Teaching Globish? The Need for an ELF Pedagogy in Interpreter Training

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Abstract

Research on the global spread of English as a lingua franca (ELF) has made headway since the 1990s. In this effort, language teaching and pedagogy have been one of the major areas of research, concentrating on how to make nonnative English learners more effective participants in ELF interactions without taking the native speaker as a benchmark. However, this research has not considered settings of mediated communication. Even in the field of interpreting studies, it is only recently that the implications of ELF on the interpreters' activity and profession have become an object of research. Findings that the "ELF condition" adversely affects the interpreters' task call for an ELF pedagogy in interpreter training, which helps students prepare for changing working conditions. On the basis of a 90,000-word corpus of in-depth interviews with 10 professional conference interpreters, this article details preliminary suggestions for an ELF orientation in interpreter training and aims to spark a debate on such an orientation.

Key Words: English as a lingua franca (ELF), conference interpreting, interpreter training, ELF pedagogy, raising awareness, accommodation strategies

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1. Introduction

In the new millennium, conference interpreters are confronting an unprecedented development: the global spread of English as a lingua franca (ELF). David Crystal (2012), the author of *English as a Global Language* (2003), estimates that there are now five nonnative English speakers for every native speaker. Against this background, and in view of the fact that—according to studies carried out by Neff (2007) for the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC)—the majority of source speeches at conferences are produced in English, interpreters' perceptions of an overwhelming and rapidly increasing number of nonnative English speakers at conferences can be taken at face value. No other development since the invention and introduction of the technology for simultaneous interpretation after World War II has changed the working conditions and professional self-image of conference interpreters to such a degree. What is happening before their eyes is, in fact, a reversal of the "path from bilingualism to multilingualism" (Feldweg, 1996, p. 89, my translation), in other words, the path from bilingual consecutive meetings to multilingual simultaneous international conferences, which characterized the 20th century and shaped the conference interpreters' profession as we know it (cf. Feldweg, 1996). Interpreters now witness the evolution from multilingual conferences back to bilingual "ELF conferences," where communication is in nonnative English and one local language, as more and more conference participants heavily rely on nonnative English and other language booths fall by the wayside. In a questionnaire survey completed by 32 professional conference interpreters, I found general agreement that this development adversely affected their work on the macro level (e.g., professional standing, job satisfaction) as well as on the micro level (regarding comprehension and production processes and capacity management; cf. Albl-Mikasa, 2010).

Accordingly, conference interpreters can be heard to complain about "Globish" or "BSE" ("Bad Simple English"). Using these labels is not a sign of ignorance of the more academic terminology and its conceptual distinctions (namely, "English as a global language," "world Englishes," "English as a lingua franca"), but an expression of the negative connotations interpreters associate with it (see AIIC, 2012, for the "lurking beast"; Reithofer, 2010). It should be noted that interpreters do not refer to Globish in terms of the trademark, which is "a set of reduced forms that can be prescribed for use in rudimentary communication" (see http://www.globish.com), but to "the actual globalized use of English as a lingua franca the world over" (Seidlhofer, 2011, pp. 153, 157). It is this usage, over the past 20 years, with which the young ELF research discipline is concerned (cf. Jenkins, Cogo, & Dewey, 2011) and that is increasingly presented to interpreters in source speeches at conferences. Although interpreters are undoubtedly theoretically uninformed participants in ELF communication, their apprehensions about ELF developments are real and have only very recently become the object of closer scrutiny (e.g., Albl-Mikasa, 2010, 2012a, 2013a, in press; Reithofer, 2010, 2011). The implications of ELF on translation/interpreting were not previously considered in ELF research activities (cf. Cook, 2012; Mauranen, 2012), and case studies in the field of interpreting studies concentrated on the effect of nonnative accents on the interpreting task (especially Cheung, 2003; Kurz, 2008; McAllister, 2000; Sabatini, 2000) and the advantage of having the nonnative speaker's mother tongue as one of the interpreter's working languages (cf. Basel, 2002; Kurz & Basel, 2009; Taylor, 1989).

On the basis of the most recent studies, I have identified adverse effects of ELF usage on interpreters' activity in the following areas:

1. *Market developments* (cf. Albl-Mikasa, 2010): The need to display high quality interpreting services is increasing in the face of (a) fiercer competition (in addition to smaller numbers of language booths, interpreters are increasingly contracted only for highly technical and complex events, because the easier ones are conducted in English) and the necessity to give customers good reasons to offer and pay for interpreting services, and (b) interpreters' feelings that they must defend their reputation as language experts and dissociate themselves from unprofessional uses of English. The interpreters' dilemma is that, at the same time, it has become increasingly difficult for them to deliver high quality. Extra cognitive effort is required in comprehension of nonnative speakers, to unravel unorthodox structures, idiosyncratic lexical phrases, and unfamiliar accents, and in production for nonnative listeners, to adjust and accommodate to varying proficiency levels.

2. *Bilingual mediated conditions* (cf. Reithofer, 2010): Contrary to unmediated ELF communication settings, conference interpreters work in monologic speech event settings where there is little room for interaction, meaning negotiation, or pragmatic strategies (such as explicitness, accommodation, let-it-pass and collaborative coconstruction), so that they are deprived of the standard means of compensation that usually facilitate and ensure successful ELF communication.

3. *Processing and capacity management* (cf. Albl-Mikasa, in press): The growing number of nonnative speaker participants at conferences poses a challenge to the interpreter's capacity management, which, as detailed by Gile on the basis of his well-known effort models (2009), is taxed under favorable working conditions, let alone under less favorable ones, for example, strong accents (also in the case of native speakers); complex, technical, and dense source texts; less able speakers/source-text producers; and less adequate technical, booth-related, and other situational conditions. The "ELF condition" adds an additional burden, in that the interpreters' automated processing is undermined. A case study involving nonnative speakers and a trainee interpreter (cf. Albl-Mikasa, in press) suggests that the activation and retrieval of established links between source and target language items, of settled-in transfer routines, and of ready-to-use translation equivalents may be impeded because incoming (nonnative source language) items are different from those learned and encoded by the interpreter and, consequently, do not match with previously encoded and stored items (see the "principle of encoding specificity" in van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983, p. 335).

Herein lies, in fact, one of the handicaps that can be identified for interpreters in times of ELF: ELF is "a new type of English, a hybrid language, a kind of 'pluralized English'" (House, 2012, p. 173) confronting the interpreter with unexpected and impossible to expect idiosyncratic formations. As Seidlhofer and House point out,

> what ELF research is increasingly yielding insights into is precisely the hybridity and dynamism, fluidity, and flexibility of ELF interactions. . . . Much of ELF is negotiated ad hoc. . . . ELF discourses are creative local realizations, or performances, of a global resource that continually gets appropriated and re-fashioned by its speakers. (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 111)

> The vast majority of ELF speakers are *per se* bilingual or multilingual speakers, which means that transfer from other languages and code-mixing are common in ELF interactions. (House, 2012, p.174)

Although the "dynamic and adaptive use of language resources" (Dewey, 2012, p. 142), or the creative, innovative and cooperative use of linguistic means of expression and communicative strategies (cf. House, 2012) are the very basis of effectiveness in lingua franca communication, it is exactly this nonconformity with patterns of usage and the unconventional use and appropriation of phrases and expressions that may become obstacles in the interpreting context. Thus, the great diversity of ELF source speech that interpreters receive makes it difficult for them to prepare for such eventualities in an assignment situation. As a result, according to interpreter reports, this inherent variation in the global forms and functions of English can hamper well-established automatisms (cf. Albl-Mikasa, 2010) and undermine routine inference processes (cf. Albl-Mikasa, in press). Therefore, what is seen as a major asset for users of English in unmediated lingua franca conditions may become a liability for interpreters

in mediated communication when these nonnative English users participate. Although it is almost impossible to "preempt" ELF usage, conference interpreters and interpreter trainers need to find ways to prepare, at least, for what can be expected.

As outlined above, efforts to develop a "pedagogy of ELF" (Dewey, 2012, p. 153) have so far been restricted to unmediated ELF communication or, more specifically, to second-language teaching. In that context, the challenge for the English-learning classroom lies in helping teachers to reconcile the reality of ELF as a noncodified form of English, which displays high levels of diversity and plurality, with inherited and internalized ideals of a codifiable, monolithic form of standard English (cf. Dewey, 2012); focus is placed on accommodation strategies, intercultural and pragmatic competence, flexibility, and tolerance of variation (cf. Jenkins et al., 2011). Turning to interpreter training, it will be important to cater to changing working and processing conditions and to consider new requirements and (sub)competences resulting from ELF developments.

Based on a 90,000-word corpus of in-depth interviews on interpreter competence that I conducted between January and December 2011 with 10 professional conference interpreters working in the German market (cf. Albl-Mikasa, 2012b), I designed a (process and experience-based) model of interpreter competence that incorporates ELF-related skills. In the present article, I present a follow-up analysis of the reports in that corpus with a view to providing preliminary suggestions for ELF-oriented interpreter training. The aim is to give an impetus to further research into more substantial didactic measures.

As described in Albl-Mikasa (2012b), the corpus data were collected as follows: the interviewees, four female and six male interpreters, were recruited (the criteria being their availability) from the 32 respondents who had filled out the questionnaire in the 2010 survey. At the time of the interviews, all were working as freelance conference interpreters in the German-speaking market: one for the E.U., two for the E.U. and in the private market, and the other seven in the private market. Two had a working experience of 30-plus years, two of 20-plus, and the other six of about 15 years. Nine had German as their A language and English as B or C, and one had an English A and a German C (some of them also had other C languages); eight of them were members of AIIC. Each interview lasted for 60 to 70 minutes, and the word-for-word transcriptions (disregarding prosodic and other paralinguistic features) range from 7,000 to 11,000 words each. For easier reference, the 10 interviews were coded from I-1 to I-10 in alphabetical order.

2.   Suggestions for an ELF Orientation in Interpreter Training

The "pedagogic challenges that follow from English being increasingly used as a European and global lingua franca and from the theoretical and empirical insights ELF research provides" have been described by Kohn (2011, pp. 86–87; see also Kohn, 2007) for foreign language classrooms. From a social constructivist angle, Kohn identifies these challenges on the following three levels: (a) students having to know about ELF, (b) students' ability to understand nonnative speakers of English, and (c) students' production competence. When applied to interpreting, the corresponding levels to be distinguished for an ELF orientation in interpreter training are as follows: (a) awareness of developments, requirements, and attitudes regarding ELF (interpreter trainees have to "know about ELF"); (b) (source text) comprehension (interpreters must be able to "understand nonnative speakers of English"); (c) (target text) production (interpreters must reconsider their "production competence"); moreover, in this context, it also seems appropriate to take into account implications for (d) the level of transfer.

Generally speaking, all dimensions of the interpreters' processing—comprehension, transfer, and production—may be affected by nonnative English conference participants. However, this does not apply to all interpreters with English as one of their working languages in the same measure. Interpreters with an English A, at least those who are working predominantly into their mother tongue, are confronted with nonnative speakers to a much lesser degree. Interpreters with an English C will have to deal with nonnative speaker input in the comprehension phase, but they do not have to be concerned with the production process in the sense that they do not have to accommodate to nonnative English listeners. It is, therefore, the English B interpreters, especially those in the private market who provide interpretation from and into English, who are most affected by the developments sketched out above. They bear the brunt of mediated ELF communication because not only do they have to cope with ELF-induced reception problems, but they also must invest additional accommodation efforts in the production process (see Section 1.3. below and Albl-Mikasa, 2010). An ELF orientation in interpreter training, therefore,

proceeds from an initial distinction between language pairs, directions, and versions and further distinguishes the different processes that the measures to be designed should target: *comprehension, transfer,* and *production,* complemented with an *awareness-raising* component.

2.1. Comprehension

From the interpreters' point of view, the range of different accents on the part of nonnative speakers is basically an extension of the general problem of speakers who are difficult to understand. Interpreters confess to "struggling" with strong native accents (e.g., Scottish or Texan) or marked individual speaking styles (e.g., mumbling or fast presentation rate) in a similar way. Examples given by one of the interpreters refer to the swallowing or twisting of sounds: A German speaker may say "Kontabität" instead of "Kompatibilität," [compatibility]; an English speaker may say "[kwo:|fen'a:]" to mean "quarter of an hour"; and an American speaker may say "winner" meaning "winter" (I-1).

Difficulties posed by nonnative source speeches go beyond unfamiliar accents:

> It's much better when people speak their own language, because, if not, you can't follow their words very often, the way they think; I know the way a usual German thinks, but sometimes you don't even understand the pronunciation which is wrong. The other day a French [man] was speaking English and he would say "merrily," which you find on a Christmas card: "Ding Dong Merrily on High," and I thought what the hell is he saying, and he said "merely." Or I know an Italian chairman who doesn't differentiate between *le* and *les* when he speaks French, so you don't know whether it's a singular or a plural. (I-2)

Another interpreter (I-6) reported cases in which pronunciation problems compounded the incorrect use of concepts. In one case, for instance, a nonnative speaker spoke of a "beer trap." What he was actually trying to say was "bear trap." But not only did he get the pronunciation wrong, he also used the wrong concept. "Bear trap" is a technical stock market term denoting an undesirable situation for short sellers (they get trapped and are forced to cover their positions at high prices). The speaker, however, was referring to some kind of mechanism that should stop large-scale financial transactions beyond a certain threshold. In the heat of the moment, this confusion made it impossible for the interpreter to figure out what the speaker was talking about. Only later did he realize what the speaker had been trying to say. This example goes to show that, in the reception process, nonnative speakers can be more of a problem for the interpreters than native speakers because difficult accents can be coupled with unconventional or even incorrect use of concepts, lexical expressions, compounds, or other structures.

Interpreters suggest that to prepare student interpreters for the multitude of voices awaiting them, they must be able to work their way into the special reception conditions and keep practicing listening comprehension. They therefore have to have ample opportunity to listen to a great variety of accents and ways of expressing things, to "develop an ear for it" (I-1, I-3). The more they get used to the foreignness, the less such expressions will appear odd and new, and the potential for derailment in the process will decrease. As one interpreter put it: "The 24th Chinese speaker may still be difficult to understand, but much less so than the first one" (I-8).

This raises the question of course materials, that is, of how to obtain recordings of original speeches incorporating all possible accents and ways of speaking in view of the great number of Englishes out there. Opportunities for interpreters to familiarize themselves with nonstandard ways of expression are much harder to come by because they do not—as in the case of difficult native-speaker accents—have an established broadcasting industry behind them. Thus, whereas French may be spoken differently by Québecois or Northern Africans, and German differently by Austrians or the Swiss, interpreters can get broadcasts from Quebec, Algeria, Austria, or Switzerland. With global Englishes, it is only where English is an official language (e.g., in India) that similar resources are available and can be tapped. Unfortunately, such resources are not available or are inaccessible as far as a greater number of nonnative speakers from all over the world are concerned. As the interpreters interviewed point out, however, the field is not so wide open that one would need to present hundreds of local Englishes or teach each and every variety. It is rather a matter of presenting trainees with typical examples of frequent or prototypical (African, Eastern European, Indian English, etc.) varieties "to make them develop the habit of decoding and the skill of coping with pronunciation" (I-3). Special ELF units or modules should be introduced in

advanced semesters, in which the more prevalent accents are presented. To meet the challenge of tracking down a variety of nonnative speeches to be presented to the students as source texts, the Internet is at least one source (e.g., of original speeches by people like Bishop Tutu, who was mentioned as an example in I-3). A particularly valuable source is the TED global conference website (www.ted.com).

Learning targets are probably best kept moderate at the beginning. According to the interpreters interviewed, it is important to lower the frustration level, given the common interpreter mistake of missing whole sentences because of a preoccupation with one's anger about the speaker or about source text difficulties. The idea is to proceed from the "What is this language supposed to be?" feeling to the "Oh, okay, I do understand at least something" experience (I-3). In this way, students can begin to build upon the experience that it does not take too long to find one's way into some minimum understanding, and that it is acceptable to content oneself with rendering what is feasible.

With regard to teaching methods, instructors will have to be quite inventive to devise new forms. One way could be to involve foreign language students (on ERASMUS[2] or scholarship/grant programs) and ask them to participate in discussion groups to be interpreted by the students. As pointed out (in I-5), prediscussion meetings of interpreters and participants may help students to build up expectations and guide hypotheses about speaker styles. Another method may consist of having the nonnative speaker give a speech on the basis of a well-prepared manuscript, followed by a question-and-answer session; this would make it clear to students that marked differences may have to be expected between well-formed and "freestyle" nonnative speech. The student interpreters' task will inevitably be influenced when speakers are not able to keep up the presentation level (in terms of register, style, and lexicon; see also Section 1.3. below) in answering questions. In this way, students could gain early insights into the kind of situations they ought to expect in their careers.

Finally, such practical training is ideally founded on or combined with a theoretical basis, that is, knowledge about the language-specific structures and surface realizations, which typically rub off from the L1 onto the lingua franca English (for psycholinguistic explanations of L1 to L2 transfer effects, see Albl-Mikasa, 2013a). The interpreters interviewed reported of individual differences typical of particular languages and felt that it would lower the surprise effect if students were acquainted with such features. They underlined that French and Spanish speakers tend to swallow the *h* sounds, and Spanish and Italian speakers tend to be much more redundant and phatic, so that the interpreter has to wait for them to actually "not only speak but say something" (I-2), before putting it into (in the case of English) much more compact and reduced target language speech. German English speakers often have an unnecessarily epical way of putting things ("it is like this that it is snowing" from *es ist so, dass…* or "to delete without replacement" for *ersatzlos streichen* instead of simply "to delete") and Eastern Europeans refrain from using articles ("I thank chairman," "I give you chair"). Although these examples provided by the interviewees seem to be somewhat self-explanatory, ELF corpus analyses may yield more valuable insights in this respect, which can be fed into linguistics courses about typological features and structures of relevant languages; these courses can then be combined with a more practically oriented course that deals with the prototypical instances found with nonnative English speakers. This approach may have limited success when it comes to non-European speakers, especially Asian speakers, such as Indians, Japanese, and Chinese. Interpreters find that they pronounce English words in ways that are, at times, unrecognizable to Western ears, which can make interpreting "context-based guesswork" (I-1). Whereas here it might at least be helpful for students to be alerted to what to expect, so as to minimize irritation, a theoretical base could still be useful to back up the more unconscious skills acquired from practicing the decoding of unfamiliar accents during practical courses in the booth.

2.2. Transfer

The interpreters interviewed pointed to the necessity of a strategic reorientation of the transfer process. In their experience, all strategies "that are generally required for the interpreting task" (I-3; see, e.g., Kalina, 2000) will have to be "put to even greater use" (I-3) when interpreting for nonnative speakers. This applies to condensation (leaving out information without distorting the message) as much as to streamlining of the output to save resources for comprehension, or to a dependence on visual input (I-1, I-

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[2] ERASMUS is a widely implemented, successful student exchange initiative as part of the E.U.'s Lifelong Learning Programme (cf. http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/erasmus_en.htm).

3). Preparation strategies (cf. Albl-Mikasa, 2012b) become even more important to support inference processes. As one interpreter put it:

> Maybe preparation will become even more important (for inferencing in the very situation) and so will the use of visual support—my personal *ultima ratio* is to read off a sentence from the PowerPoint slides that matches the prompt provided by the speaker in order to avoid saying nothing for a couple of sentences and, thus, losing the listeners' trust. (I-3)

Another interpreter made the following comment:

> If, in my capacity as interpreter, I do not know an English version of an L1 expression used by the speaker, I have to rely on my evasion strategy: If a plausibility check makes me find that something can't be the case, I leave it out or beat about the bush, later perhaps I try to guess what was meant and see whether I can still straighten things out. (I-1)

The same interpreter made a point also stressed by others (I-4, I-9):

> In my opinion, the best way to cope with such difficult situations is to keep calm and get more practice. If I allow myself to get upset, this will block parts of my analytical skills, which I need for decoding and recovery. As an interpreter trainer, I would try and gently bring home to the students that such situations do arise, that everybody gets strained in the beginning, but that it is possible to practice how to deal with them. (I-1)

Against the background of these statements, ELF-specific adaptation of the interpreter's strategic repertoire may include (further) development of the following strategies:

- *Evasion* (make plausibility check → in case of implausibility, omit for the time being or gabble at large → keep guessing the intended meaning as the speech continues → when things are clearer decide whether to set things right or not)
- *Don't panic* (keep cool under all circumstances—getting excited blocks analytical capacities and prevents recovery of intended meaning—be assured that this happens to all interpreters all the time, that such situations are not indomitable and that one can only improvise)
- *Substitution* (when the worst comes to the worst, stick with the PowerPoint slides—which need to have been prepared well—or just keep reading them off, so as not to say nothing and lose the listeners' trust)

It may be helpful for students to become acquainted with the inventory of strategies in theory first to then test the respective strategies in the booth. Because of considerable evidence of a "shared languages benefit" (Albl-Mikasa, 2013a, p. 105), that is, the supportive effect of having the nonnative speaker's mother tongue as a working language, testing might more usefully be implemented under varying conditions. Trainers might have students experiment with the differences in nonnative source text producers under conditions (a) when they share the nonnative speaker's mother tongue as an L1, (b) when they have the nonnative speaker's mother tongue as one of their B or C languages, and (c) when they are fully unacquainted with the nonnative speaker's mother tongue. This would give students opportunities to discover how variations in nonnative speaker input affect their strategic behavior and their coping strategies in particular. Moreover, practical in-booth courses could be complemented with further contributions from the theory of interpreting. Models such as Gile's (2009) effort models can be very useful in explaining to beginners what ELF means to their capacity management. They could come to understand that the particular ELF conditions, which sometimes require the interpreter to "invest more concentration and to think outside the box" (I-6), may take a heavy toll on what Gile calls the "total available processing capacity" (2009, p. 170). Against such theoretical understanding and knowledge of possible coping strategies, it may become easier for students in the early stages to experience what it means to juggle and allocate resources under particular ELF conditions.

2.3. Production

In the case of producing English as an A or B language, the interpreters interviewed agreed that for a nonnative audience, simpler is better. Interpreters are contracted to provide a service and to promote and facilitate communication; when working for nonnative listeners, there is simply no place for sophisticated idiomatic expressions: "What is the use of throwing in expressions like 'I would concur with the chairman' or 'that's a sticky wicket,' when no one understands them?" (I-2); "What is a Czech or Turkish salesman supposed to do with English phrasal verbs?" (I-10). Finally, "in the European Parliament, the new countries all speak English only and take the relay from the English booth. If that is too English an English, they will not understand it" (I-4). Generally speaking, interpreters do make an effort to adjust to the perceived proficiency levels of their audience, unless their resources are overtaxed (Albl-Mikasa, 2010).

Another case of the accommodation required in ELF contexts, and a corollary of ELF developments— at least in the German market—is that interpreters may have to cater to members of the audience who are native speakers of the language of the source speech. Two interpreters commented on Hungarian (I-6) as well as Czech, Polish, and Macedonian (I-2) speakers giving their presentations in highly "problematic" German (Eastern European speakers do, at times, use German as a lingua franca), which prompted the native German listeners to take earphones and listen to the English interpreter, in the hope that the interpreter might be able to make some sense of what they themselves considered to be unintelligible. Apparently, it is not uncommon for conference participants who are supposed to listen to the original presentation to switch over to the English interpreters. For the interpreters, this means that they have to be prepared for having to cater not (only) to the intended audience, and that this may require further accommodation. In fact, one of the main problems as far as accommodation is concerned is that it is often difficult for the interpreters to tell exactly who is listening to them and, hence, how or to what extent to accommodate. Interpreters sometimes use the microphone to find out whether somebody is listening at all and to get people's reactions (turning round, nodding; I-2). There is general agreement among the interpreters interviewed that knowing the nonnative profile of the recipients does in fact influence their rendition; however, in the case of large-scale conferences with a mixed native and nonnative audience, there is little they can do in terms of accommodation.

Because accommodation has come to be a standard service that interpreters provide and regard necessary (this is confirmed in the questionnaire survey; Albl-Mikasa, 2010, and in the interviews), students should get opportunities to interpret for or in front of nonnative addressees in simulated conferences. In this way, they can develop a sense of what is appropriate and how to proceed. At the same time, instructors will have to take into account that it can be rather unsettling for trainees to have to invest a lot of effort into building up a high-level language competence, including sophisticated idiomatic phrases and expressions, only to be told that they must now learn how to suppress them. It may also be discouraging for student interpreters to learn that conference participants may sometimes expect them to make sense of what they themselves fail to understand.

That students should get theoretical input regarding strategies also applies to accommodation strategies, which are only partly covered by the conventional (i.e., non-ELF-related) inventory of production strategies as described, for instance, by Kalina (comprising, among others, "restructuring, paraphrasing, condensing or expanding information, and the use of prosodic or non-verbal features," 2000, p. 7). It is, therefore, for the instructors and theoreticians in the field of interpreting to devise or empirically investigate the more ELF-specific accommodation strategies based on the general ones, which, according to communicative accommodation theory (CAT),

> can be used to modify the complexity of speech (for example, by decreasing diversity of vocabulary, or simplifying syntax), [and] increase clarity (by changing pitch, loudness, tempo by repetition, clarification checks, explicit boundarying devices and so on). (Giles & Coupland, 1991, p. 88)

An important production strategy is, finally, that of "changing registers" (Kalina, 2000, p. 23). The interpreters in the questionnaire survey preferred native source speakers not least because of their "higher register" (Albl-Mikasa, 2010, p. 135) and felt the necessity of "cutting down on style and register" (Albl-Mikasa, 2010, p. 238) when adapting to a nonnative audience. As pointed out in I-5, nonnative speakers (unless they read out well-prepared manuscripts) may find it difficult to keep up an appropriate register throughout the source text (especially in spontaneous question/answer sessions), which makes it

necessary for interpreters to level out register shifts in target text production. Dealing with changing registers may, thus, gain in importance in the context of ELF communication and may have to be incorporated into interpreter training.

2.4.   Raising Awareness

With the number of nonnative conference participants increasing exponentially, interpreting students must gain an awareness of the implications for and effects on their work. They should be informed about ELF-related developments in general and their ramifications for the profession for which they are training in particular. More specifically, they should develop a consciousness of what these developments mean for the activity that they are carrying out, that is, how deviations from a learned standard affect their processing.

First and foremost, students must know what to expect, so as to avoid unnecessary irritation and to reduce the surprise effect, which can "block analytical skills" (see Section 1.2. above). This includes an understanding of the challenge nonnative speakers represent, because their performance may

> range from the unproblematic (since many nonnative speakers do, of course, speak very good English) to the difficult but comprehensible and the truly unrecoverable, and it is only when they open their mouth that the interpreter will know. (I-3)

Raising awareness in this way will also help interpreters to adopt the right attitudes. There are many unpredictable variables in ELF contexts, which are difficult to prepare for, but if interpreters know that the ensuing strain is a fact of life experienced by most interpreters, and that one gets used to it (see above), they will be able to muster indispensable "tolerance and patience" (I-4), according to the interpreters interviewed.

Being part and parcel of a service that aims to facilitate communication, this attitude also involves a certain degree of "empathy" (I-7). One interpreter reported a useful exercise offered in a summer school on consecutive interpreting.

> The coach pretended to be a Russian lady speaking English with the typical difficulties in speaking and understanding. She was interpreted into German and received interpretation into English. The coach demonstrated a great acting talent, displaying among other things the psychological insecurity of the woman, who was not only unfamiliar with the interpreting situation, but also far from proficient in English. This made me realize that unintentionally I acted snottily towards her, to which "the Russian lady" immediately reacted. (I-5)

It is, of course, asking a great deal of inventiveness of instructors to simulate such situations, especially because "it should not become burlesque" (I-5). However, it would be useful for students to get similar practice opportunities.

Even more impalpable is perhaps the kind of empathy, or "sensitiveness" (I-9) and "intuitive sense" (I-3) to be displayed on the micro level, which applies to (a) the comprehension effort in the reception phase as well as (b) the accommodation effort in the production phase. As the interpreter in I-5 put it:

> (a) Not all Globish is totally wrong, of course. From a grammatical point of view it may be somehow correct, but it seems strangely lifeless. At this point the interpreter needs to determine to what extent she is allowed to dissolve this lifelessness without (mis)interpreting and thus altering the speaker's intended meaning. The question is again whether one can assess what it would have been in the speaker's mother tongue without imputing a certain tenor to him.
> (b) In adjusting to the listeners' proficiency level, when working into English, one must not underestimate the listener, for this will not go unnoticed and will create a strange atmosphere, without listeners being able to tell what caused it.

Such reading between the lines in comprehension and the balancing act between over- and underestimating the listeners' skills in production are a rather sensitive and subjective matter, which students should be at least encouraged to consider. Finally, tolerance is also called for when it comes to "global English corporate language," which is "a real problem, for speakers will say things like 'labalization' and the native speaker will think, 'What on earth is that supposed to mean?'" (I-2). Students should be made aware of phenomena such as *global English corporate language* and ELF in general, so as not to enter into the professional stage unprepared and get trapped from the very start.

Although attitudes such as tolerance, patience, and empathy do aim to put up with even the unbearable or unmanageable, trainees might also have to be encouraged to figure out the point at which a situation becomes fully impracticable and may warrant steps such as "professional foul." The interpreters reported that there are situations when all they can do is let the audience know through the microphone that, for want of comprehensible speaker output, it is simply impossible to render the speaker. Therefore, "one has to empower the students and give them the green light to dare to communicate to the audience that it is not the interpreter's fault when nothing plausible comes out from the mike and into the earphones anymore" (I-6).

3. ELF Pedagogy of Common Concern for ELF Research and Interpreting Studies

In light of the growing number of nonnative English speakers at conferences and the implications reported by professional interpreters, there can be little doubt that interpreter training must undergo changes with a view to integrating an ELF orientation. Traditional methods will not do, for "what is the use of practicing all those beautiful idiomatic expressions on the basis of source texts and speeches from Obama and European Parliament delegates, when 99% of conference participants simply do not talk like that?" (I-3). At the same time, interpreter training can only serve to lay the foundation for ELF-related competences, which are, to a large degree, built up through real-life professional conference experience and the practice of authentic ELF speech.

On the basis of the above analysis of practical interpreter experience, it can be said that an ELF pedagogy for interpreter training will have to aim to acquaint interpreter students with the most current features and realizations of different Englishes (Asian, African, European, etc.) alongside those of different native standards (Midwestern, Southern American, Northern English, Australian, etc.). It cannot, and need not, cover the full range of possible accents and ways of speaking, but should rely instead on abstraction, which, more generally speaking, is an integral part of learning and practicing. The important thing is to prepare students and boost their decoding skills by using a range of sound bites, and to unleash their sense for extrapolation, which will lay a foundation for making other manifestations more accessible. In addition, students may find it useful to train for the fast alternation of native and nonnative English speakers to develop rapid reactions to what they conceive of as quite different varieties. For such practical training, it seems reasonable to introduce specific ELF modules at an advanced stage of the interpreter training program. It is up to empirical ELF pedagogy-geared studies to find out more about the ideal point of introduction, length, composition, and other aspects of such modules and their integration into the more standard parts of the course.

The practical (in-booth) part could be coupled with providing a more general knowledge base about ELF-related matters. This refers to a wider understanding of current global and social developments (ELF and globalization, ELF and multilingualism, ELF and language contact, etc.) as well as language-specific subjects. Information about typological features of languages or rather prototypical properties from native languages that regularly feature in nonnative speech will be highly useful for up-and-coming interpreters. The theoretical linguistics courses in university interpreter education might thus be developed into a more targeted framework to cover such language typological principles and regularities as may be useful in real interpreting settings.

A related question is the extent to which interpreters must be familiar with other languages. For just as a large passive vocabulary greatly facilitates the deciphering of unorthodox native-speaker input, so too is knowledge of several foreign languages of great value when it comes to making sense of nonnative speech (see the "shared languages benefit" in Albl-Mikasa, 2013a). It is somewhat paradoxical that, accordingly, interpreters with several C languages may have an advantage over interpreters with only one

A language plus English B, although the latter are those most directly confronted with the challenges of ELF in conference contexts (see Section 1 above).

Finally, this raises the overarching question of the role of Standard English. From the interpreters' perspective, (what they would regard as) slackening standards do not enter the picture, nor would they advocate a less norm-oriented approach to interpreter training (as Dewey, 2012, does for second-language learning and teaching). From their point of view, students will need as much exposure to different nonnative pronunciations and ways of speaking as possible to develop the necessary comprehension skills, but should continue to aim at native-speaker Standard English (or a near-native English B) for target text production. Such high-level command of the language is seen as a requirement for understanding and making sense of the different nonnative surface realizations, just as availability of the whole range of different means of expression from which to choose is considered indispensable for variable, audience-designed production:

> English proficiency standards must remain as high as ever, for only those who are super-fit in English can notice and adequately react to the different manifestations and surface realizations, changeovers and crossovers that nonnative English communication at conferences entails. (I-5)

This perspective presenting the interpreters' angle contributes to ELF research by making it clear that efforts to create ELF pedagogy in unmediated or mediated contexts cannot simply take an emancipatory stance from the "Standard English rules" tradition (which is a major concern in ELF research; cf. Jenkins et al., 2011). At the same time, the interpreters' perspective must be informed by theoretical advances, for neither nonstandard English nor Standard English can or should be decreed in learner and user contexts. As Kohn (2011) points out in his presentation of "my English condition," the two are not incompatible or irreconcilable. From a social constructivist point of view, one can, by (psychocognitive) definition, always only build up one's own English. Accordingly, whether a learner or user sets Standard or nonstandard English as his or her aim comes second, because he or she can only have his or her own idea or representation of this "standard" as a goal. Interpreter trainers and ELF researchers alike must therefore look realistically at the various conditions under which English is used as a lingua franca (which is, in fact, what the pragmatic turn in the study of ELF is increasingly about) and address questions such as the following: What are the source texts produced by nonnative speakers like? What are the particular difficulties they present to the interpreter? What are the repercussions on capacity management? What are the different types of accommodation efforts called for by what kind of nonnative audience? and What other factors play a role in ELF settings and may render the interpreters' task more difficult?

Given the great number of variables, factors, and hypotheses involved, redesigning interpreter training to incorporate an ELF perspective will be important work. Descriptive empirical efforts should be accompanied by publication of reports on the measures, methods, and materials found to be useful in training contexts. The collection of ELF-related material should be systematized and made accessible as open sources. ELF corpora, such as VOICE,[3] TELF,[4] or ELFA[5] (cf. Kohn, 2011), could be exploited to filter out L1-specific ELF features to be grouped together in blocks of Englishes. Knowledge of the "family resemblances" they reflect would greatly facilitate the interpreters' work. Most of all, analysis of ELF-specific source texts and description of the resulting challenges and problem areas must get under way, so that typical stumbling blocks can be identified and viable didactic measures and consequences suggested.

Acknowledgment

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[3] VOICE (Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English): http://univie.ac.at/voice/
[4] TELF (Tübingen English as a Lingua Franca): http://www.telf.uni-tuebingen.de/
[5] ELFA (English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings): http://www.helsinki.fi/englanti/elfa/

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