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List of Abbreviations

AHS.....	Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule (Selective Secondary School)
BHS.....	Berufsbildende Höhere Schule (Vocational School)
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
ELF.....	English as Lingua Franca
ELT.....	English Language Teaching
ENL.....	English as a Native Language
FL.....	Foreign Language
L1	First Language
NS.....	Native Speaker

1. Introduction

it's nothing [...] very new erm English as a lingua f- franca actually is not at all erm because that's just how language languages evolve if they are used by speakers of other languages in context where the focus is on er information is on er getting messages across where the information where the yeah the focus is on actually understanding each other erm so where that attitude is more important than er speaking like a native speaker erm or performing certain norms that are admired by someone else (AR4: 12)¹

In this quote one of the participants of the present interview study, AR4, successfully captured the essence of the subject matter at hand, namely English as a lingua franca (henceforth ELF). Indeed, as she stated in the beginning “it’s nothing [...] very new”, the term ELF has been used since the 1920s with a remarkable increase since the year 2000 (Ritt 2016: 130). Notably, only since 2000 has the present understanding of ELF as a hybrid, highly flexible use of English in its own right developed (Seidlhofer 2017: 4). Since then, research within the ELF paradigm has been thriving with some of the earliest notable contributions being Jenkins (2000) and Seidlhofer (2001). These early publications were vital in establishing ELF as a field of interest and in describing what ELF is and what it is not. It most certainly is not a simplified, deprived version of English as a native language (ENL) distributed to learners on a global scale (Jenkins 2012: 491-492; Widdowson 1997: 139)². Quite contrary, interrelating with the increasing globalization of the world, English has experienced an unprecedented spread becoming the first truly global lingua franca (Haberland 2013: 195, Seidlhofer 2017: 1). Presently, people all around the world with various linguacultural backgrounds use ELF in a wide range of settings, be it in academia, for business or in private life. ELF has become “a kind of unplanned Esperanto” (Lo Bianco 2016: 260). However, Mufwene (2012: 367) warns that it should not be relied on too much. On the one hand, it should be kept in mind that other languages such as Spanish, Russian

¹ This extract has been taken from one of the interviews which were conducted and transcribed as part of this research. See Chapter 3 for more details on the research design and participants.

² See also Seidlhofer (2006) for a discussion of five common misconceptions about ELF and ELF research.

and Arabic can function as interregional lingua franca as well (Modiano 2009: 61). On the other hand, while the English language might have experienced an unprecedented spread becoming “the first truly global lingua franca” (Seidlhofer 2017: 2), there still remains a large proportion of the global population who do not speak English and might not even have access to learning it (Seidlhofer 2011: 2).

Talking about the global spread of English, it is also important to stress here the difference between the distribution and the spread of a language (discussed in length by Widdowson 1997), the keywords being adoption (distribution) and adaptation (spread). Hence, as ELF spreads around the world, speakers adapt the virtual language for their purposes and, as a result, the language evolves, as rightly indicated by AR4 in the quote above. In other words, ELF can be seen as the “functionally effective realization of linguistic resources” (Widdowson 2013: 192). Importantly, the linguistic resources available to speakers and employed by speakers in these settings are not restricted to a specific variety of English (Pitzl 2018: 9). Moreover, these resources are not even restricted to English, since most ELF speakers are bilingual or multilingual speakers (House 2012: 174). Therefore, speakers do not simply adopt and perform the linguistic norms and linguacultural behavior of ENL but rather employ all their linguistic resources, including the ones from any other language speakers have available, to meet their communicative needs in ELF communication.

However, since the notion of ELF has not been defined clearly and consistently in research literature, it is deemed necessary to describe in more detail how the term is understood in this thesis. Especially in the beginning of ELF research, the term ELF was subject to considerable debates (see e.g. Seidlhofer 2001, 2006, 2011; Jenkins 2006a; Prodromou 2007, Cogo 2008) and Mortensen (2013) warns of a reification of ELF agreeing with Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey’s (2011: 296) view that ELF cannot be considered a language variety due to the inherent hybridity and variability in this use of English. Seidlhofer (2011: 7) defines ELF as “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option”. This definition is generally accepted by scholars of this

field of study. Notably, this view of ELF does not exclude native speakers of English from lingua franca communicative encounters. However, Seidlhofer and Dorn (2012: 120) point out that nonnative speakers tend to outnumber native speakers in ELF scenarios since, on the whole, the number of nonnative speakers worldwide has surpassed that of native speakers. Therefore, native speaker will cease to provide the linguistic reference norm which, as Widdowson (1994) conclusively argues, calls into question their ownership of English. This is also reinforced by ELF speakers' focus on communicative effectiveness diminishing the value of "performing certain norms that are admired by someone else", as AR4 (12) accurately described it. As a consequence, reevaluating native speaker authority has been one of the major interests of the field (Zhu 2016: 172).

By questioning native speaker authority and by highlighting that ELF has become the most frequent use of English worldwide, ELF researchers have shown the relevance of ELF for language pedagogy. Indeed, there has been an increasing emphasis on implications of ELF research findings for English language teaching (ELT). However, translating theory into practice poses quite a challenge to both linguists as well as ELT practitioners. In general, ELF researchers cautiously restrain from giving teachers explicit directions concerning ELF-sensitive pedagogical practices, stressing that the integration of such practices following an evaluation of the relevance of ELF is a local decision which has to be made by teachers for their individual teaching context (Sifakis & Bayyurt 2015: 474). To bridge the theory-practice divide, Dewey (2012: 141) stresses the need to work with teachers to further research the potential ELF holds for ELT. However, Kordia notes that "there have been surprisingly few reports by teachers describing the way they have tried to change their teaching to address the implications that ELF may have for their own situation" (Sifakis et al. 2018: 197-198). Hence, the purpose of this study is to fill this gap for the Austrian context and to further explore the feasibility of integrating an ELF perspective into language teaching by interviewing ELF-informed teachers about ELF in the school context. Thus, also answering the call for "further engagement between researchers and practitioners"

(Dewey & Patsko 2018: 453). In particular, the study aims to investigate Austrian ELF-informed teachers' views on the relevance and benefits of ELF for them and their students. Moreover, the intention was to also find out if ELF-informed teachers currently integrate an ELF perspective into their teaching and if so, what challenges they have met due to their ELF-sensitive teaching practices and what their resulting needs are.

For this endeavor, seven in-service ELF-informed teachers were interviewed using individual, semi-structured interviews. It is worth emphasizing that a prerequisite for participants in this study was to have a profound understanding of ELF. This criterion was established based on the assumption that such an understanding by teachers would be the key premise for integrating an ELF perspective into their language teaching. Therefore, four teachers who had worked at university within the research field of ELF and who then proceeded to teach at secondary level were selected. The remaining three participants were younger in-service teachers who first came into contact with ELF during their teacher education by completing a course on ELF. It was assumed that having these two distinct groups of participants with a varying degree of knowledge of ELF would yield a more comprehensive picture of the present situation in ELT classrooms for ELF-informed teachers as well as interesting results reflecting the impact teacher education courses which raise pre-service teachers' awareness of ELF have on the present situation. After conducting and transcribing the seven interviews, the transcripts were analyzed employing content analytical methods to gain an understanding of the participants' views.

To achieve the aim of the present study, Chapter 2 will first establish the theoretical background for this research. This is done by first discussing the differences between ELF and another acronym which is often associated with ELT in expanding circle countries, namely, English as a foreign language (EFL). Furthermore, the link between ELF and ELT will be explored from different perspectives. Firstly, findings of studies on teachers' and learners' attitudes toward ELF will be reviewed. Secondly, it will be discussed how ELF is or could be integrated into teacher education in order to raise

awareness in pre-service teachers. Then, it will be examined if and how an ELF perspective is currently included in ELT materials. Moreover, implications of ELF for language testing will be considered. Lastly, a short overview of suggestions proposed in ELF research literature on how to integrate an ELF perspective into language teaching will be given.

Chapter 3 will then proceed to explain the employed research methodology and present the interview guide which was designed for this study. Furthermore, it will introduce the context of the Austrian language classroom as well as the participants by describing their academic involvement with ELF as well as their teaching background. After having discussed the methodology and the analytical tools employed in this research, Chapter 4 will concern itself with the analysis of the collected data by presenting and discussing the most significant findings. At first, it is attempted to develop an understanding of the relevance of ELF for the participants themselves and for their teaching context. Having examined the relevance of ELF, participants' current ELF-sensitive teaching practices will be inspected as well as the challenges they have met due to these practices. In the end, an overview of the participants' needs related to ELF-sensitive teaching practices will be provided. It will be argued that if the teachers' needs would, at least partially, be met, it would enable them to include an ELF perspective more consistently and more effectively in their language teaching. Thus, this thesis aims to contribute to current research in ELF by showing the benefits, challenges and needs of ELF-sensitive teaching practices, as experienced by ELF-informed in-service teachers, in an effort to help shift the focus in ELT "on actually understanding each other" (AR4: 12).

2. Investigating the link between ELF and ELT

To aid this study's effort to mediate between theory and practice, this chapter will explore the link between ELF and ELT by reviewing issues raised in ELF literature. The first subsection will be focused on the relevance of more theoretical issues connected with ELF and ELT, such as the difference between ELF and EFL, the questioning of native speaker authority and implications of ELF for ELT. The second subsection will investigate the link on a more practical level looking at the attitudes of teachers and students, the role of ELF in teacher education and how ELF could affect current testing practices. Lastly, the third subsection will discuss various suggestions which have been made in ELF literature on how an ELF perspective could be integrated into English language classrooms.

Before I begin discussing relevant literature, a short note on terminology seems appropriate since many labels have been (sometimes interchangeably) used by researchers to describe ELF-related practices in pedagogy and teacher education (e.g. 'ELF-aware', 'ELF-informed', 'ELF-oriented')³. In this thesis, the label 'ELF-informed' will be used in Seidlhofer's (2011, 2015) understanding of the term. In particular, 'ELF-informed' will be employed to describe teachers who have given "critical consideration to how the language is actually put to communicative use" (Seidlhofer 2015: 23) and who let their teaching practices be informed by their language awareness and understanding of ELF. As a modifier to practical aspects of teaching, such as teaching practices, the label 'ELF-sensitive' will be used. This label was selected since, to my knowledge, it is not linked to any proposed approach or framework of a pedagogy of ELF. Thus, in the interview study, it left room for the participants to assign their own meaning to it and decide for themselves what they viewed as 'ELF-sensitive teaching' without being affected by any associations with other researchers' ideas of what an "ELF-informed approach" (Wen 2012) or the like

³ See Riegler (2018: 12-27) for a discussion of these terms.

should/ could look like. In accordance, 'ELF-sensitive' is also employed in this thesis which reports on the interviews.

2.1. Departure from conventional thinking in ELT

Before we can start discussing the perceived relevance of ELF for foreign language classrooms, it is important to point out the main conceptual differences between ELF and another acronym often associated with ELT and English language learners, namely, EFL.

Investigating the differences between these two acronyms (i.e. ELF and EFL) and what they denote, it is helpful to first understand what EFL typically stands for. Swan (2012: 379) calls attention to the two meanings EFL holds. In particular, EFL can refer to an activity, namely, "the teaching and learning of English to and by non-native speakers" (Swan 2012: 379) as well as the kind of English which is, traditionally, taught to and learnt by nonnative speakers. In EFL, the central focus is on the geographical origin and the native speakers of the language (Seidlhofer 2011: 17). In the context of Austrian English language education, this primarily has meant an orientation toward the British or US-American native speaker (Spichtinger 2001: 54). If English is learnt and used as a foreign language, the presumed goal for learners is to acquire near-native competence based on the assumption that the primary purpose for which learners will want to use the language is communication with native speakers of English (Jenkins 2006b: 139). In this view of English, the learner of the language accepts the authority of the native speaker and will try to adhere to native speaker norms, "not only in terms of what is grammatically correct, but also of what is situationally appropriate and typical, with all the fine nuances, resonances, and allusions embedded in shared knowledge and experience acting as 'membership devices'" (Seidlhofer 2011: 17). Hence, it is expected of a learner to not only understand and adopt the linguistic norms but also the cultural and social norms entailed in the language as spoken by its native speakers.

In contrast, the native speaker authority becomes a matter of debate within the ELF paradigm. As hinted at in the introduction, ELF refers to the use of English in lingua franca scenarios in which native speakers of English may or may not be present (Mortensen 2013: 36). Regardless of their presence, due to the increasing number of nonnative speakers worldwide coming from various linguacultural backgrounds, the importance of the linguistic reference norm provided by native speakers gradually diminishes (Seidlhofer & Dorn 2012: 120). Consequently, in these communicative situations, correctness and, more importantly, appropriateness is not evaluated against a native speaker norm of English (Jenkins 2006b: 139). Instead of adopting linguacultural norms of a native speaker, the main objective in ELF communication is to use the language and any other linguistic resources available to speakers to meet their communicative needs. This is done by way of adapting the language for the purpose at hand (Seidlhofer 2011: 18).

More specifically, in ELF situations, speakers' multilingual linguistic resources are used in a flexible way to negotiate meaning and speakers agree on "ad hoc, pro tem norms" (Seidlhofer 2011: 18) which are appropriate and specific to the situation. Hence, in ELF communicative encounters, "it would be interactionally counter-productive, even patently absurd in most cases, for speakers to (strive to) adhere to ENL linguacultural norms when no ENL speakers may even be present" (Seidlhofer 2011: 18). Furthermore, Dewey (2014: 16) points out that, in these situations, strictly adhering to ENL norms could even have a negative effect on intelligibility. Thus, instead of displaying an adoptive language behavior, speakers of ELF actively

reshape the language to their needs through the reassignment of forms to different pragmatic functions, through the fashioning of new idioms, through borrowing and code-switching, and through the exploitation of the plurilingual resources that ELF users bring with them (Ferguson 2012: 178).

This has been shown by several descriptive studies (e.g. Metsä-Ketelä 2006; Breiteneder 2009; Klimpfinger 2009; Mauranen 2012; Pitzl 2018). Notably, such an adaptive linguistic behavior is not necessarily due to knowledge gaps of the language users but rather might be employed to project their identity as speakers with their

own linguacultural background which is distinct to that of a native speaker (Jenkins 2006b: 140).

As far as the question of who uses either ELF or EFL is concerned, no clear distinction can be made. Jenkins explains that “there is considerable overlap between ELF users and EFL learners, partly because many of those who start out thinking they are learning English as a foreign language end up using it as a lingua franca” (Jenkins 2006a: 159). Seidlhofer (2011: 185) concurs by acknowledging that even though the role of English in today’s globalized world is distinctly different from that of other modern languages such as Italian or Japanese, English can be studied like them. However, she points out that English in its function as lingua franca in intercultural communicative encounters is presumably of greater relevance and use to most learners and speakers today. Nevertheless, some learners might want to conform to native speaker standards, for example, if they wish to study in or emigrate to Great Britain or the USA. Swan (2012: 381) accurately states that “it is not easy to generalise about speakers’ aims”. He takes this point even further by claiming that some learners really want to conform, however, Seidlhofer (2011: 200) challenges this by remarking that such an attitude might be invoked by outside influences. Students’ attitudes will be discussed in more detail in the next subsection. For now, it will suffice to say that while recognizing a conceptual distinction between these two acronyms, namely ELF and EFL, is deemed useful for an understanding of the relevance of ELF for ELT, “drawing too rigid a distinction between students whose goal is ELF communication on the one hand and those with an EFL orientation on the other may be unhelpful for pedagogy” (Ferguson 2012: 179). Ferguson underlines his statement by pointing out that students may want to be mobile and flexible in their use of English (Ferguson 2012: 179). This, of course, raises questions of how EFL and ELF can be reconciled in pedagogy.

Considering the link between ELF and ELT, it becomes clear that establishing the relevance of ELF for ELT is not a straightforward matter. One of the most critical voices of such a link has been Swan (e.g. 2012, 2013) who claims, in Widdowson’s

words, that ELF can contribute “little or nothing” (Widdowson 2013: 187) to EFL pedagogy. In particular, while Swan indeed acknowledges that “[r]esearch by ELF scholars will [...] provide an increasingly reliable empirical base for syllabus and course planning” (Swan 2012: 388) in that research findings will help in making “informed decisions about priorities” (Swan 2012: 388) in language teaching, he argues that ELF is not suitable to be taught as an alternative to ENL (Swan 2012: 388). Swan bases his belief on the common misapprehension of ELF to be a variety of English (Swan 2012: 385). While early ELF research conceptualized ELF “not only as a distinctive context in which English is used but also as an emergent or potential variety [...] one which might eventually be codified once sufficient descriptive research had been carried out” (Ferguson 2012: 177), more recent research has shifted the focus away from formal features to the underlying processes (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey 2011: 296).

Nonetheless, Swan (2012) evidently speculates that if ELF were to have any relevance in language teaching it would be as an *alternative*. Widdowson (2013: 193) disagrees to this view by stating that current ELT practices should not simply be “abandoned and replaced by ELF”. In a similar vein, in a recently published colloquium, Sifakis (et al. 2018: 202) conclude that the contributing authors’ unequivocal opinion is that ELF could be integrated within EFL pedagogy but should not replace it. Instead of perceiving ELF as a potential replacement, the relevance of ELF for pedagogy should rather be seen as suggesting “an alternative way of thinking” (Seidlhofer 2011: 208), thus, shifting the focus in language teaching away from urging learners to conform to ENL norms (Blair 2017: 356) to helping learners develop a capability (Widdowson 2003). What is meant by capability in this context is “the strategic ability to make communicative use of linguistic resources, including those of the learners’ own language” (Widdowson 2013: 192). Thus, developing a capability would help learners and users of a language to adapt the language to their needs. Moreover, Seidlhofer (2011: 198-199) emphasizes that an ELF-sensitive pedagogy would also shift the attention to the learners and the learning process.

Concerning the language content of English lessons more specifically, there is a general consensus among most ELF researchers that while ELF research can provide information as to which forms to prioritize as well as information about which forms play a less significant role in international communication (e.g. Jenkins 2000, Seidlhofer 2011), it will not provide an altogether different set of norms. In his paper *Towards a post-normative approach*, Dewey (2012: 166) elaborates on this by arguing that “ELF is relevant not so much in terms of identifying alternative sets of norms, but more in terms of enabling us to move beyond normativity”. In a more recent paper, Dewey (Sifakis et al. 2018: 169) reiterates this notion of a post-normative approach by stressing the “need to rethink the way language is viewed in ELT methodologies”. In a similar vein, Vettorel believes that “a more inclusive and plurilithic approach acknowledges the ways in which English is experienced outside the classroom” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 180). This is based on her perspective on the relation between ELF and ELT. In particular, she perceives the relevance of ELF for ELT as a shift in foci, leaving behind an Anglo-centric perspective in classrooms and introducing a more realistic sociolinguistic one, taking into consideration the current global role of English (Sifakis et al. 2018: 180).

Similarly, Ferguson (2012: 178-179) asserts that incorporating an ELF perspective into language teaching would not mean the abandonment of linguistic forms since it would still be necessary to teach norms. However, the difference would be that all the forms taught would not belong to only one variety. But rather, this would mean to teach forms which have been prioritized by ELF research or found to be distinctive of ELF use (Ferguson 2012: 178-179). In addition, in an ELF-sensitive classroom there would need to be “an increased emphasis on communication strategies and processes” (Ferguson 2012: 178-179) since ELF research has demonstrated the value of pragmatic strategies, such as paraphrase and repetition, for effective ELF communication (e.g. Kaur 2016). Thus, Ferguson (2012) seemingly agrees with Seidlhofer (2011: 206) who states that “most learners would benefit from a focus on communication processes and strategies combined with an initial focus on priorities

derived from descriptive ELF research into the functional value of linguistic features on all levels of language". Hence, ELF research sheds a critical light on current practices in ELT (Dewey 2014: 13).

One of the concepts central to ELT which has been seriously challenged by ELF research is the unquestioned belief in the authority of an elusive and idealized native speaker. As Honna (2012: 193-194) observes, "the global spread of English has not resulted in the global acceptance of American English or British English as the absolute standard usage". In other words, as mentioned in the introduction, the language was spread and not distributed (Widdowson 1997). Therefore, even though native speakers are often still perceived as the owners of the language and are awarded prestige and the right to use English creatively, "they may not in fact have any demonstrable expertise" (Dewey 2014: 22) in lingua franca communicative encounters. In fact, it is frequently native speakers who struggle to adjust their speech and accommodate to their interaction partner in lingua franca language scenarios (Dewey 2014: 19). Ferguson (2012: 178) puts this quite provocatively by stating that "[s]trict conformity to the norms of some abstract standard language construct is largely irrelevant, beside the point". Thus, it is argued that nonnative speakers of English have become agents of language change and evolution in their own right (Dewey 2014: 16). However, an adherence to the norms of standard English is still often equated with "quality of clear communication and [...] intelligibility" (Widdowson 1994: 377) in the pedagogical context (see Section 2.2.1.). Moreover, in many educational settings, learners are still expected to strive to adhere to native speaker norms and a lack of conformity is associated with incompetence (Widdowson 2012: 8). As Seidlhofer explicates,

it is taken for granted that the more closely learners approximate to these native-speaker norms, the more proficient they will become as users of the language- and conversely, of course, the less they conform, the less proficient they are bound to be (Seidlhofer 2011: 184).

This still constitutes the prevalent, common belief, even though several studies and theoretical works (e.g. Seidlhofer 2011) have shown and argued that a failure to adhere to native speaker norms does not necessarily have to result in

miscommunication. Quite the contrary, ELF research has demonstrated that ELF speakers can communicate successfully without strictly following native speaker norms for language use and communication and instead use creativity and other multilingual linguistic resources they have available (e.g. Pitzl 2018).

Therefore, major rethinking in ELT is required to prepare students adequately for international and intercultural communication with ELF as the communicative medium. This rethinking would need to involve a new perspective on the subject matter itself, on English itself, embracing its plurality. Since, as Seidlhofer (2001: 140) points out, “as far as linguistic models as targets for learning are concerned, these usually do not figure as a focal concern, or a matter for reflection, at all”. Dewey (2012: 146) agrees with her by stating that “when teachers are required to make choices, they draw from a repertoire of methods and techniques, but never from a repertoire of Englishes”. Seidlhofer (2011: 197-198) elaborates on this notion by listing ten points which such a rethinking about and reconceptualization of English would entail if an ELF perspective were to be assumed. One of the points would be to “consider the possibility of setting objectives that are realistic in that they both reflect the learning process and are attainable, and correspond more closely to the requirements of the majority of actual users of the language” (Seidlhofer 2011: 197). Assuming an ELF perspective in language teaching would sustain learners in “*learning to language* [original emphasis]” (Seidlhofer 2011: 197) in Swain’s (2006) sense of the term. More specifically, “[l]anguaging [...] refers to the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language” (Swain 2006: 98). However, rethinking the subject would only be possible if teachers, students and others involved were open to such a change. Therefore, the next section will look more closely at their attitudes toward ELF.

2.2. Reviewing issues involved in the link between ELF and ELT

2.2.1. Attitudes toward ELF

The last section has shown the relevance of ELF for ELT. Now, before discussing in more detail how an ELF perspective could be integrated into the language classroom, it is useful to examine attitudes toward ELF of people involved and directly affected by language teaching. There have been several studies investigating the attitudes of teachers (e.g. Jenkins 2007, Sifakis & Sougari 2010) and learners (e.g. Timmis 2002, Galloway & Rose 2013). The main focus will be on teachers' attitudes since the present study is also concerned with teachers' perspectives. At the end of the subsection, a brief account on the attitudes of learners and other users will be given.

Investigating teachers' attitudes, Sifakis and Sougari (2010) revealed in their study of Greek state school teachers that age might be an influence on teachers' willingness to depart from an exclusively Anglo-centric teaching approach. While, overall, participants still agreed that Standard English should constitute the aim for teaching, it appears that older teachers are more strongly attached to a normative perspective on language (Sifakis & Sougari 2010: 312), while younger teachers (age 22-30 years) showed a greater willingness "to experiment with unknown territory" (Sifakis & Sougari 2010: 311). Another study, which investigated nonnative teachers' beliefs about different varieties in the language classroom by interviewing twenty-six teachers from three different continents (Africa, Asia, Europe), found that the majority of the participants felt the need for a standard variety in language teaching, preferably either American English or British English (Young & Walsh 2010). Likewise, Szymanska-Tworek (2016) showed in a study with 170 pre-service teachers in Poland that they tend to reject the idea of including a wider selection of English varieties in ELT materials. However, teachers would be open to more culturally diverse content in ELT materials (Szymanska-Tworek 2016: 97). Comparing this study with a study conducted by Llorca and Huguet (2003) in Italy, it appears that teachers' openness to cultural diversity in ELT and their perception of the importance of including various cultures has changed over the years. In their study, Llorca and Huguet (2003)

investigated, among other things, nonnative teachers' views on the relevance of British, local, EU and Commonwealth culture for language teaching showing a clear preference for the British culture, meaning in this case, that an English teacher should have an extensive knowledge of British culture.

In comparison, in an in-depth interview study with seventeen nonnative teachers, which was partly reported on in Jenkins (2005) and then a full account was given in Jenkins (2007), Jenkins disclosed an ambivalence within teachers' attitudes. On the one hand, Jenkins (2007: 215) revealed that even nonnative English teachers linked the mastery of a native-like English accent directly to the mastery of the language in general, and that many participants believed in the necessity of a native-like accent for them as language teachers. On the other hand, teachers seemed to display an attachment to their L1 as part of their identity, even when speaking English (Jenkins 2005: 541). Due to this ambivalence in her participants' answers, Jenkins concludes that, contrary to her belief before the study, "it cannot be taken for granted that teachers (let alone all speakers) from the expanding circle wish unequivocally to use their accented English to express their L1 identity or membership in an international (ELF) community" (Jenkins 2005: 541). Moreover, Jenkins' (2005, 2007) study has also shown that some teachers might be conceptually open to ELF, however, translating such an openness into practice is still difficult, with participants also worrying about their students' and their students' parents' view on ELF. In their study with Brazilian pre-service and in-service teachers, Cogo and Siqueira (2017) recorded similar findings concluding that their participants displayed a positive attitude toward ELF, however, as far as implications for language teaching were concerned, they appeared to be rather cautious. The present study aimed to investigate if the same holds true for Austrian teachers and, as Chapter 4 will show, overall, Austrian in-service teachers indeed exhibit a comparable cautious disposition. Similar to Cogo and Siqueira's (2017) findings, in a preliminary report on a study also conducted with teachers, Dewey (2012) reports a discrepancy between teachers' answers on questions about the relevance of ELF and actual teaching practices pointing out that teachers who

seem to have a favorable attitude toward ELF have not necessarily adapted their teaching practices accordingly.

Another matter of concern for the participants of Jenkins' study was their colleagues' attitudes toward ELF which they presumed to be unfavorable (Jenkins 2005: 540). This was to some extent validated by Dewey (2012: 152) who reported that his participants tend to display different opinions on the relevance of ELF for teaching practices. Hence, he arrives at the conclusion that "[c]learly, the practical (ir)relevance of ELF is not a straightforward matter" (Dewey 2012: 152). Notably, a consideration of Vettorel's findings (2015) provides a quite optimistic outlook on the future of ELF in ELT. On the whole, the (native and nonnative) primary teachers participating in her extensive mixed methods research study in Italy showed an awareness of the lingua franca role of English and the role of ELF for their students' lives and seemed to view it in a quite favorable light. Thus, Vettorel (2015) tentatively suggests that teachers' beliefs and practices may be gradually changing.

As far as students' attitudes are concerned, Timmis' (2002) study of students from 14 different countries offers some insights. Similar to the teachers' view, students associate a native-speaker accent with competence in the language (Timmis 2002: 242). He remarks that "[t]here is still some desire among students to conform to native-speaker norms, and this desire is not necessarily restricted to those students who use, or anticipate using English primarily with native speakers" (Timmis 2002: 248). However, Timmis' conclusion is later contradicted by the findings of Galloway and Rose's (2013) study in the Japanese context and Ranta's (2010) survey of Finnish students, for example. Considering Galloway and Rose's study, not only did it show that students possessed an awareness that their future interaction partners will quite likely be nonnative speakers like themselves (Galloway & Rose 2013: 244), but it also challenged Timmis' conclusion by demonstrating that students have adapted their view on native speaker authority and the necessity to approximate native speaker norms over the ten year period between the two studies, in pace with global changes in ELF usage (Galloway & Rose 2013: 247). Investigating Finnish students' views,

Ranta comes to the same conclusion, however, recognizing that students appear to differentiate between 'real-world English' and 'school English' for which ENL norms are still relevant (2010: 175).

In contrast, Groom's (2012) questionnaire study with 127 European speakers of English presented findings quite similar to Timmis (2002). More specifically, Groom's findings show that the majority of the participants is not in favor of the idea of ELF being taught to learners instead of a standard variety (Groom 2012: 54). One participant rejects the idea by remarking the following: "I don't think it reasonable to teach anybody a language that is not spoken by native speakers" (Groom 2012: 54). Thus, Groom (2012: 54) argues in line with Timmis (2002) that "[w]hile learners should not be forced to attain native-like standards, nor should they be forced to give them up as unattainable". Notably, Timmis (2002: 248) remarked that a similar study to his might obtain quite different results in ten years' time with an increased awareness of the global role of English. While Groom's (2012) study disproves this assumption, showing that among European users of English there is still a strong attachment to the native speaker norm, Galloway and Rose's (2013: 247) study verified this assumption in the Japanese context by demonstrating that students perceived communication strategies as more valuable than native-like competence, as did Ranta (2010) three years prior for the Finnish context.

Seidlhofer (2011: 200) reflects on the results of Timmis' (2002) study by stating that this attachment to the alleged superior status of standard varieties is unsurprising. She argues that this can be retraced to the traditional conventions of ELT by saying that "teachers and learners have been well schooled in the assumption that anything that does not conform to standard ENL is by definition defective, incorrect, undesirable" (Seidlhofer 2011: 200). This attitude and view on language is still existent in teachers, as some of the studies discussed in this subsection have shown (e.g. Jenkins 2007). However, Vettorel's (2015) study offers an optimistic outlook on the future, indicating that this attitude seems to be changing. Notwithstanding, ELF

stands little chance of being adopted even by teachers who understand the concept unless it is validated by their own experience, legitimized

through inclusion in teaching materials such as recordings and dictionaries, and taught in teacher education programs (Jenkins 2005: 541).

Hence, the subsequent sections will look at current trends in teacher education and teaching material in relation to ELF to further investigate the practical link between ELF and ELT.

2.2.2. ELF in teacher education

Seidlhofer (2011: 201) remarks that the place to start ELF-sensitive teaching is teacher education. In concurrence, Dewey (2012: 141) stresses that collaborating with teachers is essential for exploring and establishing the practicability of an ELF perspective in ELT. Hence, teacher educators take on a fundamental role as “a mediator between growing ELF research literature and the practitioner’s local teaching context” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 202). In other words, their function should be to educate teachers both linguistically and pedagogically which includes informing them about recent developments in the use of the language (Seidlhofer 2011: 192). Therefore, to properly prepare teachers for the classroom, teacher education should “foster knowledge and awareness of the current reality of English” (Vettorel 2016: 116) as well as encourage teachers to critically reflect on current practices and conventional concepts (Sifakis et al. 2018: 172). Presently, teachers appear to demonstrate a willingness to engage critically with current practices and to learn about ELF which is evident by an increase in participants in teacher education courses which aim at raising an awareness of ELF (Sifakis et al. 2018: 166). There is also an increase of courses offered which include an ELF perspective (e.g. Sifakis & Bayyurt 2015). These teacher education courses generally aim at informing teachers about ELF on the one hand, but on the other hand, also aim at changing teachers’ perspectives and attitudes toward “the plurilithic reality of world Englishes” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 166).

However, as became evident in the previous section, raising teachers’ awareness of ELF is “not sufficient for an ELF perspective to be taken up in any lasting or practical

sense” (Dewey 2014: 17). Therefore, Kordia suggests the following as a potential next step:

What we need are reports of classroom research on ELF-aware teaching, where other teachers (a) describe the problems they have faced in their context in view of ELF, (b) analyse the way they have tried to solve them through specific lesson plans and tasks, and (c) evaluate the outcomes of their endeavor, to use them not as “formulas to be rigidly applied,” but rather, as “frameworks for assessment” and further reflection (Widdowson 1990: 26), along with the information related to ELF and that related to our own context. (Sifakis et al. 2018: 201-202)

If teachers were to engage in such an endeavor, they could “drive changes ‘from below’, with possible impact also on other stakeholders, publishers in the first place” (Vettorel 2016: 113). This would increase the feasibility of incorporating an ELF perspective, since, as will be shown in the next section, there is currently a lack of material which truly acknowledges the recent developments of English.

2.2.3. ELF and teaching material

Even with advances in teacher education, teachers are unlikely to adopt an ELF-sensitive teaching approach if it is not “legitimized through inclusion in teaching materials” (Jenkins 2005: 541) since textbooks represent “the visible heart of any ELT programme” (Sheldon 1988: 237). Moreover, not only teachers but, more importantly, learners and parents as well often consult textbooks as the main source of reference (Sifakis et al. 2018: 185). Consequently, Vettorel and Lopriore (2013: 484) stress that the goal and focus of language learning materials and classroom practice should be ELF-sensitive with the aim of facilitating learners’ progress to become effective communicators who are familiar with and can adapt to various communicative settings. More specifically, they state that

[i]n this light, activities and tasks in the [Foreign Language] FL classroom should be oriented at fostering the development of language and (inter)cultural awareness as well as communication strategies, that is, at providing learners with tools to become effective communicators with English in its pluralized forms and differentiated contexts of use in today’s interconnected world. (Vettorel & Lopriore 2013: 484)

Notwithstanding, textbooks continue to promote “Anglophone, idealized and unrealistic standard language models” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 183). To illustrate this, in their study of German textbooks, Syrbe and Rose (2018: 157) found that instances of ELF communicative encounters in the material, “if defined as communication between speakers of different first languages”, are quite rare. Even though publishers claim that an international perspective on English was taken in their materials, they persistently base the language content on ENL norms, as can also be seen in Dewey’s (2014) short analysis of two ‘international’ textbooks. If publishers were to truly incorporate an ELF perspective in their materials, they would need to acknowledge the current global role of English “in terms of contexts, speakers, language use and effective (intercultural) communication, with texts, tasks and activities that are more reflective of this plurality” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 182).

Thus, teachers who wish to integrate an ELF perspective into their language teaching “face a formidable barrier of a lack of materials” (Syrbe & Rose 2018: 153). Due to this lack of suitable textbooks, it is generally recommended (e.g. Seidlhofer 2015) to complement available textbooks with additional material. This could be quite beneficial for learners since “[s]imply relying on textbooks limits learners’ access to actual language use as well as their understanding of making meaning and co-constructing understanding” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 189). However, creating additional material requires a lot of time and effort on the part of the teacher, whose workload is usually already quite high. Therefore, the lack of available material poses quite an obstacle to the integration of an ELF perspective in ELT.

2.2.4. Testing ELF for English language tests

Yet another great obstacle to realizing an ELF perspective in language teaching is the current testing culture. As Jenkins (2006c: 49) explains, “[i]t is changes in teaching which keep pace with changes in testing and not vice versa”. Due to this washback effect (cf. Brown & Abeywickrama 2010: 38-39), it would be crucial for examination boards to engage with ELF and implications of ELF for teaching in order to facilitate a positive change in the language classroom. To do so, stakeholders would need to

revise “[c]urrent conceptualizations of proficiency in terms of gradual approximation to the competence of the native speaker” (McNamara 2012: 202) because an insistence on the conformity to native speaker norms is still quite persistent in ELT tests (Jenkins 2006c: 43). However, it has been shown that a blind adherence to native speaker norms is not necessary for successful communication in ELF and it sometimes even impedes on communication. This communicative reality, well-documented in ELF research, should stimulate a reevaluation of the linguistic norms for testing (Seidlhofer 2011: 13). Moreover, ELT professionals involved in language testing would need to reflect on the kind(s) of English(es) to be tested. As Seidlhofer remarks, “the big *what* in terms of *whose* English is being tested in settings all over the world, no matter whether in the Inner, Outer, or Expanding Circles, has hardly been challenged [original emphasis]” (Seidlhofer 2011: 14)⁴.

However, incorporating an ELF perspective into the testing and assessment component of language teaching poses quite the challenge. McNamara (2012: 201) points out that any ELF-sensitive assessment would require “the conceptualization of a learning dimension of ELF communication, that is, the notion of degrees of competence and the possibility of improvement or progress in the ability to manage this form of communication”. Later on, he adds that “[a]ssessments guide learning, and a proficiency dimension is currently somewhat lacking if ELF theory is to guide English language learning as it should” (McNamara 2012: 202). Due to this lack of a practicable alternative, Jenkins (2006c: 48) acknowledges that “English language testing still has to be conducted in relation to some sort of standard”. Furthermore, students who may prefer aiming their learning at a near-native variety of English should not be neglected in an attempt to reconcile the global plurality of English with language testing (Jenkins 2006c: 48). Still, some changes could be implemented right away despite these obstacles in an interim phase (Jenkins 2006c: 49). For example, examinations boards could reflect on their perception of correctness and maybe start

⁴ The terms ‘Inner Circle’, ‘Outer Circle’ and ‘Expanding Circle’ refer to Kachru’s (1992) concentric circle model for distinguishing between countries where English is spoken as a native language (‘Inner Circle’), as a second language (‘Outer Circle’) and as a foreign language (‘Expanding Circle’).

to perceive correctness not only as a blind adherence to and an accurate reproduction of native speaker norms but as being “communicatively motivated and contextually relevant” (Jenkins 2006c: 48). This would help to depart from a “pedagogy of failure” (Seidlhofer & Widdowson 2019: 27). Moreover, testing criteria could be informed by or based on empirical evidence of ELF interactions (Jenkins 2006c: 49). This would be a big step in the direction toward ELF-sensitive teaching, since “testing (and therefore teaching) at present discourages the development of vital accommodation skills” (Jenkins 2006c: 48).

Turning now to the presumably most important and influential language document effective in Europe, namely, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe 2001), it becomes clearer why the native speaker orientation is still quite predominant in teaching and testing. While Swan (2012: 382) claims that the CEFR focuses on fluency rather than formal accuracy, a closer look at the descriptors reveals that the native speaker still holds the authority over the language. The reference scales and descriptors equate competence in a language with native speaker competence (Hynnen 2014: 303). As Seidlhofer (2011: 185) observes, “‘intelligibility’ is taken to mean being intelligible to native speakers, and being able to understand native speakers”. Throughout the framework, it is assumed that learners will only need the language with native speakers, in other words, the prospective interlocutor is assumed to be a native speaker and no one else (Hynnen 2014: 303). Thus, “the responsibility for successful communication is held to lie entirely with the non-native speaker” (McNamara 2012: 200). In fact, Pitzl’s (2015: 119) analysis of the document shows that the CEFR presents learners’ limited language proficiency as one of the two main causes for misunderstanding (the second one being cultural diversity) and places the sole responsibility for achieving, maintaining and re-establishing understanding after misunderstandings on the language learner. In contrast, communication between native speakers is constructed as being perfect and free from miscommunication (Pitzl 2015: 111).

However, even though the term ‘native-like’ is frequently employed in the reference scales and descriptors, the CEFR never fully explains what is understood by this term (Dewey 2014: 21). The document relies exclusively on assumptions about the native speaker and ENL, and these assumptions are quite idealized (Dewey 2015: 73; Pitzl 2015: 111). In response to the criticism concerning the native speaker orientation evident in the CEFR, the council of Europe published a companion volume to the CEFR with new descriptors in 2018. Due to the controversy surrounding the term ‘native speaker’, the term was eliminated from the descriptors and it was emphasized that “the CEFR illustrative descriptors do not take an idealised native speaker as a reference point for the competence of a user/ learner” (Council of Europe 2018: 45). However, taking a closer look at the modified descriptors suggests otherwise. In the descriptors “native speaker” has mostly been substituted with “speakers of the target language” (Council of Europe 2018: 223), thus, still implying an ownership and a (now covert) native speaker orientation. Moreover, Pitzl’s (2015) criticism of the framework concerning the conveyed asymmetry between learner and interlocutor as understanding is viewed as being neither co-constructed nor shared is as valid as before.

Moreover, while English occupies a unique role in today’s world due to its lingua franca function, this special status is not accounted for in the CEFR and English is rather treated like other modern foreign languages (Seidlhofer 2011: 185). This might be connected to the controversy which evolves around the role of English in Europe. On the one hand, English is frequently used as lingua franca in the EU (Llurda 2004: 316) and the value of English for international communication is recognized, being able to speak English is even sometimes seen as “a basic need for all European citizens” (Lopriore 2016: 71). Yet, on the other hand, English is seen as a threat to multilingualism undermining diversity and minority languages (Lopriore 2016: 71).

One more document which directly influences language teaching in the classroom is the curriculum which has yet to be informed by “an understanding of English as currently used by speakers in naturally occurring interactions within social interaction

and multilingual environments” (Lopriore & Vettorel 2015: 18). However, Kohn (2016: 87) notes that ELF is now explicitly referred to in German school curricula finally acknowledging the changing role of English in a globalized world, thus, inciting optimism. A similar development can be observed in Finnish curricula (Ranta 2010: 160). Looking at the Austrian context, any such change is not clearly visible yet. Even though, as pointed out earlier, English, its learning as well as its usage experience, is evidently distinguishable from any other language due its global function (Sifakis et al. 2018: 160), there is still only one curriculum which applies to all modern foreign languages (i.e. French, Italian, Hungarian, etc.) in Austria (cf. BMBWF 2018), thus, not accounting for this clear difference in the global roles of these languages and demonstrating very little understanding of the significance of ELF. This is also evident in the explicit reference to the language level descriptors of the CEFR, which, as previously discussed, still reinforces a native speaker orientation.

As can be seen from the discussion of these selected aspects of language teaching, teachers who wish to integrate an ELF perspective into their teaching face some serious challenges. Nevertheless, there are some ways in which they can acknowledge the plurality of English in their classroom despite these challenges, thus underscoring Dewey’s view that “what happens on the ground in language teaching is by and large dependent on the actions of the individual teachers” (Dewey 2012: 148).

2.3. Integrating an ELF perspective into the language classroom

Considering suggestions that have been made in ELF literature about possible ways to integrate an ELF perspective into the language classrooms, some notable ones have been collected and will be presented in the following section.

Many researchers have so far shied away from proposing an ELF-sensitive approach alternative to established ELT approaches, stressing that “this will always be a matter of local decision” (Seidlhofer 2011: 198). Therefore, most suggestions found in the literature are either quite abstract, theoretical ones or specific activities and

resources which could be incorporated into a more traditional ELT approach. A notable departure from these suggestions is a pedagogical framework proposed by Wen (2012). This framework for an 'ELF-informed approach' to the teaching of English features two dimensions. One dimension is "the view of what language is" (Wen 2012: 373) and the other one is "the view about teaching" (Wen 2012: 373), both dimensions are divided into a linguistic, a cultural and a pragmatic level. Wen (2012: 375) claims that her framework does not demonstrate "an extreme stance on ELF" but rather finds the golden middle between the traditional native speaker orientation and "the view that the native variety is totally irrelevant to ELF" (Wen 2012: 375). Moreover, she believes that by clearly separating teaching content from teaching objectives in her framework, "it would be easier for classroom teachers to accept the idea of ELF and apply it into practice" (Wen 2012: 375). Nonetheless, she acknowledges the strictly theoretical nature of her proposal and the need for it to be empirically tested and then further revised. To avoid associations with this approach which might have influenced participants' reports on their teaching practices, the term 'ELF-sensitive' is used in this thesis to collocate with teaching practices and the like, as stated in the beginning of this chapter.

A more specific suggestion for including an ELF perspective in the classroom is to work with corpora. Many researchers have stressed the benefits of exposing learners to authentic ELF communications (e.g. Kohn 2016) by way of using data from available ELF corpora or from other instances of ELF use which can be found online. Lopriore (Sifakis et al. 2018: 163) remarks that by including extensive ELF discourse in language education learners would be "engaged in noticing and languaging practices" (Sifakis et al. 2018: 163). She suggests that, when working with such data, learners should be asked to "articulate their thoughts and reactions about the various linguistic and pragmatic processes implemented that help render communication effective" (Sifakis et al. 2018: 163). However, Seidlhofer (2011: 183) cautions that even though such samples might be "real as samples of usage" (Seidlhofer 2011: 183) they might require more effort on the part of the learner to translate them into examples for

learning. If samples from corpus data are “to be learnt from they have to be understood as typical in one way or another, in other words they have to be understood as examples of something” (Seidlhofer 2011: 183). In addition, Vettorel (2016: 111) remarks that a possible obstacle to corpus work in the classroom is that the teachers themselves might not be familiar working with (ELF) corpora.

Another suggestion which is frequently made, and perhaps more feasible, is to use audio or audio-visual material featuring nonnative varieties of English in the classroom instead of exclusively using recordings of native speakers of a standard variety. Bayyurt (Sifakis et al. 2018: 175-176) points out that “[t]his way they [the learners] can realize that, as non-native speakers of English, they can speak with great confidence and fluency despite the fact that their pronunciation may not sound like standard British or American English”. Modern technology and the internet offer a vast amount of resources which could be used in the language classroom to familiarize students with various accents. For example, Guerra and Cavalheiro (2019) mention celebrities who often successfully communicate in English and songs in English by nonnative speakers who and which could demonstrate to the students “the unnecessary need to sound like a NS [Native Speaker]” (Guerra & Cavalheiro 2019: 125). They also provide a list of movies which feature non-standard accents, lingua franca communicative encounters including instances of code-switching (Guerra & Cavalheiro 2019: 126) and a list of online archives (Guerra & Cavalheiro 2019: 126). Another resource they mention is TED talks which offers talks by speakers from various different backgrounds about a wide range of topics (Guerra & Cavalheiro 2019: 128). TED talks could be quite a valuable resource to teachers since transcripts and subtitles for the videos are provided on the website and the videos can be accessed completely free of charge. Lopriore and Vettorel (2019: 115) also supply teachers with a list of annotated websites.

The internet has not only played a major role in giving English the global status it holds today, but could also be an important resource when trying to incorporate the international status and diversity of English into the classroom. As mentioned before,

teachers can employ it, on the one hand, as a tool to find audio as well as audio-visual recordings of ELF communicative encounters. On the other hand, the internet could also be used to enable and generate such situations for students in the classroom. While Kohn (2016: 91) acknowledges the difficulties, which lie in providing students with “intercultural contact and communicative interaction among speakers from different lingua-cultural backgrounds” (Kohn 2016: 91), he points out that modern technology and social media might offer promising solutions. In this context, he mentions “asynchronous forum and blog tools” (Kohn 2016: 91) as well as “synchronous chat, videoconferencing and virtual world environments” (Kohn 2016: 91). Kohn (2016: 91) emphasizes that “[p]edagogically motivated intercultural telecollaboration exchanges offer rich opportunities for natural and authentic lingua franca communication between pupils of different languages and cultural backgrounds”. One strength of such telecollaboration exchanges is that students are usually familiar with these technologies from their real lives (Kohn 2016: 91). Cavalheiro (Sifakis et al. 2018: 187) supports this by remarking the internet is “a large part of most students’ lives” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 187) and by incorporating it as a tool for language learning in the classroom teachers may “capture their students’ interest” (Sifakis et al. 2018: 187) and make language use and learning more relevant, authentic and up-to-date, thereby achieving “[w]hat really matters” (Seidlhofer 2011: 198), namely, “that the language [...] engage[s] the learners’ reality” (Seidlhofer 2011: 198). Guerra and Cavalheiro (2019) also list several websites and applications which can be employed by teachers for a more collaborative approach.

Yet another possible way of incorporating an ELF perspective into the language classroom would be to resort to the students and their experiences as resources. Vettorel (Sifakis et al. 2018: 183) recommends “asking students to share examples of the Englishes they see and hear in their environment and of experiences of communication in ELF contexts”. While other suggestions might require teachers to spend more time looking for material and preparing their lessons, the feasibility of

this last suggestion is quite self-evident. Hence, all teachers would have at least one possible way at their disposal to integrate an ELF perspective into their teaching.

2.4. Summary

This chapter first established a link between ELF and ELT on a conceptual level pointing out the differences between ELF and EFL and stressing the inadequacy of the native speaker orientation in ELT. Next, selected issues involved in this link were reviewed, namely, attitudes toward ELF, the role of ELF in teacher education and the presence (or lack thereof) of an ELF perspective in currently available teaching material and language tests. Lastly, suggestions made in ELF research literature about how an ELF perspective could possibly be integrated were collected.

Considering the attitudes of teachers toward ELF, studies have shown a continuing attachment to the native speaker orientation as well as an ambivalence within teachers (cf. Jenkins 2007, Dewey 2012). This reluctance to detach from conventional thinking about language and from the presumed native speaker authority is also still visible in teaching material, leaving teachers who wish to adapt their teaching with a serious lack of resources (Section 2.2.3.). Another obstacle to the integration of an ELF perspective in language teaching is that the same attachment is also prevalent in language testing. Seidlhofer (2015: 25) acknowledges that this institutionalized dominance of the native speaker orientation, evident in textbooks and assessments, is probably the most demanding challenge ELF-informed teachers have to face. As Chapter 4 will show, teachers do experience the lack of material and the inadequacy of language tests as quite challenging to their ELF-sensitive teaching practices. However, before we look at the findings of the study in more detail, the next chapter will first present the study design, the context of the research and the teachers who participated.

3. Interviewing ELF-informed in-service teachers

3.1. Research interest and method

Teachers' awareness of ELF and an understanding of its relevance for ELT is deemed crucial for a successful integration of an ELF perspective into language classrooms, as became evident in the literature review in the previous chapter. Therefore, raising teachers' awareness, for example in teacher education, is an essential first step, as remarked by several scholars (e.g. Jenkins 2005, Seidlhofer 2011). The university of Vienna has started to offer pre-service teachers courses with an explicit focus on ELF (e.g. University of Vienna 2019). Therefore, it could be argued that, at the university of Vienna, this initial step has been set up and it is time to move on to the next step. However, this raises the question of what the next step could be. Since no clear answer could be found in ELF literature, my interest was raised. Conducting interviews with ELF-informed in-service teachers was considered useful in order to acquire an understanding of the current situation in Austrian classrooms in regard to ELF. This understanding might, subsequently, inform researchers and ELT practitioners about how they could proceed in their attempt to link ELF and ELT in practice as well as about the challenges teachers currently face. To pursue this research interest, I conducted semi-structured, individual interviews with seven ELF-informed in-service teachers. This group of participants was selected based on the assumption that all participants in this study have developed an awareness and a presumably thorough understanding of ELF either during their studies or through their academic research, thus, fulfilling the first step and being equipped and willing to integrate an ELF perspective into their language teaching. Hence, as a preliminary for the next step, this study will also investigate where exactly these ELF-informed in-service teachers see the relevance and benefits of ELF for themselves, for their students and for their teaching.

In particular, the specific research questions, this study seeks to answer are the following:

- (1) How do ELF-informed in-service teachers perceive the current situation in the Austrian school context with regard to the relevance, benefits and challenges of ELF-sensitive teaching practices?
- (2) What would Austrian in-service teachers need to better integrate an ELF perspective into their language teaching?

3.2. Research context and participants

The current research project was carried out within the context of the Austrian public school system. The most recent, available statistics show that in 2017/18, the majority of students in Austrian schools (97.8%) were studying English (Statistik Austria 2019). Moreover, in Austria, English is not only the foreign language that is most frequently learnt in school but for many students also the only one (de Cillia & Haller 2013: 170). To provide the reader with more detailed background information on the context of the study, this section will provide a brief description of the English language education at secondary level in Austria. Afterwards, the participants will be introduced.

3.2.1. The context of the Austrian language classroom

Since the school year 2003/04, foreign language education starts in the first grade of primary school (de Cillia & Haller 2013: 150), when students are approximately six years old. According to the latest Austrian statistics (Statistik Austria 2019), most students' (99.8% of all primary school students) first foreign language at school is English. Students continue their English language education until they leave school which can technically be at any point of time as soon as students have attended school for nine years (BMBWF 1985). If students choose to graduate high school, they can do so either at an *Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule* (AHS), which offers a general education on both lower and secondary level, or at a vocational school, which students can start at after the fourth-grade of lower secondary (BMBWF 2020b).

There are several different types of vocational schools in Austria, all of which can be united under the umbrella term *Berufsbildende Höhere Schule* (BHS) (BMBWF 2020a). By the time students graduate AHS, they will have had eight years of formal English instruction at secondary level, with four lessons (à 50min) a week in the first two years and three lessons a week in the subsequent years (BMBWF 2018). In comparison, students graduate BHS after five years of upper secondary as opposed to the four years of upper secondary in an AHS, hence, students learn English in school for nine years at secondary level. The amount of English lessons per week a student graduating a BHS will have had received differs only at the upper secondary level from the AHS, and also varies between different types of vocational schools. However, looking at the number of English lessons in total, this is only a minor difference.

In both AHS and BHS, students graduate by taking written and oral standardized leaving exams in six subjects (BMBWF 2020c), one of which is usually English. In Austria, the standardized leaving examination is colloquially known as *Zentralmatura* or, even shorter, *Matura*. The old, non-standardized form of the leaving exam was referred to as *Matura* and the use of the term continued even though the format of the examination drastically changed. To avoid confusion, the standardized leaving examination will be exclusively referred to as *Zentralmatura* in this thesis. The *Zentralmatura* was issued in the school year 2015/16 for the first time on a national scale in both school types (BMBWF 2020c). The written exam in English consists of three (BHS) or four (AHS) parts, namely, listening, reading and writing, and in AHS, there is also a language in use part. For the written exam, all tasks are standardized and for the receptive skills, teachers receive answer sheets and grading scales. Students' written texts are also corrected by the class teacher, based on a standardized rating scale. The tasks for the written exam as well as the rating scales for assessing students' writing are based on the CEFR. The tasks for the oral exam are not standardized but designed by the collective of English teachers in a school. It is widely acknowledged that language tests have a considerable influence on how a

language is taught (cf. Brown & Abeywickrama 2010; Jenkins 2006c). Hence, background knowledge about the recently introduced *Zentralmatura*, which constitutes the most important exam for high school graduates, enriches one's understanding of participants' perspectives and the considerable washback effect of this examination on participants' teaching practices, as will be seen in Chapter 4.

3.2.2. The participants

Seven in-service teachers participated in this study. The participants were selected according to the criterion sampling strategy (Dörnyei 2007: 128). In particular, the specific criterion they had to fulfil consisted of a previous involvement with ELF, either as an academic researcher in this field or in the course of their teacher education. More specifically, participants selected for the 'teacher education' group had to fulfil the minimum requirement of having chosen the topic of ELF as one of two areas for their final oral exam. Additional to this exam, they may have attended classes which focused on ELF but this was not a precondition for being selected. This overall criterion was established to ensure an in-depth understanding of ELF on the part of the participants since, as Ehrenreich (2012: 183) rightly declared, such an understanding is essential if teachers wish to adapt their teaching accordingly. Four out of the seven participants had been involved in academic research in ELF prior to their teaching at a secondary school, thus, constituting the 'academic research' group. The remaining three participants had dealt with ELF as part of their teacher education. Six out of these seven participants are female.

A short note on the labels of the participants is helpful here. To protect the participants' anonymity, the first group will be identified by the abbreviation AR which indicates that they have participated in Academic Research. The second group was tagged TE for Teacher Education. Additionally, each participant received a number at the end of their tag to achieve a clear distinction between all participants (e.g. AR1, TE1). Whenever information gained in the course of the interviews is mentioned or extracts from the interviews are included in this paper, the exact source will be indicated in parenthesis after the relevant passage by first listing the speaker

identification of the participants, followed by the turn from which the information or extract is retrieved, thus, taking the form (AR4: 12). If more than one participant has offered a similar piece of information, the tags will be ordered alphabetically with the numbers in an ascending order. Moreover, the citation rules according to the *Style sheet for papers in linguistics* published by the English department are used in regard to the length of interview extracts, meaning, that extracts longer than three full lines will be presented as a separate, indented paragraph and shorter ones will be integrated into the main text, marked by double quotation marks (University of Vienna English Department 2017: 5). Moreover, if I feel it is worth emphasizing particular words in extracts, I will visually highlight them by putting them in **bold**. Having explained the sampling strategy and more technical aspects concerning the participants, the following paragraphs will now be dedicated to a closer description of each participants' background, starting with participants belonging to the group AR.

As indicated above, all AR participants had been actively involved in academic research within the field of ELF. Moreover, three participants (AR1, AR2, AR4) reported that, during their employment at university, they gained experience with transcribing ELF conversations and the fourth one (AR3) was involved in marking up words in transcribed ELF conversations as corresponding to a particular part of speech. In addition, all participants of the AR group have worked with ELF data for their research studies and published papers on ELF. Furthermore, AR4 expressed an interest in ELF in the pedagogical context (in Austria) from the beginning on (AR4: 10). In the course of her academic research, she "realized that different strategies are important that erm yeah speakers make use of of these strategies to get their messages across" (AR4: 14). In sum, all four participants of this group had not only heard about ELF but have also actively and extensively engaged with ELF data in one way or another as well as with academic publications, research and debates about ELF.

In comparison, participants in the other group have heard about ELF in a class for their teaching degree and chose it as one of the two areas for their final oral exam. It is noteworthy that a class with a focus on ELF is not mandatory as part of the teacher education at the university of Vienna. Hence, the participants have voluntarily selected and attended a class with an explicit focus on ELF, showing an initial openness to ELF. Moreover, by choosing it as one of the topic areas for their final oral exam, they have shown a continued interest in ELF. Considering the role ELF played in their teacher education in more detail, both TE1 and TE3 took one class with an explicit focus on ELF and TE2 attended two ELF-focused classes, one of which concerned itself with ELF in the teaching context. Other than in these few ELF-focused classes, ELF was mentioned either not at all or just as a side note in compulsory linguistic or didactic courses, according to the participants. For example, TE2 explained that in a class on ELT methodology the teacher mentioned ELF and offered the students an article to read, however, did not engage further with the topic. TE2 remembers the presentation of ELF in this particular class as follows: “so there is this concept but it still needs to be developed further it cannot be erm applied erm in teaching now because there is still there is not enough theoretical background yet [...] -not enough erm empirical studies” (TE2: 20). Further, while all participants had written at least one seminar paper within the field of ELF, only one participant (TE2) reported that she has recorded and transcribed ELF conversations, in which she then investigated turn-taking management. The seminar paper by TE1 evaluated schoolbooks in the business context in regard to ELF and TE3 looked at ELF in connection with intercultural competence. It can be inferred from the participants’ involvement with ELF at university that all seven participants were aware of ELF and had an in-depth understanding of its characteristics, thus, fulfilling the prerequisite for this study.

Looking at the teaching experiences of the participants, the years of classroom experience ranged from one year (TE2) to ten years (AR1, AR4) with two participants (one of each group, i.e. AR2, TE3) holding the middle field, both having taught at

secondary level for four years. Notably, the first year of teaching is usually a training year in Austria in which the new teacher is assigned a mentor teacher and one class per subject and it constitutes the last phase of the teacher education program. At the time of the interview, TE2 had just completed this training year. It is also worth mentioning that AR2 does not hold a formal teaching degree. At the time of the interviews, five participants (TE2, AR1, AR2, AR3, AR4) were working at an AHS. The remaining two participants (TE1, TE3) were employed at a BHS. Most participants taught at schools either in Vienna or in its vicinity. Only AR4's school is located in a town further away from the capital. Considering the age of the students they teach in more detail, AR1, AR3 and AR4 stated that they primarily, but not exclusively, teach lower secondary. AR2 reported that she started out teaching lower secondary level classes exclusively and then in her third and fourth year of teaching she also started teaching upper secondary classes. Moreover, in her third year of teaching, she was also assigned a first grade for the first time. Evidently, TE1 and TE3 only teach upper secondary classes, however, TE1 has taught lower secondary classes before while working at another school for half a year. TE2 was assigned a fifth grade class for her training year.

All in all, it can be seen that the participants in the AR group have been more extensively involved with academic ELF research, while the involvement of the participants in the TE group with ELF has been restricted to their teacher education. Looking at the years of classroom experience, the difference between the groups is less noticeable, since both groups include a teacher with four years of experience. Another notable difference emerges when the ages of the students are considered. Although all four AR participants reported that they primarily teach lower secondary, they have also taught older students. In comparison, the TE group has mainly taught older students, with the exception of TE1 and her brief employment at a lower secondary school. Having provided key information about the participants' background, the following subsection will present the data collection and

transcription process, the interview guide and the analysis which has been carried out.

3.3. Data collection, interview guide and qualitative analysis

Most of the interviews were held in summer 2019. The last interview (AR4) was conducted at the end of October in the school year 2019/20 due to availability issues.⁵ All interviews were conducted in English, however, participants were invited to switch to German whenever they wanted to. The setting of the interviews varied. Since the aim of the interviews was to gain insight into the participants' worlds (of teaching) and their perspectives, it was deemed advantageous to opt for a setting in which the participants would feel comfortable and relaxed enough to share their views. Therefore, the participants were allowed to choose the setting for their individual interview. In most cases, the interviews were recorded in the comfort of their own home. Only one interview (TE1) took place outside in a public park. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes, although the precise length of each interview was determined by the participants' desire to speak and to elaborate on the occurring topics. Notably, one interview (TE1) was considerably shorter than the rest (26 minutes). In retrospect, another setting for this interview might have been beneficial, resulting in a longer interview since the public setting might have impeded the participants' desire to elaborate on the interview topics.

The interview guide served as the main research instrument and can be found in the appendix of this paper. It was comprised of three sections. The first section was intended to gather information about the participants' teaching background. In particular, the questions inquired after the number of years they have been teaching and which age groups they mainly teach. The intention of the second section was to develop an understanding of their involvement with ELF at university either as a pre-service teacher or as an academic researcher. While the first question in this section,

⁵ In the original design of the study, the intention was to interview eight teachers (four participants per group). However, one participant (TE4) unfortunately withdrew due to a professional reorientation.

which elicited information on the first encounter with ELF, was the same for both groups, the following set of questions differed between the groups. This set of questions aimed to identify more closely the extent of the participants' personal academic involvement with ELF. Since the participants were selected based on their participation either in academic ELF research or in university courses on ELF, the questions in this set were tailored to the differing background. The remaining two questions of this section and their follow-up questions were the first "opinion questions" (Hughes 2012: 268). More specifically, these questions inquired about the participants' perception of the role of ELF for language teaching in general and their own teaching context.

The last and largest section of the guide included nine main questions and constituted the primary focus of the interviews. Seeking an in-depth, comprehensive understanding of the participants' views on the implications of integrating an ELF perspective into their teaching, these questions addressed their ELF-sensitive teaching practices, benefits they see and challenges they have met. Moreover, a particular research interest with four questions devoted to shedding light on the matter from various perspectives and in different contexts, was the participants' needs. In the end, participants were asked if they wanted to add anything and if there were any questions, they felt that should have been asked but that were not included in the interview guide. This offered the participants the opportunity to return to any topic they wished to further elaborate on and to add any topic which they considered relevant for the present research. Moreover, since the purpose of the interviews was to gain an insight into the participants' experiences and views, additional questions were asked during the interview, whenever I felt that this would generate a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives.

All interviews were conducted by me. During the recording of the interview, I tried to keep my contributions to a minimum to avoid influencing the participants' responses and to minimize any potential bias. All interviews were recorded with two devices, namely, a Zoom H4NPro Handy Recorder and a Samsung Smartphone using the

integrated voice recorder application. Once an interview was recorded, the transcription process began. All interviews were transcribed using the built-in transcription tool of the computer software MAXQDA (VERBI GmbH 2018) employing an adapted version of the VOICE transcription and spelling conventions (cf. VOICE Project 2007a, b). The transcription conventions were adapted considering the level of precision appropriate to achieve the aim of this study as well as taking the context of the study into account. As a result, some terms which are specific to the Austrian school context and which were also frequently used by participants were not translated but kept in their original German form. The closed list containing these terms can be found in the appendix. Evidently, the transcription process continued well beyond the recording of the last interview, with several iterations to achieve consistency and correctness in the transcripts. Subsequently, the transcripts were analyzed in MAXQDA employing a content analytical approach to the data (Dörnyei 2007, Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005). Thus, the most salient points in the interviews as well as recurring themes that emerged were coded. Additionally, each question of the interview guide received a code in order to display the structure of the interviews in the transcripts. The intended purpose of this was to help the researcher stay aware of the context and co-text of the coded segments. Once the initial coding was rounded off, second-level coding was launched seeking to organize the initial codes into more abstract categories (Dörnyei 2007: 252). The creative coding tool in MAXQDA helped to clarify the connections and relations between different categories. In addition, a range of other tools available in MAXQDA, such as the codeline tool, were used to visualize the data aiming at a deeper understanding. As typical for qualitative research, the coding of the data and the interpretation were not consecutive processes but rather iterative and synchronous in nature. Finally, overarching themes were identified and will be presented and discussed in the following section. To illustrate the most salient themes and to provide a more direct insight into participants' view, extracts from the interviews are included in this paper and are numbered to enable clear and simple referencing.

4. ELF-informed in-service teachers' views

As hoped, the analysis of the interviews yielded interesting insight into the participants' perspectives as well as their ELF-sensitive teaching practices and consequences thereof. In this chapter, the main themes which emerged in the analysis will be presented and discussed. The first focus will be on the participants' views on the role of ELF for their teaching and how their perception has changed over time (Section 4.1). After it has been established that all participants perceive ELF as relevant and beneficial for language teaching now, the focus will be shifted toward an account of their current ELF-sensitive teaching practices (Section 4.2). However, integrating an ELF perspective is not without its challenges, as will become evident in subsection 4.3. Finally, in an attempt to answer the second research question, the reported needs of the participants will be summarized. Ultimately, it will be argued that if ELF-informed teachers are to adapt their teaching to the needs of their learners in a globalized world, their needs have to be considered as well in order to achieve a successful integration of ELF into ELT.

4.1. The perceived relevance of ELF for ELT

In order to elicit participants' views on the relevance of ELF for teaching, the interview guide included two main questions and three optional follow-up questions. These questions aimed at retrieving information about the interviewees' perception at three different points in time, namely, as a student/ as an academic, when they first started teaching and now. Firstly, the participants' views on the role of ELF for ELT upon their first encounter with ELF at university will be examined, followed by a discussion of their views when they first started teaching at a secondary school, as well as an investigation of the relevance ELF holds for them personally. Afterwards, two more factors which purportedly influence the participants' perspective, namely, the age of the students and the mentor teacher during the training year, will be discussed.

Interestingly, not all participants were positively inclined toward ELF from the beginning on and did not see a connection with ELT immediately. As TE1 (18) reported, for example, when she first heard about ELF during her studies, she was rather skeptical of the concept. She attributed her initial skepticism to her struggle to properly grasp the concept. In a similar vein, AR1 admitted that “at the very very beginning erm I no I didn't spend a minute on thinking that ELF and teaching has anything erm erm anything to do with each other” (AR1: 16). Even upon starting teaching, AR1 declared that she “thought ELF doesn't have a doesn't have a place in the classroom at all” (AR1: 18). In contrast, AR3 perceived ELF as “a concept that made a lot of sense” (AR3: 22) and she “thought it was very relevant for teaching” (AR3: 22) already during her years working as an academic. Similarly, TE2 (36) said that learning about ELF gave her self-confidence and TE3's first thought was that “it's a good idea because that's what's I- what language is all about it's about communicating and getting your message across” (TE3: 26). Thus, TE3 expected it to be “what people have been doing for a long time” (TE3: 26), however, upon starting teaching, he found out that “that is not yet the reality in Austrian classrooms” (TE3: 26). What exactly the reality in Austrian classrooms currently looks like, especially in regard to ELF, will be carefully investigated in the subsequent pages, however, TE3 already foreshadowed the current situation quite accurately in his comment. Nevertheless, before looking into this further, the participants' opinions on the practical (ir)relevance of ELF when they first started teaching will be reviewed.

In fact, TE3 (28) himself and three other participants (TE1: 50, AR2: 18, AR3: 24) reported that when they first started teaching, they did not integrate an ELF perspective into their teaching at all. In the beginning of their teaching careers, surviving emerged as a keyword in their narratives. For example, AR3 remembered the beginning of her teaching career as a time where she was “so busy with erm my new role my new job [...] trying to survive” (AR3: 24). Similarly, AR2 recounted: “ELF didn't even cross my mind it was pure survival in the classroom” (AR2: 18). TE1, who saw herself still at the beginning stage of her teaching career, having had one and a

half year of classroom experience at the time of the interview, stated that she “just didn’t have the time really to focus on on such things” (TE1: 50).

However, even though integrating an ELF perspective was not a primary concern at the beginning of their teaching, the participants’ background in ELF was of personal relevance to them. For example, TE3 explained that initially he was “a bit overwhelmed with the workload so ELF was there but **at the back of my mind**” (TE3: 28). AR1 concurred by pointing out that ELF was “not at all [relevant] at the very beginning I mean it was **always in my background** erm and **in my mind**” (AR1: 18). AR4 also highlighted the influence of ELF on herself rather than directly on her teaching practices: “erm it was relevant because it was relevant p- it was of **personal relevance** because it was part of me er but apart from that and it might be shocking news now not at all” (AR4: 18). As can be deduced from these short extracts, at the beginning of their teaching careers, most participants perceived ELF as having an impact on them personally, and consequently, on them as teachers, rather than ELF having an influence on their teaching practices directly.

Investigating this further, AR4’s answer to the question if she felt she practiced ELF-sensitive teaching provides valuable insight:

Extract 1

no because it's ways it's ways too little it's it's there isn't much much there **it's just because I am who I am and because it's part of me** but that's why I'm talking about it that's why I try to make my students aware of it erm but it's not really it's not really part of my teaching like in in general it's once in a while here and once in a while there and having a different focus but erm there could be (ways) more than that (AR4: 52)

AR4 critically reflected on her teaching practices in extract 1, stressing again her perspective on the relevance of ELF for teaching. Remarkably, it appears that, in her view, she has integrated ELF into her identity rather than her teaching practices. Quite similar to AR4’s self-perception, AR3 (30) acknowledged that her knowledge of and involvement with ELF research has had an effect on her professional identity. Moreover, she also perceived this effect as having changed her in a positive way and that she would be a slightly different teacher if she had not been aware of ELF prior

to her teaching (AR3: 30). Another positive effect for her was a change in perspective concerning students' learning process and mistakes, helping her to adopt a more flexible perspective, liberating her from the grammar rules of ENL (AR3: 26). This liberating effect was also felt by in-service teachers in Cogo and Siqueira's study (2017) which was discussed in 2.2.1.

In contrast, other participants (AR1, AR2) reported a less favorable effect, an inner dilemma created by a tension between, as AR2 (18) vividly put it, the "little ELF researcher in [her] mind" and the "school teacher personality" (AR2: 18). Extract 2 and 3 show AR1's and AR2's reflection on this tension.

Extract 2

and then it was a bit schizophrenic for me there was **the academic in my in my person** and saying ah ja that is perfect ELF that you speak and it's so interesting and now I would like to have my recording device and I would like to transcribe you and and analyze you and at the same time **the teacher in me** saying ah that was a mistake and you need to correct it and improve it so yes a bit **schizophrenic** (AR1: 30)

Extract 3

having this ELF trained university background I you have these er you're kind of this hybrid teacher with these **two personalities** and one of them is your researcher being aware of your perpetuating all the stereotypes that you accuse being an ELF researcher but still you do it and you have to fit in and you have to use the coursebook and yeah so that was that (AR2: 6)

Comparing these extracts to the views of AR3 and AR4 who seemed to perceive their academic background in ELF research as an asset, a striking difference emerges. In extract 2 and 3, AR1 and AR2 described their unresolved inner conflict which appears to be clearly linked to the impact their own involvement with ELF in academia had on them personally and a perceived inadequacy of a symbiosis of this and their new role as English language teachers. This illustrates that having an in-depth understanding of ELF could also cause inner conflicts in teachers once they are faced with the expectations felt by them in the school context.

Interestingly, the other group did not mention an effect on them personally. The only participant of this group who expressed a similar concern about an inner conflict was

TE2, however, this will be discussed in detail toward the end of this subsection. For now, suffice it to say that her inner conflict seems to have been rather induced by her mentor teacher than by her involvement with ELF at university. One possible explanation for the simultaneous presence of two allegedly conflicting personalities in two participants of the AR group but in none of the TE group might be their more extensive participation in academic research and, by working in this domain, presumably, participating in ELF interactions and gathering direct, personal experience with lingua franca communicative encounters over the years while simultaneously engaging in a reflection on this language use in their own research. Another possible explanation, closely connected to the first one, is that participants of the AR group had developed professional (ELF) researcher identities before entering the school context permanently where they had to take on teacher identities. This might have led to participants experiencing the expectations and pressures from the school context more strongly. Subsequently, this change in their professional environment linked to different expectations might have prompted participants of the AR group to put a stronger focus in the interviews on the relevance of ELF for them personally.

Considering the present teaching context, participants appear to have developed a view on ELF as being relevant for them as teachers as well as for their teaching, even if this might not have been the case at their first encounter with ELF or when they first started teaching. However, most participants (AR1, AR2, AR3, TE1, TE3) pointed out that the age of the students is a factor which influences their perspective of how and to what extent ELF is relevant for a specific teaching situation.

For example, TE1 reported on her teaching experience at a lower secondary by stating that ELF was not relevant at all to either her or her students there. The focus was on trying to keep the subject as clear as possible so that “students don’t get confused with I don’t know an Indian English accent or something like that” (TE1: 20). As far as first-graders are concerned, AR2 (14) concurred with TE1, stressing the responsibility she felt. In comparison, TE1 continued by pointing out that “ELF is rather a topic”

(TE1: 20) at her current school, an upper secondary vocational school. However, even though she stated that there are more listening exercises in the schoolbooks featuring nonnative English speakers than in lower secondary and more than during her schooldays, she remarked that “there’s not really much of it even in erm upper secondary now” (TE1: 20).

TE3, who also currently teaches at an upper secondary school, differentiated even between the first two years (i.e. fifth- and sixth-grade) where he takes on a more prescriptive approach and older, more mature students who have “the mental capacity to like distinguish between er what is asked of them in a purely academic context in school and what they’ll actually need in the outside world” (TE3: 28). He explained this differentiation by the following conflict which emerged due to an incompatibility of Austrian language policies and ELF-sensitive teaching practices:

Extract 4

but it's difficult because er you tell them like that's okay you can pronounce it like that people will know what you mean that's also okay if you use this tense or that tense but then again I also had to or felt I had to tell them well that's actually incorrect like what you're doing you'd have to use I don't know present progressive for instance whereas present simple as you just did in that case is absolutely fine everyone knows what you mean but in a strictly prescriptive er context that is that's incorrect and the problem is that at the er with the Schularbeiten with the exams that's what I have to grade that's what I have to assess like so that was als- that was always a bit confusing (TE3: 28)

This utterance reflects a tension similar to the one reported by Jenkins (2007: 225): “[i]t seems, then, that there was a tension between these teachers’ commitment to their students’ NS-dependent success in *practice* and their positive views of [...] ELF in *theory* [original emphasis]”. Since the native speaker orientation in ELT is still predominant in Austria, it is left to the teachers to reconcile their awareness of ELF and the current global role of English with the requirements of the Austrian school system. This results in teachers feeling a tension between two forces pulling in seemingly opposite direction, as experienced by TE3.

AR1 voiced a similar concern focusing more on the students’ understanding of themselves as learners and, as they grow up, also as users of the language.

Extract 5

I had the feeling that as as maybe you also need erm to grow up before you see that you are not a learner anymore but you use the language I think if you are ten eleven twelve that you don't see that you don't have the perspective that English really helps you in the world that you can talk to other people from other countries [...] but as soon as they grow up I have the feeling that erm they they kind of try to separate it so at school we learn it so it has to be perfect you need to have the third person s and you need to to use the the the grammar correctly and so on and so on and you also need to pronounce it perfectly but at the same time they see okay what I learn here I can use I can really use and then ah it makes sense that people from different countries they learn it in a different way they use it differently and still we understand each other so then it seems to make sense for them that was my experience at least (AR1: 18)

In this extract, AR1 casted doubt on the students' perspective on ELF as having any relevance for them. In a similar vein, answering the question if she mentioned the term ELF explicitly to her students, AR2 also stated that the students' ages influence the integration of an ELF perspective in her teaching and expressed doubt about younger students' interest in ELF, at least in the terminology.

Extract 6

I think I did once but it's er this was this lesson where nobody was interested so erm at least with the age group that was Unterstufe er I mean [...] I probably would have worked differently er so if you have an eighth grade and er you've got a small group er and you've got the right setting I think you could do a lesson on this yeah but in Unterstufe I basically gave up yeah erm so erm like terminology is not something that they find very interesting @ I I think I used the term and I told them er but I didn't ha- I mean this was just one lesson yeah but erm I didn't have the feeling they were very interested yeah okay (AR2: 52)

It can be seen that the age of the students figures quite prominently in teachers' consideration of the relevance of ELF for a specific teaching situation. Participants seem to believe that an ELF perspective is more relevant when teaching older students. This difference is often explained by referring to students' ability to grasp the concept of ELF and differentiate between the use of the language outside of the school context and the learning of the language in school.

One factor which affected two participants' (AR1, TE2) perspectives on the relevance of ELF for them personally was their mentor teacher for the training year. In Austria,

every new teacher gets assigned to a mentor teacher during their training year who is supposed to offer support and guidance to them. At the end of the training year, the mentor teacher assesses the performance of the new teacher in a final evaluation which can then be used to apply for a teaching position (BMBWF 2019). At the time of the interview, TE2 had just completed her training year. She reported that her (British native speaker) mentor teacher had a significant influence on her accent. The significance of this influence can be seen in extract 7.

Extract 7

so when he observed me he said wow erm you sound you almost sound like a native speaker I mean it's American but I mean British would be better but still you sound American like so that's fine [...] so I was being evaluated on the basis of me sounding like a native speaker yeah now of course what happened I tried really hard to sound like a native speaker because of course I wanted to have a good grade in the end[...] again I tried really hard to yeah to get rid of my Austrian accent whenever talking or speaking English and yeah I mean of course then I had this inner conflict kind of like okay there's the ELF concept which I think is progressive and a good thing but on the other hand you know so there's this tension going on erm and yeah in in the end yeah to be honest I decided to to sound American like because yeah I needed this good report @ erm yeah (TE2: 49)

Thereby, TE2 revealed an inner conflict similar to the “linguistic schizophrenia” (Jenkins: 2007: 214) referred to by a participant in Jenkins’ study. However, it appears that this inner conflict was not necessarily founded in an ambivalence in attitude toward her own accent. Instead, this conflict in her seems to have emerged due to external pressure, namely, the assessment of her teaching competence (and, apparently, near-native linguistic competence) by her mentor teacher.

In order to answer the second part of the first research question, participants were asked at several points in the interview about the benefits of ELF-sensitive teaching practices they see for them and for their students. First of all, all participants displayed a positive attitude toward ELF-sensitive teaching practices and said that they see benefits both for them and their students. After a short account of the reported benefits for themselves as teachers, the benefits they see for their students will be summarized.

Considering the benefits of ELF-sensitive teaching practices for teachers, AR4 reported, for example, that she believed she gains “happier students” (AR4: 56). In comparison, AR1 was also quite convinced of the benefits for her personally adding that she feels like she “also learn[s] something from them” (AR1: 78) because she does not see “the imperfect learner in [her] students but but somebody who brings something with him or her” (AR1: 78). What is noticeable in this remark is that she described a shift in perspective initiated by her knowledge of ELF and resulting in a benefit for her as teacher. This indicates that the inner tension she mentioned in extract 2 might only be present in connection with certain aspects of language teaching such as the correction of mistakes. Similarly, AR3 also listed a change in attitude as a personal benefit, as previously mentioned. To reiterate, AR3 viewed the notion of ELF as “liberating” (AR3: 26) for her as a teacher, forming her into a “more open more flexible” teacher (AR3: 102). Moreover, another benefit for her is that she has “a goal in mind which is which is different from erm sort of teaching English as the language” (AR3: 102).

In a similar vein, after recounting an uncomfortable experience from her own school days, TE2 (44) pointed out that an awareness of ELF would help teachers become more open and forgiving to nonnative accents, thus, not focusing solely on “English as the language” (AR3: 102), in the sense as it is often understood in ELT context, namely, English as in ENL. AR2 made a similar remark concerning correction in the classroom. In her opinion, one of the benefits of her awareness of ELF is that she thinks more about what and how she corrects, especially in Oberstufe, emphasizing again the age factor.

Extract 8

erm yes er because I I think it's I mean this is reality yeah er and the benefit for me is definitely that it makes me think more about what I correct and how I correct it erm and I think especially in the in Oberstufe yeah (AR2: 56)

This heightened critical awareness of what and how to correct in the English language classroom can also benefit students, according to the participants (AR2: 56, TE2: 44, TE3: 76). TE3 shared an insightful observation about classroom correction which is

displayed in extract 9. In particular, he explained that when focusing on successful communication and not on accuracy when correcting students, it is easier for them to see why something is a mistake.

Extract 9

it's easier to understand why something is a mistake because I just tell them no one knows what you're talking about like no one understands what you mean and students see and understand yeah and that's something I need to work on so it's easier for them to understand er why that just didn't work out and that speaking in that communicative situation whereas when we purely focus on rules sometimes students don't get why this and that is now okay or not okay (TE3: 76)

After asking for a repetition of the question, he continues his thought in the next turn.

Extract 10

yeah exactly exactly so erm that's where you could tell them like it's about understanding each other and sometimes students don't see why they should like stick to the rules as they're asked to do (TE3: 78)

Another valuable benefit for students is that an understanding of ELF can support them in becoming self-confident users of English by taking away their fear of using the language and making mistakes (AR1: 80, AR3: 38, TE3: 46) and, instead, helping them see the language as a tool and as a resource (AR4: 56)

All in all, it can be said that the participants of this study share a view on ELF as being relevant and beneficial to them, their students and their teaching, both in overt and covert ways. Moreover, various points of tension have been identified. Nonetheless, participants have found ways to integrate an ELF perspective into their language teaching. These will be reviewed in the following subsection.

4.2. Participants' ELF-sensitive teaching practices

Having discussed the relevance and benefits of integrating an ELF perspective into language teaching, as experienced and reported on by the participants, the following subsection will focus on how they currently realize such an integration. As the previous subsection has demonstrated, all participants agree on the relevance and benefits of ELF for language teaching in general. Next, it will be investigated for which skill an ELF perspective is the most relevant according to the participants' views and,

further, how participants currently include an ELF perspective in their teaching practices.

Most participants (AR1, AR2, AR3, AR4, TE2) stated that they believe integrating an ELF perspective is the most relevant in teaching when students develop their speaking skills and one participant (TE1) did not explicitly mention for which skill she considered an ELF perspective the most relevant. The seventh participant (TE3) stressed the importance of developing an intercultural competence in students. Upon closer investigation of their stated reasons for their respective views, it becomes clear that there is a general consensus among the participants that including an ELF perspective is especially relevant when it comes to developing their students' oral communications skills and teaching them how to deal with cultural diversity in interactions, as can be seen in the following extracts in which TE2 and TE3 explained the relevance of an ELF perspective for spoken conversations.

Extract 11

erm when it comes to to talking mainly when it comes to **communicating with other people from different cultures** yeah erm because erm how do I say this right now erm mmh I think in order to have a successful communication with other people erm students need to be or my students they shou- I want them to be tolerant you know and open-minded (TE2: 55)

Extract 12

that's where a lot of er miscommunication takes place like when I have a certain image that is usually like in most cases wr- not right like a false image in my ha- head about erm what how speaker of a foreign culture erm behaves and interacts and then due to globalization that is in ninety-nine percent of the cases not the case and er I think that's where the relevance er is yeah @ (TE3: 38)

Moreover, participants explained that the relevance of ELF when teaching speaking also lies in the more spontaneous, less scripted character of spoken conversation, making it the more "ELF prone setting" (AR2: 26) in which speakers may also employ creativity, as pointed out by AR4 (22) who realized this through her own research. The emphasis on spoken communication is also evident in ELF research by other scholars, as is the creativity employed by ELF speakers to adapt the language to their needs (e.g. Pitzl 2018). In addition, participants (AR1, AR3) believed that students are

more likely to use English in spoken communication since "more communication takes place on the spoken level" (AR1: 36).

Investigating how these teachers currently integrate an ELF perspective into their teaching of students' oral skills and also other language skills, it can be seen that some suggestions which have been proposed in ELF literature have been taken up in practice by these teachers. The following paragraphs will describe teachers' current ELF-sensitive teaching practices by first looking at their approach to language in the classroom on a general level. Proceeding to more specific teaching practices, the most notable ones will be discussed. In particular, participants' integration of communicative strategies will be illustrated, followed by their error correction in the classroom. As will become evident, both of these teaching practices have been mentioned and elaborated on by the majority of the participants. Afterwards, at the end of this subsection, a third ELF-sensitive teaching practice will be described, namely, the reflection on language and language use.

In general, AR3 explained that she does not see ELF as something that she teaches in a predetermined, time-restricted sequence in her lesson but rather as something which is "always there to some degree" (AR3: 32) and which she always tries to have in mind, at least in the background. This is in line with her previously discussed perception that ELF is primarily relevant to her personally and does not change her teaching practices directly. Further, she described the influence on her teaching as shifts in foci, for example, putting more or less emphasis on accuracy for lesson sequences or activities. Hence, other aspects of her teaching which are influenced by her ELF background are grammar and pronunciation. Concerning these areas, AR3 reported that she either leaves out or does not stress certain chapters of grammar and pronunciation too much (AR3: 32). This appears to exemplify what has often been addressed in literature, namely, that the relevance of ELF (research) for ELT is not to replace current ELT practices but rather to inform them about priorities (e.g. Seidlhofer 2011). Another participant (AR2: 22) revealed that she sees the influence of ELF not so much in what she prepares, as she reportedly closely followed the

textbook, but rather in how she implements things. Thus, presumably using the textbook, as Seidlhofer (2015: 26) suggested, “as a *prompt* rather than a *script* [emphasis in original]”.

Another suggestion for an ELF-sensitive teaching practice, which has been frequently highlighted by researchers (e.g. Vettorel & Lopriore 2013), is the explicit teaching of communicative strategies to students to properly equip them for international and intercultural communicative encounters. This is also taken up in practice by the ELF-informed teachers who participated in the present study. For example, AR1 (38) sets an example for her students by practicing code-switching in the classroom, thus, making use of her multilingual resources. Moreover, AR1 (72) as well as TE1 (42, 60) and AR4 (32) encourage their students to rephrase their ideas if they are missing a word, as explained by AR1 in the following extract:

Extract 13

I always tell them if you don't know a word th- the one word you want to use try to to **use different words** so that you don't have to stop your conversation [...] maybe use yes I always say use simpler words if you know don't know this one word try to describe it use other words and so that you keep the flow going and that you communicate [...] I actually never have thought about it so erm in detail erm but erm yes I try to maybe I try to teach them strategies to erm en- strategies to make them feel like a user (AR1: 72)

What is interesting in this extract is AR1's description of how she teaches students communicative strategies, while, at the same time, remarking that she “actually never [has] thought about it so erm in detail”. It could be inferred that the tension she referred to in extract 2 does not impinge upon this more practical aspect of her language teaching. This interference could be made on the basis of her remark that she has not reflected on this aspect before, possibly, there has never been a situation which forced her to reconsider. This disparity between her perception of ELF in the school context and her actual teaching practices reminds of the unpredictability of teachers' actions based on their stance with regard to ELF found in Dewey's (2012) study.

Rephrasing thoughts to make oneself understood was the communicative strategy most frequently mentioned. Moreover, AR4 disclosed that she integrates communication strategies also in her vocabulary teaching by creating “different vocabulary games where it’s mostly about erm reformulating ideas” (AR4: 20). Another way in which AR4 transferred the knowledge she had gained through her ELF research to her teaching was a focus on prefixes and their varying productivity. Concerning this topic, AR4 explained that she experienced a tension between her knowledge of the potential functional value of linguistic resources, such as the prefix *un-*, and the requirements of the Austrian school system to teach and assess children according to an either British or American native speaker norm. This tension appears to be quite similar in nature to the one experienced by TE3 in extract 4. Dewey recognized such a tension also in his participants and explains this with the “duality inherent in teachers’ professional responsibilities” (Dewey 2012: 167). In particular, teachers are expected to meet their learners’ needs while simultaneously meeting institutional expectations which are often native speaker oriented (Dewey 2012: 167).

Besides the inclusion of communication strategies, another aspect of the participants’ language teaching which was influenced by their ELF background is their way of correcting students. Participants (AR1: 22, 74, AR2: 48, AR3: 92, AR4: 34, TE2: 53) pointed out that when practicing speaking skills in class and generally in speaking situations, they are careful about what and how they correct their students. In fact, most of the participants mentioned that they try to keep their corrections of pronunciation and grammatical aspects in their students’ utterances to a minimum, emphasizing the importance of intelligibility and their desire to encourage students to use the language.

In contrast, AR1 (50) stresses that when it comes to text writing, she corrects each and every mistake. She justified her detailed corrections of students’ texts as follows:

Extract 14

because the the writing thing is that there I really **correct everything** and it is also very important for me but apart from also in writing for the first

of all I'm very happy when they use the language when they try out new structures that is the written and the the the spoken form erm in written I in the written form I I always correct things er to make them also see because they ca- can come back to it if they go back to a text they have written at the beginning of the year and I don't I want to see I ma- I want to have them see what they could do differently that is why I correct everything erm (AR1: 50)

While still expressing her delight in students' use of the language, the extent of corrective feedback she provides the students with drastically differs between these two modes, according to her. She explained this with the more permanent character of written texts, which students can use as a reference for future language learning. Further, this appears to be connected to an aspect of the written mode mentioned by AR2 (26), namely, that accountability of a language user for any non-ENL forms increases once the words are written down.

In comparison, other participants (AR3: 32, AR4: 34, TE2: 53) mentioned that they have adapted their corrections of students' written texts putting less emphasis on accuracy alone and also considering other aspects such as the structure of a text. AR4 elaborated on her way of correcting students' writings in the following extract:

Extract 15

in written texts erm if you when teaching and students hand in a text you decide yourselves we do have these <L1de> GERS {CEFR} </L1de> scales where you need to erm you need to use different categories when marking your essays or your texts but you can still choose for example not to er look at accuracy er when you get their text for the first time but on actually how the text is structured how they manage to to accomplish the tasks that they are set erm and focus on that and erm like try to to help them build up their confidence in actually manage to do their tasks [...] you choose yourself what you want to give feedback on and I feel like if you if if your feedback (recoilingly) focuses on on the tasks and erm on how they actually accomplish their tasks erm then they then they gain more confidence in actually using the language whereas I think if I would be if I would focus only on accuracy and say that doesn't work you have to use an s here and you have to use that that would not be too good for actually being motivated (AR4: 34)

In this extract, it becomes evident that AR4 perceived a shift in foci for corrections of written texts as beneficial for students. As AR4 explained, this benefit is that students

gain confidence when they actually have a chance to use the language instead of having accuracy mistakes corrected all the time.

Another notable aspect of their language teaching which was mentioned by most participants in some form or another, is their encouragement of the reflection on language and language use. For example, returning to communicative strategies, AR3 (36) mentioned that she includes them in the classroom by raising students' awareness to strategies they use themselves, thus, encouraging them to reflect on their own language use. Additionally, AR3 (70, 88) as well as AR4 (30) talked about how they use their students' experiences outside the classroom, such as holidays and video games, as resources and opportunities for reflections on language within the classroom, like the teachers in Vettorel's study (2015).

Extract 16

erm again trying to relate to something that is sort of (I don't know) in the book or they talk about usually (it helps) when they talk about their holidays and they tell me they've been to I don't know er Spain Greece wherever erm and erm sort of I I try to elicit as well that they talk to someone in English and then I make them aware that hey English is not your mother tongue but you did a good job and you talked to this girl or boy in in English who I don't know as a mother tongue different mother tongue and then I make them aware of of of this being a different kind of English I call it ELF I say this once I know they forget it erm but I try to sort of er ex- ex- keep on mentioning that in in simple terms yeah (AR3: 70)

Extract 17

but is spoken everywhere and I I ask them when you go on holiday or when er when they tell me about holidays which language did you actually speak erm and I ask them how did you feel could you understand those persons speaking and was it difficult for you to understand them and how did you manage speaking I I try to yes build up some kind of awareness for the fact that they as students are already er part of English as a lingua franca communications because they travel to where ever they go on holidays but they travel to different European countries for example and of course they speak English to people over there and they're happy and yeah (AR4: 30)

TE3 (30) remarked that he critically evaluates cultural aspects in textbooks with his students discussing concepts such as stereotypes, culture and interculturality. He reasoned that this is the area in which he can integrate an ELF perspective most

effectively by phrasing his intention as follows: “I don't want er to teach future tourists I want to teach future users of English” (TE3: 30).

To summarize this subsection, it can be said that teachers have found ways to integrate an ELF perspective into their language teaching. Notably, all of the ELF-sensitive teaching practices mentioned by the participants can also be found as suggestions in ELF literature, as was discussed in subsection 2.3. Next, challenges these teachers have faced due to their practices will be examined.

4.3. Challenges for an ELF perspective in ELT

As the previous subsection illustrated, participants have found some ways in which they could transfer their understanding of ELF into their teaching practices. However, there are major obstacles which teachers who wish to adapt their teaching have to face, some of which have already been briefly disclosed. The following subsection will consider the challenges participants have met in their attempts to integrate an ELF perspective in their teaching in more detail. At first, the participants' views on the influence of current language policy documents, more specifically, the CEFR and the curriculum will be investigated as well as their understanding of the effect of the recently introduced *Zentralmatura* in Austria. Secondly, the recurrent theme of a lack of acceptance by everyone involved in language education will be discussed. Another theme that emerged as a challenge was the complexity of the concept and the students' struggle to properly grasp it. Lastly, the lack of material which hinders the integration of an ELF perspective will be given some consideration.

To elicit the participants' view on current language policies, participants were asked about their views on the link between the CEFR as well as the Austrian curriculum and an ELF perspective in the classroom. Moreover, the participants were encouraged to comment on the effect of the recently introduced *Zentralmatura* in Austria on ELF-sensitive teaching practices. Concerning the CEFR, while AR1 (38) and AR4 (34) (see extract 15) pointed out a positive effect of the CEFR, others questioned its suitability and criticized its native speaker orientation. As to the curriculum,

several participants perceived the rather vague and partly contradicting wording in the curriculum concerning the role of English in the world and other issues as problematic. Lastly, there appeared to be a general consensus among the participants on a limiting effect of the *Zentralmatura* on the potential of integrating an ELF perspective.

As could be seen in extract 15 (AR4: 34), one benefit of the CEFR and its rating scales for AR4 is that it encourages teachers to shift their focus when correcting students' texts so as to avoid focusing solely on accuracy mistakes. AR1 agreed on the benefit of the CEFR thinking that, while continuing to correct all accuracy mistakes in texts, "the language use values more now" (AR1: 38). In comparison, while, on the one hand, appreciating the CEFR, AR2 questioned the suitability of the CEFR for English at the same time:

Extract 18

I think it's in a very it's a good document it's immensely important and I think it helps a lot but erm the question I'm asking myself is whether you can s- have the same whether English or ELF is still a foreign language as all the other foreign languages whether it makes sense to have the same framework and use it for French and Spanish and you name it all the traditional foreign languages that you usually learn to communicate with native speakers and English which is kind of outside this framework (AR2: 40)

The concern raised by AR2 in this extract has also been voiced by other ELF researchers (e.g. Seidlhofer 2011). Moreover, the same criticism could also be applied to the Austrian curriculum which does not differentiate between English and other modern foreign language, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Talking about the CEFR more generally, TE1 criticized it because, in her opinion, it prevents teachers "from erm using ELF in our classrooms or for accepting other types of English" (TE1: 44). While showing an awareness of the publication of a revised version of the CEFR and its elimination of the term 'native speaker' and the like, TE2 declared that one "could still see that this ideal is being implied" (TE2: 79). Moreover, she believed that if teachers would strictly adhere to the CEFR and its guidelines in their lesson planning

and assessment, it would “certainly limit the possible incorporation of ELF concepts” (TE2: 79).

As far as the curriculum is concerned, AR1 (60), AR2 (40) and TE3 (30) criticized its inconsistent wording and guidelines as well as its lack of comprehension of some key concepts. AR2 has adopted a critical stance on the Austrian curriculum since her first reading which she conveyed in extract 19 below.

Extract 19

if I remember correctly my initial impression was one of being they're trying to integrate an ELF perspective and they're trying to reflect what's going on but you just get the buzz words in the introduction but then when it comes to what the curriculum actually asks you to teach then it's still very traditional (AR2: 40)

However, it is noteworthy that the influence of the documents on the participants' teaching practices do not appear to be either self-evident nor very noticeable. For example, TE2 explicitly mentioned that in her one year of teaching, “the CEFR has never been mentioned” (TE2: 79). Moreover, AR1 suggested these documents could be seen as adaptable to an ELF perspective:

Extract 20

if you see it in a flexible way I think there's there's a lot of room for for ELF in all these frameworks and and regulations because actually the aim is isn't the aim of everything of teaching and of EL- using or of ELF the use of the language (AR1: 58)

AR3 sums up this sentiment in a nutshell by stating: “I teach people I don't teach documents” (AR3: 72).

Thus, the documents might not influence the participants' teaching directly and might not be taken into consideration for each lesson they are planning, however, the influence of these documents on language teaching are evident in the design of textbooks as well as in what and how the students' language skills are tested in the *Zentralmatura*. Therefore, participants were also encouraged to comment on the effect of the *Zentralmatura* on their teaching practices and the possibility of integrating an ELF perspective in teaching. All participants agreed on a limiting effect

of the *Zentralmatura*, stressing the pressure of teaching to the test, thus, leaving little room for an ELF perspective.

More specifically, AR1 expressed her discontent with the feeling of having to teach to the test, concerning, in particular, the test formats.

Extract 21

erm so I think that the that especially with the new er Matura I have the feeling that that a lot of erm focus is on preparing them fo- for the special format [...] so that the real the use the using of the language kind of is getting lost in a way (AR1: 82)

AR2 (44) and AR3 (76) expressed a similar sentiment concerning the “checklist [...] [of] test formats erm and text types” (AR3: 76) needed for the *Zentralmatura*. Moreover, AR2 criticized that

Extract 22

it standardizes things very very very much and it doesn't r- leave or hardly leaves any room erm for the teachers to to bring in their own interests but also students' own interests... I think that really is a tough job reconciling an ELF approach with the *Zentralmatura* (AR2: 42)

TE2 (81) agreed with AR2 stressing the limitations on teachers' creativity. In a similar vein, TE3 pointed out that another negative effect of the *Zentralmatura* is not only that it standardizes things and takes a prescriptive stance on language, but also that due to this focus and the required familiarity with the test formats, students are not open to things which are not tested in the *Zentralmatura*.

Extract 23

a very negative one b- because it got even more prescriptive it got the focus is now even more on erm on rules on right and wrong on black and white and because it doesn't matter really anymore what you teach outside of teaching to the test doesn't really matter anymore like all the books we read all the cultural aspects we look at these just evaporate into thin air once i- we get to the er *Zentralmatura* and the students know [...] so things you do outside of this very narrow framework that's just I wouldn't say pointless but next to pointless and the students know so they're not even accepting things outside of the box anymore (TE3: 62)

TE3's comment mirrors Ranta's (2010: 167) finding of students' awareness of what they will be tested on and their appreciation for being properly prepared for taking the final exam. Furthermore, AR3 (74) identified the students' ages as having an

impact on the extent of the influence of the *Zentralmatura* on teaching, also pointing out the responsibility teachers hold in preparing their students appropriately for this final leaving exam.

Extract 24

the closer erm you come to erm <L1de> achte Klasse {eighth grade}
</L1de> er the more erm influence of course it it has on on your teaching
it must have because it's your job to prepare them (AR3: 74)

Consequently, the responsibility teachers feel they have toward their students which manifests in a perceived obligation to teach ENL norms is further reinforced by the test requirements of the *Zentralmatura*. This is also evident in TE3's remark who stressed the importance of the native speaker norm for the exams by stating that "we need to keep all the rules at the back of our head otherwise people will fail the exams that's the reality" (TE3: 64). AR4 also comments on this, echoing TE2's, TE3's and AR2's criticism of the *Zentralmatura* for reinforcing an ENL orientation in ELT and dismissing all other foci as irrelevant.

Extract 25

as a teacher you have to prepare your students for that it's your
obligation and if you do not stick to ENL rules in teaching and if you do
not force the third person s into them they will actually not get that good
results and that's not what they want that's not what their parents want
and that's of course not what you as a teacher want because it all falls
back on you [...] **there's very little room left for what you like to do** (AR4:
18)

Thus, it appears that, "even though nobody wanted that and it was al- always proclaimed from the top we're not teaching to the tests" (AR4: 18), the *Zentralmatura* with its requirements and guidelines drastically impacts teachers' decisions on what they teach as well as students' desire of what to be taught. This prevalence of the native speaker orientation evident in the *Zentralmatura*, can also be seen in teachers', students' and parents' expectations of English language teachers and English language teaching.

Concerning colleagues' awareness and acceptance of ELF, AR1 (86), AR2 (70) and TE3 (26, 84) noticed a difference between younger and older teachers. In extract 26 and 27, AR1 and AR2 talked about older teachers who had neither heard about ELF in

their teacher education nor had been involved with ELF on an academic level, thus, seem to have very little understanding of what ELF is and what it is not. Moreover, AR1 and AR2 perceived an unwillingness in older, more experienced teachers to adapt their teaching.

Extract 26

maybe that's the reason why so many teachers maybe erm are very erm hh <L1de> zögerlich {reluctant} </L1de> when it comes to to the idea of International English and ELF because they are afraid first of all their work is useless more or less because you know everybody speaks English erm and erm so you don't need th- the teacher who who is educated and has studied the the topic [...] I think the teachers have are afraid that the level of English erm goes down (AR1: 86)

Extract 27

you still have lots of teachers who work who studied at a time when ELF didn't even exist yeah and I think that's that's probably one of the challenges to reach out to them and to make them er know about the concept and then be willing to invest work in this because that's basically what it means yeah so if you have to change your way of teaching and prepare new materials it's it's a question of time and erm being willing to do extra work for something that you probably not convinced of in their case yeah (AR2: 70)

In extract 26, AR1 repeated some of the concerns about and misconceptions of ELF which are often voiced by both linguists and lay people (see Seidlhofer 2006). The observation by these three participants that younger teachers are more open to the notion of ELF could be indicating that “what is done at university concerning ELF finds its way into the classroom” (TE3: 84), thus, that things are changing (AR1: 44). As discussed in section 2.2.1., Vettorel (2015) also observed that teachers’ attitudes appear to gradually change in a favorable direction.

However, it appears that at least some schools still have to undergo a lot of change in order to achieve an awareness of ELF among the collective of (English) teachers, as becomes evident in AR2’s remark.

Extract 28

I mean you still got the colleagues where you have to convince them that American English is also proper English so we're miles away from from ELF yeah (AR2: 46)

Participants (AR1, TE2) also appear to feel a pressure on them from colleagues and students to fulfil the idealized image of the native speaker to be considered competent both in the language and as an English language teacher.

Extract 29

teachers themselves especially the older ones but also younger ones they have this perspective or many of them not all or I had the feeling they had this perspective erm English must be perfect you have to have an either British or American accent and you as a teacher of course know all the words that exist and you know everything and also the students kind of or a lot of students have this attitude that you have to be near native-like you hav- as a teacher but also themselves erm (AR1: 18)

Extract 30

of course I erm you adjust to this you know erm in order to be accepted by others probably also erm in order to be regarded as being competent and erm from from your colleagues' perspective but also from the students' perspective you know (TE2: 51)

However, this expectation of a native-like competence of the language teacher seems to be largely restricted to the accent and hardly concerned with the actual teaching practices of a teacher. As AR4 responded as follows to the question if she had been criticized by her colleagues because of her teaching practices:

Extract 31

no no n- not at all I think that's also because erm as a colleague you don't know too much about what they others actually do @@ (AR4: 48)

AR1's experience is quite similar.

Extract 32

I haven't talked too much about what I really what really goes on in my classroom because we still are erm **a lonesome rider in the classroom** (AR1: 44)

What is interesting about extracts 28 to 32 is that participants perceived the lack of acceptance of ELF by their colleagues in a negative light and as a challenge. However, at least two of the participants, have never actually been criticized by their colleagues based on their teaching practices.

Nevertheless, it is notable that while their teaching practices might not have been criticized by colleagues, they indeed have been criticized by students and parents. More specifically, AR1 once had to defend her way of correcting students' utterances

to one of her students, remarking that the student did not seem open-minded to other dialects, not even in the local language.

Extract 33

sometimes you have to erm defend that I have to defend that I don't erm correct too many mistakes in speaking erm talking to students themselves like I had some well one specific student erm who I had endless discussions about where erm what is correct and what's not correct and how to use it and he was not even erm he didn't even want to hear about different dialects then I ha- I gave example in German and that was like wow so yeah a bit strange for me but still erm (AR1: 42)

In comparison, in AR4's case, parents have criticized her way of correcting texts taking issue with the fact that she does not always check texts for accuracy but rather shifts foci (see extract 15 on how and why she shifts foci in her corrections).

Extract 34

I'm also criticized for that you have to be you always have to know which parents are behind each children because they do diff- they want different because they also then come back with a text and say there's your signature beneath it but you did not see that mistake and you did not see that mistake (AR4: 46)

Interestingly, AR4 addressed in this extract a challenge which other teachers have experienced as well, namely, that some parents still hold a quite normative view on language which they, presumably, pass on to their children and which parents seem to expect the teachers to hold as well. This view is especially evident in their reported willingness to pay privately for a native speaker in school (AR4: 18). An apparently important factor affecting parents' view on English is whether or not they use it themselves, as pointed out by AR1 and also discussed by AR4 (18).

Extract 35

but also t- talking to parents because they're still well there are some people especially people who yeah many haven't heard about ELF and many use erm English in their daily erm contexts so for them it's perfectly fine if they really don't care because they use it themselves but they are some who say English is so important and erm you need to learn it perfectly and this and that and this and that and then I sit and I listen and I nod and I nod and try to explain that erm I want to have confident users yeah (AR1: 42)

As TE2 (61) remarked, "many teachers nowadays still assume that the native speaker ideal is the one that students should aspire to", thus, fulfilling parents' expectations.

However, according to the participants' answers, it is not only teachers and parents, so the older generation, who still believe in the "absolute glorious idea of the English native speaker" (AR4: 18) but also some students themselves. TE3 perceived this as follows.

Extract 36

and sometimes sometimes it's not only the er the school system as it is now that is er obstructing ELF it's also sometimes like the students because they feel like they sometimes I have the feeling they want to know like the proper er so to speak the proper English and erm because they need it er later on and people always say that's where I'm wrong or will say that's where I'm wrong at least for the next er years and er the way it is now it's you can teach it but always erm telling them like that is ELF and that is prescriptive native speaker English (TE3: 30)

Furthermore, AR3 (58) and TE2 (51) mentioned that students can be quite judgmental when it comes to teachers' or students' accents, regarding an Austrian accent as "bad" (TE2: 51) (cf. Jenkins 2007). Hence, TE2 summarized the challenge of acceptance as following:

Extract 37

I just think it's it's really difficult to implement ELF in teaching [...] this whole mindset would have to be changed (TE2: 85)

Thus, it seems that the orientation toward the (elusive) idealized native speaker is still quite predominant in Austrian schools.

Another challenge the participants have faced is the complexity of the concept itself and also the complex relation between what is asked of students at school and what they need for successful ELF communicative encounters.

Both AR1 and AR4 believed that some students struggle grasping and relating to the notion of ELF because it is too abstract for them and not part of their world.

Extract 38

erm as I said some students they have contact to other people who use English and are from different cultures or countries erm but a lot of them simply don't so for them the thing the idea that you use it later on in their life is a very abstract one (AR1: 54)

Extract 39

they can't cannot grasp the erm like the extent and also not the importance because they are at school (AR4: 20)

In addition, AR2 also commented on students' struggle to grasp basic linguistic concepts, concluding that

Extract 40

they need to know what it means erm to to adapt in a language use before you can talk with them about adapting their language to an ELF setting in a way (AR2: 56)

The complexity of the concept of ELF (and other related linguistic concepts) seems to pose a considerable challenge to the integration of an ELF perspective into language teaching. Moreover, TE1 (18) experienced the same struggle when she first encountered ELF.

Looking at a different complex issue relating to the notion of ELF and its experienced incompatibility with current language teaching practices, TE3 talked about the challenge of making students understand the difference between the demands of the school context and the demands of ELF communication, telling them “that’s okay but it’s also not okay” (TE3: 48).

Extract 41

but it's difficult because er you tell them like that's okay you can pronounce it like that people will know what you mean that's also okay if you use this tense or that tense but then again I also had to or felt I had to tell them well that's actually incorrect [...] in a strictly prescriptive er context that is tha- that's incorrect and the problem is that at the er with the Schularbeiten with the exams that's what I have to grade that's what I have to assess like so that was als- that was always a bit confusing (TE3: 28)

Extract 42

that's where I found er the most like er difficulties because on the hand I try and tell them erm that it's all about communication on the other hand I also have to tell them you'll be tested on that and what you're tested on is not your er not [...] if you get your message across it's about how you get your message across and er it's sometimes difficult to make the students understand that difference [...] but if er with er with er stronger students I can tell them for the test for the leaving exam stick stick to the rules as they are er in your textbook but outside of that language is a whole different thing (TE3: 48)

One last challenge which has been mentioned by participants and which they voiced frequently as in need for change, is a lack of resources. For example, AR2 said that “it

was largely a matter of not having enough resources" (AR2: 44). To avoid repetition, the matter will be discussed in more detail in the next subsection which considers the needs voiced by the participants.

4.4. Teachers' needs for ELF-sensitive teaching practices

As was already hinted at in previous subsections, one of the main obstacles participants face is the (perceived) lack of acceptance by colleagues, students and other stakeholders like parents and language policy officials as well as the system in general. As a consequence, some participants (AR1, TE2, TE3) have articulated the need for a change in attitude by people involved in language education. Moreover, three participants (AR1, AR3, AR4) have also voiced their discontent not only with the curriculum and the *Zentralmatura* but also with the current Austrian school system in general which would need to be adapted to allow other perspectives into the classroom.

Extract 43

erm but I know that the teaching system as such er in Austria is very erm very much strict and and within rules and regulations so there is not much room for I have the feeling for erm I don't know er some more open things (AR1: 46)

Extract 44

of course that would ne- awareness would have to be raised at the very top level so that it's actually part of or realized as being important yeah but the development is actually in the very opposite direction I'd say (AR4: 54)

Interestingly, while AR1 and AR4 regarded the CEFR as having a positive effect on the way texts are corrected, they appear to view current pedagogical developments in Austria initiated by the Austrian government and not the EU quite negatively. Moreover, AR1 pointed out that, even though she can see change happening, the system still represents a "pedagogy of failure" (Seidlhofer & Widdowson 2019: 27).

Extract 45

now th- the whole system especially the written one with all the Schularbeiten and so on is focused very much on the erm on mistakes now it has changed a bit erm (AR1: 38)

In a similar vein, TE1 expressed a desire for “no pressure or less pressure erm f- as far as grade are concerned” (TE1: 66).

In comparison, AR3 felt a similar pressure on her pointing out that, presently, ELF-informed teachers would not be able to consistently adapt their teaching without disappointing other people’s expectations.

Extract 46

we work in a certain system and we of course we can try to change the system yeah but we can only you know we we still have to work around erm yeah there are certain rules rules yeah and certain expec- let's call them expectations yeah (AR3: 44)

AR4 shared a similar view on where change has to be initiated to increase the feasibility of ELF-sensitive teaching practices.

Extract 47

where it really has to start is at the very top and that is testing materials erm because they set I mean whatever is tested whatever they get their grades for that regulates what is taught (AR4: 18)

Therefore, it can be argued that language policies and other parts of the language education system, such as tests, would have to be changed in order to facilitate a successful integration of ELF-sensitive teaching practices. This also holds true for the assessment of the oral leaving examination, for example, as TE3 stressed after recounting a disagreement with the chair of the examination board last year. He criticized the chair’s principal focus on native-like pronunciation rather than successful communication.

Extract 48

some students were really like really fluent and could communicate er well while others just erm where just like had perfect pronunciation but couldn't really get the message across and these were graded like almost the same or th- th- the latter even better sometimes like erm where like I thought that's that's not the point of a language to sound like a native speaker (TE3: 30)

In a later comment he returned to this issue unprompted which highlighted the relevance of the issue to him. This time he stressed the value of effective communication in comparison with impeccable grammatical accuracy.

Extract 49

well erm I would need other people to understand that erm it's the outcome that counts like that's that's very broad er but I would need- I think that would be the most helpful thing to make other people erm understand with for instance as an example the leaving exam the oral leaving exam I would need other people to understand yes that student communicated perfectly well and got the message across and answered the question thoroughly and expressed their opinion successfully and then someone says well but adjective adverb or a an article and I would need people to understand yeah that was an adjective where it should have been an adverb but doesn't matter (TE3: 50)

All in all, it can be seen that participants would hope for “a better understanding of people in er positions of power” (TE3: 58) as well as “more open-minded colleagues” (TE2: 63). This change of attitude would also have to include a more positive view of nonnative English language teachers as first became evident in TE2's remark on the pressure of imitating an American or British accent in order to be viewed as a competent English language teacher (see extract 30). She elaborated on this issue at the end of the interview, highlighting the prevalent native-speakerism in hiring practices (see Jenkins S. 2017) which is quite evident in her school with about half of the English teachers being native speakers of English (TE2: 49).

Extract 50

more open-minded people towards this concept a a a whole change in the way of thinking yeah when it comes to to to speaking English also as an English teacher I just want or I would like to see others erm appreciate English teachers who might sound Austrian whenever they speak English because you can still be a really really competent English teacher even despite the fact that you might sound Austrian like and sometimes these or these teachers they they want to let their Austrian identity shine through because it's simply who they are so I would like to see a more open-minded and a more erm erm ac- ac- accepting attitude towards this yeah erm and this wou- this would help implement ELF conc-er er ELF concept in teaching a lot yeah just an an open-mindedness you know not this this narrow-mindedness that says yeah prescriptive and d- d- d- d- and erm so I think this wou- would support the the concept in erm yeah being realized in schools yeah (TE2: 97)

To achieve a greater acceptance of ELF among colleagues, participants (AR3, AR4, TE2) have suggested that a change in teacher education programs would raise pre-service teachers' awareness to ELF and, thus, produce ELF-informed colleagues who

presumably would be more accepting of ELF. Thus, TE2 echoed Seidlhofer's (2011) call that the place to start ELF-sensitive pedagogy is teacher education by stating:

Extract 51

this needs to start from the roots you know a- and this means the education of teachers (TE2: 63)

Moreover, AR4 and TE2 remarked that even though the university of Vienna employs some of the leading ELF researchers and was home to the VOICE project, there are not a lot of courses on offer in the teacher education program which focus on ELF.

Another need voiced by the participants which also stems from one of the challenges they have met is the call for appropriate and easily accessible teaching materials. As was briefly hinted at in the previous subsection and has also been underscored by researchers (e.g. Syrbe & Rose 2018), teachers who wish to integrate an ELF perspective face a considerable lack of material. While it could be argued that teachers could create their own material, this would require an extensive time investment on the part of the teacher and would therefore be a quite unreasonable and infeasible solution. As a result, after considering this frequently made suggestion, AR3 concluded that "teaching materials would be a good start" (AR3: 32). In particular, participants would welcome more ELF-sensitive textbooks and more listening exercises featuring nonnative speakers of English.

Even though quite a respectable amount of research into ELF in the pedagogical context has accumulated over the last two decades, AR4 (54) criticized that the findings of this research have not yet been incorporated into ELT coursebooks. TE3 also articulated a desire for "updated textbooks" (TE3: 58), as did TE1 (34). Both TE1 and TE3 linked their demand for ELF-sensitive textbooks to a lack of time to look for or create ELF-sensitive material. This lack of time and resources was also experienced by AR2 (44). In a similar vein, a need for appropriate listening exercises was expressed by some participants (AR3, TE1, TE2, TE3). According to the participants, finding listening exercises and videos with nonnative speakers, especially ones which feature adaptive language use as exhibited in ELF interactions, currently poses quite an obstacle to the inclusion of such listening comprehensions in the classroom.

However, including these could benefit students by increasing their confidence, as TE3 explained:

Extract 52

because now they will never reach the level we show them in class so they'll always feel second best and I think that if you confronted them more with speaking situations communicative situations between two speakers who are not native speakers erm that wou- that would show what you're doing is actually okay and is actually what it's about (TE3: 70)

Presumably, by becoming more familiar with nonnative speakers' speech within the classroom context, students might not only become more confident speakers but also become more accepting of their own and of their teachers' nonnative accent. Thus, providing teachers with more listening exercises which feature nonnative speakers would, on the one hand, answer their call for teaching materials and, on the other hand, it could lead to a greater acceptance among students.

However, since teachers do not only lack ELF-sensitive material but also the time to find or create appropriate material, it is vital that any ELF-sensitive content that becomes available is also accessible for teachers, as stressed by AR4 in the following extract:

Extract 53

materials that are accessible to teachers like not something [...] that is difficult to obtain but something that is easily that people easily get erm so that is widespread and can be used by many er the barriers have to be low to actually implement things like that but I think if there were materials and I think it would be easier I think that's (the) first thing that just to to get a coursebook different activities different materials and make it accessible make it accessible via the internet as a free download then spread it spread it to teachers and probably they'll pick out one or the other (AR4: 28)

As can be seen in extract 53, AR4 is optimistic that teachers would, at least sporadically, integrate ELF-sensitive activities if the necessary materials were available. Although, additional to textbooks and listening comprehensions, AR4 also suggested that a "preface" (AR4: 28) which explains the concept of ELF to teachers would assist them in integrating and using this material. TE3 (58) proposed the same idea for students.

Another factor impeding the quality of English language teaching in Austria, which has not been mentioned in the previous subsection, but which is relevant for the discussion of participants' needs, is the quite large number of students in a class. It must be noted that this is not a problem exclusively related to ELF but rather concerns language teaching more generally. The reason why it is relevant to the present study of ELF-sensitive teaching practices is that participants were asked whether they would prefer a teaching assistant or smaller classes after they had uttered this particular concern. If participants opted for the teaching assistant, it was further inquired which linguacultural background the teaching assistant should preferably have. TE1 (54) and AR2 (54) appeared to welcome the idea of having a nonnative English language teaching assistant, however, they also anticipated that this would be a very unlikely scenario and would receive a lot of criticism. In contrast, AR1 (76, 82) and AR4 (40) would prefer to have fewer students in their classroom in order to be able to have conversations in which all students could participate. Both of them base their decision on previous experience teaching elective courses on upper secondary level, which are usually attended by fewer students.

Dealing with the challenge of the large number of students in language classrooms, both alternatives, namely, a teaching assistant or smaller classes, would sustain teachers in meeting the needs of their students and would presumably enable them to integrate an ELF perspective into even more aspects of their language teaching, especially if the teaching assistant does not share any other common code with students besides English.

5. Conclusion

By interviewing seven ELF-informed in-service teachers, this study has aimed to examine the current situation in Austrian classrooms in regard to ELF. In particular, two research questions were attempted to be answered. The first research question was intended to investigate the perceived relevance, the benefits and the challenges of ELF-sensitive teaching practices to a select group of in-service teachers with a profound understanding of ELF which they have developed either in their teacher education or through their own academic research. In other words, the first research question looked at the present situation in ELT. The second research question inquired after the needs of teachers, thus, in this question, the focus was on the future. To answer the questions in a concise manner, the following paragraphs will summarize the main findings of the study.

Considering the first research question, all participants perceived ELF to be relevant for ELT, yet, the nature of the relevance seems to lie in a perception of ELF being relevant to them personally by being firmly rooted in their professional identity as researchers, at least for the AR group. That is to say, ELF appears to have primarily influenced their teaching by having changed their perspective on language and by having generated an in-depth understanding of effective communication. In connection with this, two of the participants (AR1, AR2) reported on an inner conflict between their researcher identity and their teacher identity triggered by the expectations and constraints in the school context. Considering the other group, TE participants reported a more direct influence on their teaching practices. Moreover, only TE2 talked about an inner conflict, however, this conflict was mainly concerned with her accent and seemed to have been induced by specific external influences, namely, her mentor teacher during her training year and colleagues.

Incited by their background in ELF, participants of both groups teach communicative strategies and encourage the reflection on language use, hence, putting into practice what has been suggested in ELF research literature (see Section 2.3). Moreover, participants reported that, especially in speaking activities, they hardly correct their

students when they do not conform to native speaker norms except when a nonconformity impedes communication. One of the benefits of such a practice is that it is easier for students to understand why they cannot say something (because if they would say it, nobody would understand them, and not just because someone somewhere thinks it does not sound 'correct' or 'right'). However, while ELF is, overall, regarded as beneficial for both teachers and students, the attempt to integrate an ELF perspective into ELT bears many challenges. These challenges include a lack of acceptance by students, colleagues and language officials, a lack of resources and a lack of understanding by students at times due to the complexity of the concept.

As far as the second research question is concerned, participants expressed various needs in order to be able to cope with these challenges and offer students an ELF-sensitive learning experience. For example, taking an ELF perspective into consideration in the construct and objectives of the recently established *Zentralmatura* would greatly help to facilitate ELF-sensitive teaching practices, keeping in mind that changes in language testing generally have a washback effect on language teaching (Jenkins 2006c: 49, Brown & Abeywickrama 2010: 38-39). In addition, participants also voiced a desire for an increased acceptance of the concept by other parties involved in language teaching (i.e. students, other teachers and language officials). As far as acceptance by other teachers is concerned, this could possibly be achieved through teacher education. Another support which could be provided for teachers who wish to integrate an ELF perspective into their teaching is ELF-sensitive teaching material, especially audio recordings featuring nonnative speakers. Moreover, participants would welcome either smaller language classes or a teaching assistant (who could be a nonnative speaker of English).

It should be kept in mind that for this study only seven teachers were interviewed and most of them work in the capital of Austria or its close vicinity. That is to say, the perspectives on and experiences of ELF-sensitive teaching practices of teachers working in a more rural area or closer to, for example, the Czech border might be

interesting to investigate to find out if they face different challenges and have other needs. Moreover, due to the relatively small sample, the findings cannot be generalized in any way but, in my opinion, they can be understood as inspirations for further research and efforts toward an ELF-sensitive pedagogy. Therefore, I argue that teachers who wish to adapt their teaching to meet their learners' needs in a globalized world should be sustained in their endeavor. This could be achieved by meeting needs, as reported by teachers in this study, such as providing easily accessible ELF-sensitive teaching material. Hence, I suggest that in a next step toward the goal of a successful and consistent integration of an ELF perspective into ELT for anybody who wishes to do so, ELF-sensitive teaching material could be developed and made available to teachers. Participants offered some ideas about which material would help them in their endeavor. One of the more specific suggestions mentioned was, for example, a text file with a brief explanation of the concept of ELF, one catered to students and one catered to teachers' or others' needs. Having such concise introductions available could also result in an increased acceptance. Another suggestion which was repeatedly made by several participants was a toolkit containing listening exercises featuring nonnative speakers. As TE3 believed, this could also increase students' acceptance of their own accent and the accent of other speakers.

In addition, it might be interesting to observe these participants and their ELF-sensitive teaching practices in the classroom to get a clearer picture of what material they would need. Moreover, based on this study, it might be worthwhile to undertake a questionnaire study with a larger sample of participants. This could yield a more comprehensive picture of the current situation in Austria and might show if there are differences between geographical areas. It could also be focused on the age of the teachers and/ or students by, for example, comparing lower secondary classes to upper secondary since the present study suggested that teachers might differentiate between age groups in their decision of how and how much ELF-sensitive teaching practices they include. Taking this to the international level or a different country

would, of course, also contribute valuable insights into the current state and potential of an ELF-sensitive pedagogy. Furthermore, interviewing the students of these teachers might yield interesting results concerning learners' language awareness and their attitudes toward ELF. In addition, this might show how teachers and students could better cope with one of the challenges, namely, the complexity of the concept.

To conclude, the examination of the current situation in Austrian classrooms in regard to ELF shows that ELF-informed teachers perceive ELF as relevant to them and to their students. Stimulated by this perceived relevance and the experienced benefits of ELF, they have found ways in which they are currently able to include an ELF perspective in their language teaching. However, if an ELF perspective is to be integrated in a consistent and successful manner, appropriate ELT teaching material would have to be designed, language policies would have to be adapted and attitudes would have to change. Thus, by integrating an ELF perspective into their teaching, teachers would meet the needs of their learners in preparing them for the reality of a globalized world in which English is, currently, frequently used as a lingua franca in international communication. However, in order to adequately adapt their teaching, teachers have needs which should be considered as well. Overall, I hope this study has, in accordance with previous studies (e.g. Jenkins 2007, Dewey 2012), demonstrated the value of working directly with practitioners and recognizing teachers as "agents of pedagogic change in their own right" (Dewey 2014: 27).

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7. Appendix

Abstract

Over the past two decades, the use of English as lingua franca (ELF) in international and intercultural communicative encounters has become the most frequent use of English worldwide. This global role of English has implications for English language teaching (ELT), as has often been pointed out in ELF research. However, translating theory into practice is not an easy, straightforward task. As a first step, teachers' awareness of ELF had to be raised, thus, several courses with a focus on ELF were offered in teacher education programs. Currently, it seems to be a bit unclear, what the next step is. To offer some insight on this, the aim of the present study is to examine the current situation in Austrian English language classrooms in regard to ELF. More specifically, the present study investigated how ELF-informed in-service teachers currently integrate an ELF perspective into their language teaching. Moreover, the study aimed to elicit teachers' views on the relevance, benefits and challenges of ELF-sensitive teaching practices. Of particular interest were the teachers' needs for a more adequate integration of ELF into ELT. Semi-structured, individual interviews with seven ELF-informed in-service teachers were conducted to achieve this aim. While it could be shown that, on the whole, participants viewed the role of ELF as relevant and beneficial to language teaching, it could be seen that teachers still face great obstacles, such as a lack of acceptance. Moreover, participants voiced various needs which, if met, would facilitate ELF-sensitive teaching practices. These needs include, among others, a call for appropriate, easily accessible materials and an adaptation of current language policy documents.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Im Laufe der letzten 20 Jahre entwickelte sich Englisch zu der am häufigsten genutzten Sprache für die internationale und interkulturelle Kommunikation zwischen Menschen diverser geographischer, kultureller und sozialer Herkunft. Diese Rolle des Englischen als globale Lingua Franca (ELF) hat zahlreiche Implikationen für den Sprachunterricht. Die Umsetzung jener Implikationen in der Praxis ist allerdings stark von lokalen Faktoren abhängig und daher kein einfacher Prozess. Ein erster Schritt zielte darauf ab, die Aufmerksamkeit der Lehrkräfte für Englisch als Lingua Franca zu erhöhen. In diesem Sinne wurden Kurse mit Fokus auf Englisch als Lingua Franca im Rahmen von Lehrerinnenausbildung angeboten. Nun ist nicht ganz klar, was der nächste Schritt sein sollte. Daher wird mit dieser Studie versucht eine Bestandsaufnahme durchzuführen, um Ideen zu sammeln wie nun weiter vorgegangen werden könnte. In anderen Worten, die vorliegende Studie untersuchte die Realisierbarkeit der Integration einer ELF-Perspektive in den englischen Sprachunterricht in Österreich. Zu diesem Zwecke wurden derzeit berufsausübende und ELF-informierte Lehrkräfte dazu befragt, inwiefern sie eine ELF-Perspektive in ihren Sprachunterricht integrieren. Des Weiteren zielte die Studie darauf ab, die Perspektive jener Lehrkräfte bezüglich der Relevanz, der Vorteile und der Herausforderungen einer ELF-sensitiven Unterrichtspraxis herauszuarbeiten. Besonderes Interesse lag dabei auf den für eine adäquate Integration von ELF nötigen Bedürfnissen der Lehrkräfte. Sieben Lehrkräfte wurden in semistrukturierten, individuellen Interviews zu ihren Sichtweisen und Meinungen befragt. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass diese Lehrkräfte die Rolle von ELF als relevant und nützlich für den Sprachunterricht ansehen. Jedoch ist erkennbar, dass dem Lehrpersonal bei der Integration von ELF-Perspektiven in den Sprachunterricht nach wie vor große Hindernisse – wie zum Beispiel fehlende Akzeptanz von der Umwelt - im Weg stehen. Zudem äußern die interviewten Lehrkräfte weitere fehlende Notwendigkeiten für einen ELF-sensitiven Unterricht. Zu diesen zählen unter anderem angemessene, leicht zugängliche Materialien sowie eine Adaption der aktuellen gültigen sprachpolitisch relevanten Referenzrahmen.

Interview guide

Greeting

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The interview will be conducted in English. However, please feel free to switch to German whenever you want to.

As mentioned in the email, this study focuses on English as a lingua franca (from now on ELF) in the teaching context. In other words, the aim of this interview is to hear about your personal experience, benefits you see and challenges you have met. Moreover, I want to find out if you would need anything and if so, what you would like to have available in your classroom in order to better integrate an ELF perspective.

If you have any questions concerning the study or the interview, please feel free to ask them at the end of the interview.

Data

Before the interview:

Name:

School type (they are currently working at):

After the interview:

Setting:

Interview Length:

Teaching Background

To start, I would like to hear a bit about your teaching background.

- 1) What year did you start teaching in secondary school?
- 2) Please tell me a bit about your working career as a teacher from [year] onwards. (starting at the beginning)
 - a. Which grades/ age groups do you currently teach (and have you taught in the past)?

- b. Have you taught English anywhere else? (Where else have you taught English?) In any other countries perhaps?

As mentioned earlier, this study focuses on ELF in the teaching context. But before we dive into this topic, I would first like to learn a bit about your background in ELF, meaning your personal academic experience with ELF.

Personal Academic Experience with ELF

- 1) When and where did you first hear about ELF?

[For former academics]

- 2) Please tell me about your involvement with ELF in academia.

- a. What kind of research have you done in ELF?
- b. What was your research focus?
- c. Have you written any publications or given any talks on ELF? If so, what was the topic?

[For former students]

- 3) Please tell me about your experience with ELF at university.

- a. Which classes did you take that had an ELF focus?
- b. In what classes was ELF mentioned even though it was not the main focus?
- c. To what extent and how was ELF mentioned in language teaching classes?
- d. Have you written a seminar paper or diploma thesis on ELF? If so, what was the topic?

- 4) *Now please try to remember your time as a student/ as an academic.* Back then, how did you view the role of ELF for English Language Teaching (ELT)?

- 5) *Now moving a bit further on in the timeline, when you first started as a teacher, how was ELF relevant for your teaching (context)?*

- a. How is ELF relevant to your teaching (context) now?

- b. Has it changed? How is it different now compared to when you were still at university/ working as an academic?
- c. And compared to when you first started teaching?

Teaching Practices

Now that I have learnt a bit about your personal academic experience with ELF, I would like to hear (more) about your experience with ELF in the language classroom.

- 1) Where do you include an ELF perspective in your classroom?
- 2) In what area/ for which skill do you feel is ELF the most relevant (for your students)?
 - a. Why is ELF particularly relevant for this competence?
 - b. How do you integrate an ELF perspective when teaching [skill]?
 - c. What benefits do you see in including an ELF perspective when teaching [skill]?
 - d. What challenges have you met due to your approach?
 - e. What would you need/ What would help you to better integrate ELF in your teaching of [skill]?
 - f. How does your ELF-sensitive teaching approach of [skill] influence your assessment of that skill?
- 3) Where else do you include an ELF perspective in your language classroom?
 - a. Please elaborate on how you include ELF in these areas.
 - b. What would help you to practice a more ELF-sensitive teaching? In other words, what would you need to integrate ELF into more aspects of your language teaching?
- 4) *As you know, the Common European Framework of Reference and the Austrian curriculum are documents with a great influence on how languages are taught in Austria. I was wondering, where do you see the relationship of these documents and an ELF-sensitive teaching approach?*
 - a. How do these documents enable/ encourage or limit the integration of an ELF perspective into the classroom?

- b. What effect does the new Zentralmatura have on the potential of realizing an ELF-sensitive teaching approach in your opinion?

Thank you for your account of these specific aspects of your language teaching approach. I would like to move on to look at the topic from a more general point of view and then I would like to put the focus on your students for a few questions.

- 5) *In general*, do you feel that you do ELF-sensitive teaching? Why/ Why not?
- 6) What does ELF-sensitive teaching mean to you?
- 7) How do you encourage your students to become self-confident users of English?
 - a. What do you tell your students about the current global role of English? Do you mention ELF explicitly to your students?
 - b. How do you prepare your students for communicative encounters with nonnative speakers?
 - c. What would you need to better help your students to become self-confident users of English?
- 8) *In general*, do you see benefits of an ELF-sensitive teaching approach for your students (maybe also for you)?
 - a. What are these benefits?
 - b. OR: Why don't you see any benefits?
- 9) *One final question*: What would you like to do in your language classroom in regard to ELF but currently can't?
 - a. {*You have mentioned that you would like to ...*} What would you need to do so?

Closing

We have already come the end of the interview.

- 1) Is there anything you would like to add?
- 2) Are there any questions I should have asked but didn't?

Thank you for your time. It was a pleasure talking to you.

Closed list of German terms

German terms which are specific to the Austrian school context and which are used frequently in code-switching scenarios by participants as well as the interviewer are represented in the transcripts without tags. This is a closed list.

AHS.....	secondary level school
Unterstufe.....	lower secondary level
Oberstufe	upper secondary level
Unterrichtspraktikum	training year for new teachers
Schularbeit, Schularbeiten	exam(s)
Matura, Maturen	leaving exam
Zentralmatura	standardized leaving exam
Germanistik.....	German department of a university
Anglistik.....	English department of a university