

Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso

**ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (ELF):  
CULTURAL ASPECTS IN BRAZILIAN EFL CLASSES**

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apresentado ao Departamento de  
Língua e Literatura Estrangeiras, do  
Centro de Comunicação e Expressão,  
da Universidade Federal de Santa  
Catarina, para obtenção do título de  
Bacharel em Letras Língua Inglesa e  
Literaturas.

Advisor: Professor Dr. Gloria Gil.

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Prof. Marimar da Silva, Dr.  
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina



To my Grandma C. da L. Reinert (*In  
memoriam*)  
To Meggie Ninas (*In memoriam*)



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To my best friend, sweetheart, the great supporter and love André  
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teachers

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“One of the great temptations for an immigrant is to go native the whole way, start eating canned soup, white bread, and Jell-O and hide one’s passion for sausages smothered in onions and peppers and crackling in fat. I read Emerson and Thoreau and other New England writers and loved them, but I knew my identity was different. I was already a concoction of Yugoslav, American, Jewish, Irish, and Italian ingredients – and the stew wasn’t ready yet.

There were more things to add to the pot  
More identities. More images to cook.”

(Charles Simic)



## RESUMO

Nos últimos anos, muitos pesquisadores da Linguística Aplicada têm afirmado que, como o Inglês hoje em dia tem um novo status, ou seja, tornou-se uma Língua Franca, é necessário criar uma maneira diferente de ensinar. Essa nova perspectiva, aqui chamada de Inglês como Língua Franca - ELF, implica abandonar as práticas tradicionais na sala de aula que dão ênfase nas variedades padrão de Inglês (Inglês Americano e Britânico basicamente) e na precisão de pronúncia e na cultura de países do círculo interno (Ex: EUA e a Grã-Bretanha.) Em vez disso, a perspectiva ELF favorece a inclusão de diferentes variedades de Inglês na sala de aula, uma ênfase na comunicação ao invés da precisão de pronúncia e em aspectos culturais locais e globais que tentam evitar preconceitos linguísticos e/ou culturais. Com base nessa nova visão para o ensino de inglês, esta pesquisa, qualitativa e não intervencionista, teve como objetivo investigar as relações entre ELF e cultura, em aulas de inglês como língua estrangeira (EFL) de dois grupos de alunos do curso extracurricular, da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), em Florianópolis, SC. Mais precisamente este estudo investiga se a abordagem de ELF impacta as crenças e as práticas de dois professores na sala de aula; como eles lidam com a cultura no dia-a-dia; e quais são suas crenças sobre cultura. Os dados foram coletados e analisados a partir da perspectiva do pesquisador à luz de algumas teorias, principalmente as de Maley (2009), Rajagopalan (2004), Sarmiento (2005), Kramsch (1993) e Mattos (2011). A fim de realizar a análise dos dados, em primeiro lugar, 16 aulas dos participantes (oito de cada) foram gravadas, e entrevistas individuais realizadas e transcritas. Em segundo lugar, as ocorrências locais e globais foram ressaltadas. Em terceiro lugar, as comparações e conclusões, a partir das respostas e ações dos participantes, puderam ser feitas, levando em consideração os objetivos desta pesquisa. Os resultados revelaram que os professores participantes parecem ter i) uma perspectiva de ensino voltada para o ELF, ii) crenças contraditórias em relação ao ensino da cultura e iii) práticas de ensino oscilando entre a forma tradicional e a abordagem de ELF. Em suma, alguns sinais em direção à perspectiva do ensino de inglês como língua franca foram percebidos na prática dos participantes. Ambos os professores tentam negociar significados e trazer a realidade dos alunos para as aulas, sugerindo uma visão de ELF como intercultural, podendo gerar menos preconceito linguístico e mais importância à cultura e à língua local. Outros estudos em outros contextos são necessários para se desvendar o impacto do ELF nas

práticas dos professores e no aprendizado dos alunos a fim de melhor compreender as possibilidades de uso do inglês como língua franca.

Palavras-chave: ELF, Interculturalidade, Cultura, Ensino.

## ABSTRACT

In recent years, many Applied Linguists have been claiming that since English has a new status, that is, has become a Lingua Franca, a different way of teaching is demanded. This new perspective, here called English as Lingua Franca – ELF, entails abandoning traditional practices in the classroom, such as an emphasis on standard varieties and accuracy of English (American and British mainly) and on culture from inner circle countries such as the USA and Great Britain. Instead, the ELF perspective favors the inclusion of different varieties of English in the classroom, an emphasis on fluency over accuracy and on local and global cultural aspects trying to avoid linguistic and/or cultural prejudices. Based on this new vision for teaching English, this qualitative interpretative, and non-interventionist research, aimed at investigating the relations between ELF and culture in English as foreign language (EFL) classes of two groups of students from extracurricular courses at Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) in Florianópolis, SC. More specifically this study investigated if the ELF approach impacts the beliefs and practices of two teachers in the classroom, how they deal with culture in day-to-day basis, and what are their beliefs regarding culture. Data were collected and analyzed from the perspective of the researcher on the light of some theories, mainly, Maley (2009), Rajagopalan (2004), Sarmiento (2005), Kramsch (1993) and Mattos (2011). In order to carry out the data analysis, firstly, 16 classes from two teachers (eight each) were recorded, and individual interviews were conducted and transcribed. Secondly, local and global occurrences were highlighted. Thirdly, comparisons and conclusions from the responses and actions could be made, taking into account the objectives of this research. The results revealed that both teachers seemed to have i ) a perspective of education facing the ELF , ii ) contradictory beliefs regarding the teaching of culture and, iii ) teaching practices ranging from the traditional form and ELF approach. In sum, some signs toward the prospect of teaching English as a lingua franca in practice were perceived, since both teachers tried to negotiate meanings and bring the students' reality to class suggesting a vision of ELF as intercultural, a language which may promote less prejudice and more importance to local culture and language. Other studies in other contexts are needed to unravel the impact of ELF in teacher practices and students' learning in order to better understand the possibilities of using English as a lingua franca.

Key-words: ELF, Intercultural, Culture, Teaching.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- CCE – Centro de Comunicação e Expressão  
DLLE – Departamento de Língua e Literatura Estrangeira  
EFL – English as a foreign language  
EIL – English as an International language  
EL – English Language  
ELF – English as a Lingua Franca  
ELT – English Language Teaching  
WE – World Englishes  
NS – Native Speaker  
NSS – Non-Native Speaker  
PPGI – Programa de Pós Graduação em Letras/Inglês e Literatura  
Correspondente  
TCC – Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso  
TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language  
UFSC – Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina
- R: Researcher  
T – Teacher  
St – Student  
Sts - Students  
J – Jess or Jay (Participants)



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## PROLOGUE

### HOW DID THE RESEARCH START?

Recognizing the impossibility of neutrality in any type of discourse (Mattos, 2011), I decided to start this study exposing my contact with the theories and talking about my motivation and personal perspectives to help readers understand my choices and writing. I believe to be central knowing the backgrounds of a writer and his/her reasons to carry out a specific research before reading any work from the researcher, therefore, I will present a brief but full account of my background regarding this study.

In 2011, when I was just starting my undergraduate course at UFSC, I began reading some theories about English teachers' practices in Brazil (which was already my profession back then), the position of the English language in the world, theories on how and why to teach English, and I started to ponder about the role of English teachers in a globalized world. Before that, I had studied English and Portuguese for a few semesters in another institution, though it was not a profound study. At that time, in the year of 2003, I worked as an English and Portuguese teacher in public schools in Palhoça, Santa Catarina. My first years as a language teacher were from 2002 to 2004. Because of economic issues (the College I attended was a private institution) and also lack of interest, I dropped College. Later, I decided to have an experience abroad, before engaging back to my English studies. I had then, the opportunity to go to the USA to study, work and live for some time. I stayed in Boston for four years. I did not have any experience as a teacher there, but I studied in two different English courses. In 2009, I decided to come back to Brazil and engage back to my English studies at the same institution I had dropped. I did it for a couple of semesters and I dropped again, because of a lack of interest in the subjects taught.

In the year of 2010, I was determined to continue my studies at UFSC, so I enrolled at the entrance exam. I passed the exam, which was a nice surprise for me. So, in the beginning of 2011, I started studying in the undergraduate program of *Letras Inglês e Literaturas* at UFSC, in which I had the first contact with the theories I used in this study. My interest for many subjects rose impressively, and I noticed that I could go further with the help of the professors. At a certain moment, I wanted to study more and I looked for Professor Gloria Gil in her room. In this conversation, she invited me to attend one of her classes at the PGI program, accordingly I did, and, since then, I have been reading about

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), globalization, culture, pedagogical practices, and the role of the English teacher in foreign language classes, especially in Brazilian contexts.

In my third year in the course, I was dealing with ideas and possibilities for a research, whilst teaching English, observing the practices of my colleagues, and reading. From these experiences altogether, I decided to find out how teachers position themselves towards a globalized world, if ELF was just a theory or a reality, impacting teachers in class, if the use of ELF was conscious or not, and many other questions regarding English teaching and cultural backgrounds. After some more readings and professors' advice, I decided to write my *Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso* (TCC) about ELF and pedagogical practices. As the readings continued and the advices too, the focus of my TCC ended up being broader, since global and local culture aspects have been added to this work. On the next pages, I will present the Introduction and the definitions used in this study.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has long been discussed by many authors and analyzed by researchers and teachers from all around the world. By ELF, it is understood that English has a position that no other language has ever had, and that it is the language spoken among Native Speakers (NS) and Non-Native Speakers (NNS) (Maley, 2009).

Seidhofer (2004) affirms that ELF is the language of communication among people who speak different first languages and have different backgrounds; furthermore, the majority of English speakers in the world nowadays are NNS. Kachru (1985) makes a clear division of types of English, by posing the existence of three circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle (See Figures 1 and 2 below).

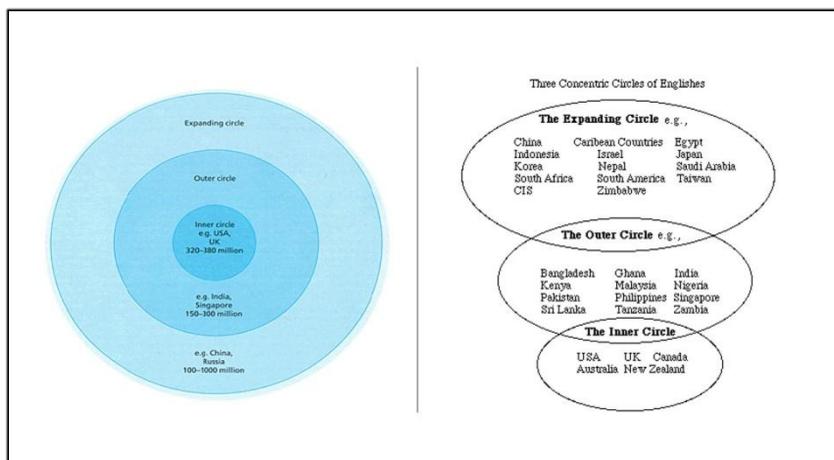


Figure 1 and 2: Types of circles of the use of English<sup>1</sup>

In Brazil, the English language seemingly has the status of a foreign language, i.e., teachers and learners seem to give the language too much importance and overvalue the NNS' Standard English, accents, habits and culture, and sometimes undervalue their own local culture, habits, accents and other aspects regarding their own nationality (Moita Lopes, 1996). Teachers should reckon that there is no neutral English

<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.transpacificproject.com/> and <http://world-englishes-and-their-features.blogspot.com.br/2013/04/the-blue-circle-model-of-kachru.html>

teaching and only after this recognition they will be able to choose the cultural approach that best fits their classes and the reality of their students. Pondering on this issue, it is important for teachers to understand their position toward the new possibilities of the English language use and teaching.

The values that Brazilian English learners/teachers seem to give to NSs might make them feel behind, since, according to the more traditional perspective, to speak similarly to NSs is half way to become a better speaker, able to gain credits from a NS-interaction and, just then, become important. Many teachers might highly consider NSs, consequently, they might teach their students how to speak as a Native, sound as a native, act or think as a native, and these beliefs may be dangerous for the Brazilian culture which is still not strongly fixed according to Rajagopalan (2003). If ELF is the type of English mainly used in Non- Native (NN) interactions, these interactions *should* have different formats from those used by native speakers (Inner circle), since it is a negotiated interaction, people can show themselves, their reality, their thoughts and their voices, in order to have a real communication, building their own identities in the process instead of copying another's (especially in terms of culture).

The English language is more often used **by** NNS than by the supposed owners of the language, that is, the native speakers. This implies the appearance of new accents and forms of the use of English, new beliefs and cultural backgrounds of speakers. Therefore, based on these ideas, teachers can demystify the superiority of the NS (Rajagopalan, 2003 *apud* Sarmiento, 2004). Nevertheless, it is essential to know if teachers are working with these specific issues to develop their students' cultural awareness and, if so, how their doing it, and if they are teaching based on the ELF perspective. By using the concept of ELF in the classroom, the local and the global culture encounter a common point in pedagogical practices (Mattos, 2011). Bearing in mind this new perspective of teaching, the English teacher can prepare students to interact, envisioning the great variety of speakers from the many countries that make use of English as a Lingua Franca, as well as to represent themselves without undervalues or linguistic prejudices. This language teaching-learning approach can be called communication without borders.

In order to share a full view of this research background, in the next sub-section I will present the definitions of ELF and culture, respectively.

## 1.1 DEFINITIONS

For this research, I selected some key definitions of English as a Lingua Franca and culture, to illustrate some meanings given to the broad use of English in the world.

a) **English as a Lingua Franca** is the language spoken among people who do not share either the same native language or a common culture (Seidlhofer, 2001, 2005). It is a different concept from English as a Foreign Language – (EFL), which has been the traditional way of naming the teaching of English as a language used only by the ideal speakers of the Inner Circle Countries;

b) **English as an international language** is the language used in intranational and international communication (Seidlhofer, 2005);

c) **English as a Global Language** is the language recognized with a global status in every country (Crystal, 2003);

d) **World English (WE)** is the language spoken across the world routinely in business meetings, trade fairs, conferences and so on (Rajagopalan, 2004);

h) **Culture** is something built along the years by a society or a group of people parting from their behavior, values, beliefs, habits, institutions and traditions, as objects and material life. (Mendes, 2004 *apud* França & Cynthia, 2008); or behavior and habits, information, language and history (Sarmiento, 2004).

All of these definitions are going to be discussed in the review of literature and throughout this study.

## 1.2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

As already suggested, the status of English has changed in the last years, from a language that belongs to some, mainly people from Great Britain and the USA, to a language that belongs to many, that is, to those who use it regardless of nationalities and which is used in many cases for international communication. In this study, I intend to know if the concept of ELF has any impact on teachers' beliefs and practices, in a context where English is considered a foreign language. Bearing in mind that if teachers perceive the concept of the English language as a lingua franca (ELF approach), their way of approaching English teaching will be different, more open to varieties, consequently, their teaching approach, in a broad sense, will be different from the ones that perceive the English language as the language of the native speaker (Standard approach), where English teachers value the native language,

culture, accents, values and so on. In other words, I want to investigate if this new status of the English language changed the models of teaching in local communities.

Departing from these general objectives, in the next sub-section I will present the specific objectives of this study.

### 1.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The specific objectives and research questions of this study are:

- 1) What are the teachers' beliefs about culture (or about the teaching of culture?) in the classroom?
- 2) Do the teachers have any preference of cultural aspects? How do the teachers work with/approach the global and local aspects of culture to develop their students' cultural awareness?
- 3) Do the teachers focus more on meanings or on formal aspects of the Standard English language? Do the teachers correct students' errors/mistakes during the class? How do they do it? Does it reinforce linguistic prejudice?
- 4) What are the cultural themes that teachers deal with in class?

In order to unveil the English teachers' beliefs and practices, it is necessary to search for certain aspects of approaches and preferences which are believed to be a turning point for a better teaching and the construction of world citizens and critical people (teachers/learners) regarding ELF and culture. Therefore, a close look on teachers' pedagogical practices is crucial. For this purpose, in the next sub-section I will approach the relevance of this study.

### 1.4 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Language transforms and is transformed as time goes by, and new technology is created. People can connect and communicate to each other more easily and broadly. Thus, ELF and discursive heterogeneity became necessary (Moita Lopes, 2008) and necessary tools for surviving in the post-modern world. Due to that, it is important to know how teachers are coping, in the classroom context, with the complexity the English language has become and with the influence of all varieties and contexts of the English use.

Maley (2009) affirms there is a lack of observation in English classes of NNSs teaching and learning surroundings regarding ELF that is capable of showing how this (English) use is being carried so far. In

other words, by bringing this discussion to a reality close to school and teachers' practices, it will be possible to know/unveil if teachers are aware of what they are focusing on in class, as for instance, if they are conscious of the existence of prejudice against NNSs, how they deal with culture on a daily basis and what are their beliefs regarding culture, to mention some possibilities.

In the next section I will present the Review of Literature used in this study.



## 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To better understand the English language (EL) nowadays, it is necessary to be aware of its history and progression/development in the world. In the next sub-section, I will give a brief explanation of the events that happened in the world related to the EL; moreover, an overview of some authors' point of view about the spread of the EL and, an account on how people involved with the language are acting towards it. Furthermore, I will briefly discuss the international communication through ELF and some implications regarding prejudice.

### 2.1 HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English Language has spread massively due to many factors, among which it is possible to cite the well succeeded England colonization , the USA dominance after the World War II, alongside with the capitalism, the boost of industry corporations, and, more recently, due to the advent of technology (Rajagopalan, 2003). The importance of the English language in the world nowadays may also be explained by the importance of the British Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and by the predominance of the USA economy, dating from World War II, which generated the so-called new-colonialism or imperialism (Moita Lopes, 2008)<sup>2</sup>.

### 2.2 ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE MODERN TIMES

English is the most used language in many daily interactions among many peoples for many reasons, and the number of speakers is increasing rapidly throughout courses and schools all over the world. Big companies that rule the market nowadays have a great deal of business done in EL and the consumers (we all) are extremely connected and exposed to it in one way or another.

The more the expanding circle countries use the English language, the more NNSs of English the world will have in the near future. The increase in the use of the EL, especially after the invention of the internet, has put it in the position of the major language for/of international communication, and many varieties of English have emerged (Seidlhofer, 2001). People from different countries and

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<sup>2</sup> My translation.

different beliefs are brought together in a virtual world, and the language for their communication is the EL. Even if the users add to it many particular aspects of their own language, they are still making use of the EL.

According to Kachru (1985), some of these new Englishes come from the expanding circle countries, i.e., varieties of English from countries in which English is a foreign language. According to Maley (2009), there is some prejudice or discrimination towards the varieties of English from NNSs and such discrimination should not exist.

The strategy to disregard prejudice can be considering English a Lingua Franca (ELF), a new perspective for teaching. When teaching in this ELF view, teachers may give more value to local identities and expressions, instead of teaching students how to communicate as a typical NS and bringing into the classroom only information about the Inner countries' culture. Thus, favoring the varieties of prestige, as for example, Americans or British, becomes obsolete. What teachers really do in class is an attempt to teach a Standard variety, according to Maley (2009), and this is suitable, but the question is whether or not they are adapting it to local needs.

People need to make use of the EL according to their needs (Maley, 2009). Sharing the same point of view, Kachru and Smith (1985 *apud* Berto, 2009, p. 14) say that:

“Englishes” symbolizes the formal and functional variation in the language, and its international acculturation (...). The language now belongs to those who use it as their first language, and to those who use it as an additional language, whether in its standard forms or in its localized forms.

And as Seidlhofer (2005, p. 339-340) asserts:

(...) English functions as a global lingua franca. However, what has so far tended to be denied is that, as a consequence of its international use, English is being shaped at least as much by its nonnative speakers as by its native speakers. This has led to a somewhat paradoxical situation: on the one hand, for the majority of its users, English is a foreign language, and the vast majority of verbal exchanges in English do not involve any

native speakers of the language at all. On the other hand, there is still a tendency for native speakers to be regarded as custodians over what is acceptable usage.

(...) being able to pronounce some sounds that are often regarded as ‘particularly English’ but also particularly difficult, namely the ‘th’sounds /θ/ and /ð/ and the ‘dark l’ allophone [ɫ], is not necessary for international intelligibility through ELF.

As Rajagopalan (2004) discusses, if the objective of ELT is international communication, why to focus on Inner circle varieties, especially in times of globalization when teachers have a great deal of varieties and options to work with?

According to Widdowson (1994) when people have an accent other than native-like, they will probably be prejudiced and taken less serious when interacting. Unless English teachers are aware of such differences, they will find difficult to prepare students to the globalized world. Teachers need to understand the influence of the Standard English and perceive it as a world language, bringing it to their own context to better fit their students’ needs, disclosing as many aspects of the language as possible and the variety of accents students will face when interacting and negotiating meanings.

## 2.3 ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA AND CULTURE

ELF and culture seem to be highly connected, according to some late discussions (Rajagopalan, 2004; Maley, 2009). In the expanding circle countries, as for instance Brazil, which developed a high valued status for English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the Standard language has become the most regarded variety.

Nevertheless, from the ELF perspective, in order to be cultural or intercultural competent, it is necessary to be exposed to the largest varieties of English as possible and comprehend differences in meanings, expressions, words, accents and cultural backgrounds as well as one’s own. English teachers can have a role in this context. They may open room in the class for these possibilities to their students, and contribute to the formation of world citizens and intercultural communicators, rather than encouraging them to become ‘native speakers of English’.

ELF is all about interculturality; it is about global and local culture as the two sides of the same coin. They both exist separately, but there is a junction of meanings toward them, one cannot exist without the other. Nowadays, global and local aspects (of the English language) also go hand-in-hand.

The concept of ELF approach seems to encompass a great variety of speakers and different reality perceptions, enlarging views about the world cultural surroundings, whilst, the local perspective cannot be forgotten in ELF teaching practices. The teaching of culture should not follow a circle countries' model, but a model that seeks to associate the ELT with the local culture (Maley, 2009; Mackey, 2003 et al.). Every context is different; every culture has its own needs and goals. ELF, therefore, is the context used by meanings of international communication.

We, as people, transform/change every day, and language is not different. Remembering the citation in the epigraph of this study, we can reflect about this every-day transformation, as we are the pots and we can add as many ingredients to the pot as we may, and the stew is never ready, the adaptation is constantly being made. People need to adapt to new realities especially because, as already suggested, language needs adaptations on both global and local needs.

Brazilian culture and Brazilians' varieties of English, that is, using English with a Brazilian accent, have to be taken into consideration in order not to create feelings of inferiority in learners; while global cultural aspects should be worked critically, with the teacher's help as a **mediator** in discussions. Since accepting that ELF is not just what we call a variety, but a new way of understanding a language, and, in this case, the English language, teachers can start elaborating possibilities in their English classes to see English from this different perspective.

If a language becomes international, as for example ELF, it stops being a native variety, since it is now a language which represents many people around the world, and if it was to be considered native then, it would be local language from USA, England, or Australia and so on. Since this is not the case, Widdowson (1994 *apud* Rajagopalan, 2004, p 112) says that: "[English] is only international because it is not their (NSs) language", it has suffered many cultural influences from other cultures and, NNSs use it to communicate, sometimes, without even having contact with NSs. In this sense, we can say that the native standard is not necessary to communicate, since we can negotiate

meanings in the case of some intelligibility problem, which has been done as far as ELF is concerned.

The problem of not giving value to local culture and accents, according to Rajagopalan (2004), is that “[the figure of the NS], among other things, has bred an extremely enervating inferiority complex among many NNS-learners/teachers, and helped spawn unfair and discriminatory hiring practices”. Consequently, NNSs may end up believing that their culture or accents are worse and uglier, comparing to the NS’s. There, lies the teacher’s role: to counteract the tendency for a monochromatic culture<sup>3</sup> and overvalues of the NS and their variety.

Moita Lopes (2008, p. 312) understands that English is “an extremely hybrid language [...] that hybridizes others (and it continues hybridizing itself), making feasible global communication”<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, it is reasonable that teachers also hybridize it for the achievement of their own purposes in local classes and prepare students for this hybridism outside the classroom, so students can appreciate other cultures and be proud of theirs, feeling part of a bigger construction.

The concepts of cultural behavior, historical culture, language culture, and so on, can be added to the pot of the intercultural teaching inherently linked to the concept of ELF, which is basically understanding and respecting others and being understood when facing other contexts. Kramsch (1993) calls this intercultural perspective a “third” place. In other words, this perspective fosters the development of a person who is capable of changing myths and beliefs, adapting reality, not overvaluing NSs and their culture, whilst understanding them, nevertheless, valuing most importantly their own; a person who is capable of seeing the visible and invisible beliefs.

Furthermore, students may not be encouraged to be just analyzers of culture, but and most importantly, builders of culture. In this respect, according to Maley (2009, p. 192):

ELF cannot be conceived as a permanent form of English, since its users do not constitute a stable community. Rather, it is a variety in constant flux, involving different constellations of speakers of diverse individual Englishes in every single interaction.

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<sup>3</sup> Rajagopalan (2003) says that *globalization* might become a euphemism for *monochromatic universal culture*.

<sup>4</sup> My translation.

Hence, teachers are able to create in class a freer environment in order to teach the EL inside the context of use they find necessary prioritizing their students' needs and cultural background. NNSs, thus, should not learn native-like English for successful communication and messages conveyance, but rather crave for intelligibility using their own variety. By doing this and accepting that EL can be used in many distinct ways of transmitting messages, prejudice, for instance, may become a problem of the past. In this respect, ELF is then, a freer concept of the use of EL, especially when it comes to pronunciation and certain grammar structures. I say "certain" because not every change can be acceptable, and this may vary from case to case, i.e., context to context.

For an expanding circle country like Brazil, ELF is highly recommended, since the status of EFL and NSs is elevated, the prejudice against those who do not speak like a native is also elevated, and, for this to change, new pedagogical practices are needed. About this issue, Crystal (2008 *apud* Maley, 2009, p.193) states that "[i]t is a basic principle of discourse analysis that the meanings of words cannot be grasped in isolation, but must take into account the whole situation in which the words are being used", meaning that, the contexts of use must be considered in order to fully understand a message. So, teachers can start negotiating meanings instead of inhibiting the learners by making them repeat what Americans or British people say, do, or think. Being supportive of the concept of ELF does not mean to tolerate errors, but rather to encourage students towards forms of real communication and interactions they may engage in; it is more about messages conveyance other than grammatical precision or accent concerns. Therefore, ELF can be seen as the language through which NNSs proudly add local flavor into EFL without feeling inferior to others (mainly the ideal native speakers).

According to Mattos (2011, p. 159), "ELF affects profoundly all the elements involved in English teaching: pedagogical practices, English teachers, learners, pedagogical materials and the identities generated in the new language" and can cooperate for "subverting the dominant order and reaching for local alternatives"<sup>5</sup>. Thus, ELF would be the perspective in which English teachers would work with negotiation, exchange of information and meanings between *local* and *global* contexts, nevertheless, encouraging students to bring about their own realities to create or transform it. On the one hand, local

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<sup>5</sup> My translation

representations in ET are the particular contexts from a specific community that can be brought to class in order to illustrate language and culture, teaching in a meaningful way to a specific group; as for instance, when a teacher depicts a particular way of ordering a pizza or a group's way of telling a joke. On the other hand, an example of a global representation in ET, can be: how British or Indians order tea, coffee or pizza and if there is any difference regarding the local traditions and the "other's".

There are very few empirical studies of culture in the EFL classroom from this perspective. Among them, Sarmiento's (2004) is worth mentioning. On her master dissertation entitled "Aspectos Culturais Presentes no Ensino da Língua Inglesa", she aimed at identifying cultural aspects approaches in EFL. The study was carried out in an English course with seven (7) teachers and thirty-one (31) students. The data on this qualitative approach with interpretative methodology research was gathered through classroom observation and two (2) recorded classes from each teacher. The author came to the conclusion that the classroom practice does not give opportunity for students to develop their intercultural communicative skills, since it is focused on the transmission of cultural information without considering language use in social interaction.

Sarmiento's (2004) research categorizes and empirically illustrates some types of cultural aspects which were also defined by the participant-teachers. These aspects were: Culture as **behavior/habits**: for instance, what people do, like, eat or dress; Culture as **information**: "culture that appears in the form of information or knowledge about something or somewhere. Compared with education degree and intellectuality" (p. 247); Culture as **language**: when the focus is on the linguistic aspects of the language; and, Culture as **history**, which was defined by the teachers, but no examples from classroom data appeared.

Even though in this work I am using the concepts proposed by Sarmiento, it is important to highlight that culture is much more than that and I share the views of Quaranta (2011), when he says that "To define one single concept of culture is impossible. This happens because culture is subject of many field discussions, as for instance, philosophy, anthropology, sociology and so on", so the viewpoints are difficult to wrap up in a simple concept, thus, a close contextual study is always relevant to understand a particular culture at a particular time. In this same vein, Geertz, 1989 *apud* Quaranta, 2011, proposes that "the human being is an animal tied to a web of meanings that they themselves wove", hence we can recognize the plot of local context and

particularities which envelop the English teaching and all the pedagogical practices under this light. Furthermore, ELF is the decentralized and anti-hegemonic language, and that is exactly what English teachers might use to better adapt to this new world and different contexts.

In the next section I will deal with the methodology of this study.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

This research is the qualitative, interpretative and non-interventionist case study. The reason for this choice is the belief that by observation and field analysis, the results may come into view closer to the regular flow of the class, suffering then, not much influence from the researcher in any aspect. Nevertheless, it is known that there is no other way to observe without being noticed altogether (Rugg & Petre, 2007). Thus, interviews were only made after the groups of students were dismissed or in another arranged moment outside the classroom, in order not to stop any regular flow during classes.

In this view Kamberelis & Dimitriadis (2005 *apud* Mattos, 2011, p. 15) also say that,

(...) although the worries about objectivity and positivism are still strong, especially for fields regarding education studies (...) it seems that nowadays the idea of qualitative approaches are being more often adopted than quantitative approaches and this has become a part of the 'common sense'<sup>6</sup>.

Departing from the research questions, I intended to get enough data to analyze the contexts of the classes and teachers' realities which involved aspects related to ELF culture, mainly global and local perspectives. For that, I meant to understand the position of two English teachers, regarding ELF and cultural beliefs and pedagogical practices, reflect on them, envisioning new possibilities for future practices.

To gather data for my analysis, I wrote an authorization letter to the responsible Department of Extracurricular Courses at UFSC, got the needed signatures and talked in person to the teachers asking for their permissions through a signed consent form<sup>7</sup> to attend their classes from September to October of the current year, 2013. It was a total of 8 classes from each teacher, each class taking 1 hour and 30 minutes, twice a week, at UFSC groundings, more specifically at CCE.

In the next sub-sections, I will deal with the context, the profiles of the two participants and the instruments for the data collection.

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<sup>6</sup> Quotation in the original text. My translation.

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix B.

### 3.1 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The Language Extracurricular Courses offered by UFSC are private courses. The students are people from all ages, i.e., teenagers, adults and senior citizens among UFSC students, technicians, professors, and people from the community, who intend to learn foreign/additional languages for various reasons.

The course offers English classes of all levels, from level 1 to 8, enwrapping beginners and intermediates, advanced 1 and 2, advanced conversation, English for reading, translation, and TOEFL preparation. The majority of the students pay for the course, but others get a scholarship from UFSC, mainly its workers, as an investment in their professional development. The classes are held at UFSC, more specifically at CCE. Each teacher has flexible hours of work and monthly payment. So, classes are offered in the three periods of the day, from Monday to Friday.

The material used by the Extracurricular course, for the advanced level classes, is the book *American Inside Out*, intermediate and advanced, and for the beginning classes, the book *Interchange*, both under the light of the communicative approach.

It was inside this specific context that I observed two groups of advanced level students (I and II) and collected data for this research, which started in September 2013.

### 3.2 PARTICIPANTS

The participant-teachers of this research were from Extracurricular Courses from UFSC, Florianópolis campus, in SC, Brazil. The criteria for this choice were: (1) non-acquaintance with the teachers, in order not to influence their classes or my analysis, and (2) the time/period of their classes, which had to fit in my schedule. After a close analysis, I opted for 5 possibilities of invitations and talked or sent e-mails to the probable participants. Two of them, who I have contacted by e-mail, did not answer me back. So, I assumed they were not interested in participating in the project. Then, I had three other possibilities. I exchanged some e-mails with one of them, and, when I explained the research this teacher stated that the group was too big for the type of research I intended to do, refusing my invitation. The two other possible participants were Jess and Jay. I waited for them after their classes and talked face-to-face, explaining my research in detail. In the end of August, Jess and Jay accepted my invitation and became the

two participant-teachers in this study. Another reason to conduct this study in the Language Extracurricular Course at UFSC was the convenience of its location and the level of the students, which as set in previous meeting with my advisor, should be students from advanced classes I or II. Gender choices were also considered, not to discriminate any, and have both analyzed.

During informal conversations, I asked the teachers to think of a fictitious name in order to preserve their identities. Therefore, the participants' names are either fictitious or chosen by me with their consent. Below, I present the participants' personal and professional backgrounds, which were collected in September and October of 2013.

### **3.2.1 Jess**

One of the participants is Jess. She is 34 years old, born in Birmingham, England. She has lived in Brazil since she was a teenager. Because of that, she does not consider herself either a native British or a Brazilian and this uncertainty applies to languages too. She sees herself as a NS, due to her use of English at home, and as a fluent bilingual, due to her Portuguese knowledge. As a worker and a student, she traveled to England to live for some time. In England, she did not have any difficulty with the local culture since she felt part of it. Regarding the adaptation to the “foreign-native/native-foreign” country, she disliked the British coldness in one-to-one interactions, even from her close family and acquaintances.

She can speak Italian and would like to learn French someday. She is graduated in Letras/Italiano. Jess stated she has always felt comfortable speaking English and uses it daily, at home, with her family and at work.

She has worked as an EFL teacher for 17 years. At the time of the interview, she was working 30 hours per month, 15 hours in the Extracurricular and the other 15 in private classes.

### **3.2.2 Jay**

The other participant-teacher is Jay. He is 52 years old, from Curitiba (PR). Informal conversations with Jay were not as frequent as with Jess, so the majority of the information regarding his personal and professional life was taken from the interview. Jay graduated in Letras Português/Inglês from UFSC and had also studied English in a private course called Centro Cultural Brasil-Estados Unidos and in High

School. He has an English teaching experience of 28 years, and the beginning of his career was at Yazigi, a private English School, where he worked for 10 years. At the time of the interview, he was working 15 hours per week at the Extracurricular course at UFSC. He feels comfortable with the English language and it is the only foreign language he speaks. He is curious about the Spanish language and would like to learn French someday. Jay had a month-experience abroad, in Sarasota, Florida.

Later on, in the data analysis section, I will make a comparison of Jay's and Jess' words, beliefs and actions in class, to a better understanding of their pedagogical practices regarding ELF and culture.

### 3.3 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

In order to collect data, I had the consent terms organized and signed by the teachers and the consent of the head of the Department through an authorization letter<sup>8</sup> by the end of August. In regards to my routine for data collection I planned beforehand to: **a)** observe the teacher-participants' pedagogical practices; **b)** take notes of their everyday practices; **c)** record classes and transcribe relevant sections; and **d)** interview the teacher-participants by the end of the observations.

#### 3.3.1 Classroom observation, note-taking and recording

In the beginning of this study, I intended to observe more classes and more teachers than I did, but along the way, I decided that two teachers and 8 classes of each participant would be enough to collect plenty of data. Therefore, because of time constraint and the amount of information needed, only two participants were chosen. Previously to that, I pondered to investigate public schools or private free English courses. But, because of time constraint, the Extracurricular Course turned out to be the one which best fitted into my schedule.

I observed 8 classes of each participant-teacher, during the months of September and October. In the classroom, I took notes of the lessons observed. The notes were my every-class-watching-helper due to the fact that, at any moment, I could register impressions which could not be noticed in the recordings. The use of the notes was extremely relevant and helpful for latter analysis. The notes were not only taken throughout the classroom observations, but in some moments of

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<sup>8</sup> See appendix A.

informal conversations with the participants. Also, I recorded some classes using a battery tape recorder, from which, later on, I analyzed and transcribed some parts.

Another key element for this research was the interview. The following sub-section gives some details on it.

### **3.3.2 Interview<sup>9</sup>**

Since the observation is not the only relevant mean to get answers, I developed some questions on the subject to make use of in the end of the observations, which were in the mid-October. The interview was intended and developed especially for this research and only for the 2 participant-teachers. It was made up of 29 questions, which aimed to collect personal and background information, and questions regarding ELF implications and teachers' pedagogical practices and beliefs regarding culture. These interviews were conducted individually and in different dates. The interview was recorded in a voice-recorder with the consent of the participants, through a consent-term signed by them. The interviews took 1 hour each.

## **3.4 PROCEDURES FOR DATA ANALYSIS**

In order to carry out the data analysis, first, the recordings of the classes and the interviews were transcribed. Second, local and global occurrences were highlighted. Third, the notes were read and, departing from them, comparisons and conclusions about the two participant-teachers answers and actions could be made, envisioning the objectives of this research.

The data was collected and analyzed from the perspective of the researcher, in the light of some theoretical readings, mainly, Maley (2009), Rajgopalan (2004), Sarmiento (2005), Kramsch (1993) and Mattos (2011). That is why a full account of the researcher backgrounds was given in the beginning of this study, in the prologue, so that readers could be able to understand that the interpretation of the data depended upon the researcher's viewpoints, and, the authors' perspectives used for the development of this study. The excerpts were selected in order to answer the research questions. Regarding the participants' students, their participation during the observed classes was also a focus of reflection when transcribing the class recordings, reading my notes, and analyzing

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<sup>9</sup> See appendix C

the collected data as well, but it was not taken into consideration in this study.

## 4 DATA ANALYSIS

To better organize the data analysis, I will answer the research questions in the order they were presented previously, bringing Jess' and Jay's beliefs and classroom practices, trying to find moments of global and local uses in their classes and preferences, to see if their practices match the ELF perspective.

Regarding the first question of this research: **1) What are the teachers' beliefs about culture (or about the teaching of culture?) in the classroom?** Jess stated she worked with what was natural, using tools as videos, stories, her own stories, i.e., examples from life and the use of technology. At a certain moment, I asked if she dealt with local and global culture in class. The answer was that, with the Brazilian culture, the work was very little. The English culture was her focus. She worked with examples of foreigners' habits, food, beliefs and, sometimes, music and movies, which matches one of Sarmiento's (2004) definition of culture: *Culture as habits*.

Jess asserted that the culture of a target language is necessary to learn such language. In this sense, I can say that the teacher does not separate language and culture, but sees both as one single entangled unit. And again, when asked about her teaching practices on culture and language, Jess said she gives high value to communication, discernment and fluency, always checking if students really understand a cultural topic or the meanings of the activity. The excerpt below brings the participant's view on teaching culture and language.

### Excerpt 1

J: Os alunos acabam se abrindo, se interessam mais e, quando a gente fala de cultura, estão todos prestando atenção. E parece que isso abre a cabeça deles (inaudible) eles ficam mais engajados, eles ficam mais curiosos, eles ficam mais interessados.

**(Interview, in October 2013)**

So, she believes that working with culture is a way of creating a more proper environment, thus, getting students' attention, curiosity and engaging them more. The interesting point here, regarding the ELF perspective, is that Jess stated she works more with the foreigner's culture instead of the local one.

In a student's presentation in Jess' class, for example, the African countries of Kenia and Tanzania were brought by the student, as she had an experience abroad and wanted to share it with the group. We can notice that, as Jess had commented in the interview, the students were very interested and engaged, since the subject was fascinating to them, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

### Excerpt 2

St<sub>1</sub>: It's strange when the Police charge to the taxi to pay.

St<sub>2</sub>: Yes, it's a poor country but it's rich in culture. I went there to do social work. To teach English and Math for 100 kids.

T: What about drinking water there?

St<sub>2</sub>: You have to buy it!

St<sub>3</sub>: What is the name of the...

St<sub>2</sub>: The project is called "50 sorrisos" and it accepts donations of 20 reais per month.

St<sub>4</sub>: There was the place of the attacks. **(Reference to the attacks on the Mall in Kenia)**

St<sub>2</sub>: That's why I bring this because of the attacks you can think "Oh, it's so dangerous!" and no, this is unique situation. **(Class observation, 7, October 2013)**

In this discussion, the students (and the teacher as well) negotiate differences and demystify generalization and stereotypes about other country. I could notice that the teacher participates just once, making a question and accepting the information brought by the student, but opens room for real interaction in the target language.

As for Jay, when asked about the importance of culture in class, he answered he did not believe the culture of a language to be relevant, although he affirmed that the language reflects its people, showing divergent beliefs, as can be seen below:

### Excerpt 3

R: Ao aprender uma nova língua é importante pra você aprender cultura?

J: **Não necessariamente.** (...) Óbvio que se eu tiver acesso à língua francesa eu vou poder ler mais livros, eu vou assistir mais filmes, ver sites e tal, vou aprender mais, óbvio, mas eu sou curioso,

sempre gostei da parte cultural, da parte da história geral, do mundo, então, não é a língua, eu não vou precisar da língua pra isso oh, a língua me traz isso, me traz aquilo, não vejo por aí, **não vejo a língua como um instrumento de transmissão de cultura.**

(...) **o modo que a língua se constrói se reflete como um povo vê a vida, como um povo vê o mundo, a maneira como a língua foi elaborada, né. A língua reflete a visão de mundo, né.**

J: **Cultura eu nunca tento...** é aquela coisa, eu tento de uma certa maneira fazer com que eles tenham uma postura, senão crítica, despertem pra se perguntar alguma coisa, né. Eu acho que você ter uma postura crítica já é um outro momento. (...) E como **cultural eu tento comparar**, porque não. Brasil e EUA, Brasil e Inglaterra, você compara tudo, Florianópolis com Blumenau, SC com PR, com SP, Bahia, não fazendo um juízo de melhor ou pior, mas aqui é assim, ali é assim, isso tem consequências x aqui e y lá. **Não com juízo de valor pra não gerar preconceito**, porque aí é preconceito, aqui é melhor lá é pior ou...

R: Você procura trabalhar as questões sociais, culturais...

J: Isso! O que que tá por trás, o que que aquilo implica...

Eu não acho que eu tenho o papel de fazer com que eles sejam críticos, eu acho eu tenho que fazer com que eles sejam pelo menos curiosos. Mas não dá as respostas, posso dar a minha opinião quando perguntarem e tal, mas não é doutrinação.

**(Interview in October -2013)**

Apparently, Jay seemed to believe that the development of critical citizen is not his role and, because of these beliefs toward culture and pedagogical practices, Jay tended to focus more on the activities of the course-book in his classes. Negotiations in class were sometimes interrupted by the teacher to offer grammar explanations or opinions without giving voice to students, focusing on grammar and on the Standard variety of the English language (Maley, 2009). In some classes, however, he worked with themes/topics in a deeper way, making intriguing questions, which became food for thought for the students.

It was possible to perceive some contradiction in the beliefs of the participant-teacher regarding the teaching approach. In excerpt 4 I could notice some contradiction taking into account what Jay said in excerpt 3 and making comparisons between his beliefs and practices.

#### **Excerpt 4**

T: If you commit a crime of corruption ...

St<sub>1</sub>: In Brazil, you have to repair and go to jail, and some companies take advantage.

St<sub>2</sub>: They stay jail in Brazil, you have to pay for what you did and prevent...

T: Are you saying that jail doesn't prevent?

St<sub>2</sub>: (Silence)

T: I read a report today that by the time of SOS, the Amazon will have lost the (inaudible) it has today.

St<sub>3</sub>: We have about the same age, and people said the petrol would disappear in 10 years.

T: The problem of the Amazon is not paper anymore, but the cattle.

St<sub>2</sub>: Brazil has a problem in the law.

T: The law is not the problem but law enforcement.

St<sub>2</sub>: Law is a problem too! Our law considers property more important than life!

T: Brazilians think, if I don't agree with a law, I don't follow, so people don't follow! **(Class observation- September 2013)**

Apparently, Jay does not realize that he works critically with the themes brought by the book from the perspective of the local culture. Therefore, despite saying that he did not believe he had any role dealing with culture more critically and did not believe the culture of a language to be relevant, he, in some moments, provoked deep discussions in class about polemic themes, regardless of his belief, as shown in the excerpt above. In that moment of the class, he and his students discuss a legal issue in a Brazilian cultural context. This corroborates Sarmentos's research (2004), in which she depicted culture in class as behavior/habits that includes what people do. In this study, the class discussion was about the Brazilian behavior in relation to Brazilian laws. The intention was real communication.

In order to understand the teachers' preferences in their classroom practices and answer the second research question: **2) Do the teachers have any preference of cultural aspects? How do the teachers work with/approach the global and local aspects of culture to develop their students' cultural awareness?** I asked the participants some culture-related questions, as for instance, if there was any aspect in the specific local or global culture or in the more broadly Brazilian culture they admired. Jess replied the following:

### Excerpt 5

J: Eu gosto muito de **música popular brasileira**, pensando assim, bossa nova. Acho esse aspecto cultural assim, muito bom. Ótimo. É uma pena que a gente não tenha muito contato. Eu tenho um pouco assim, do que resta da **nossa cultura indígena**. Acho que esse contato com eles, com a natureza é uma coisa maravilhosa também. Humn, a **culinária**. Eu gosto muito da culinária daqui. Não é tanto a brasileira, mas pensando assim, a regional. Brasileira também, mas é tão diverso, né, você pensa em Minas Gerais e Florianópolis, a diversidade é muito grande né. Então eu acredito que até a diversidade de culturas dentro do Brasil é muito grande (**Interview in October-2013**).

After analyzing her answers and thinking about her pedagogical practices, it was possible to notice that Jess did not allow her preferences to control her choices in class, (since she had to follow the course book). One example was the fact that, in class, she did not work with songs or Indians (at least) *during my observations*. Nonetheless, the theme of culinary, which was a topic brought by the course-book, was discussed in her classes with excitement and feelings. Although Jess was fond of some cultural aspects, she seemed to put some distance between her preferences and her topic choices for classes. Yet, in some cases, as in the excerpt below, she could have provoked a deeper discussion about the differences among cultures, to increase cultural awareness in her students, but she remained in the surface stating she was afraid of deeper discussion such as politics, religion beliefs and so on, affirming that students who would not agree could stop taking to avoid arguing, consequently, they would not practice the right level of their English.

### Excerpt 6

T: In America (USA) they “wash the dishes” while in England they “wash up”. It’s like they wash just the dishes and leave the rest! (**Visit 5 – September 2013**)

This is an example of what Maley (2009) suggests that many teachers prefer to do: to teach a Standard variety, i.e., to bring examples from what the native-speakers do, say or think (linguistically or culturally). In this case, she seems to favor the British way of expressing, implicitly saying that Americans say the expression in an *awkward* manner while rolling her eyes while saying the American expression and then laughing because of the idea that they (Americans) *do not wash* the rest of the dishes (according to her joke). Maybe, she chooses it unconsciously; still, her preference over British standards is there and can possibly be perceived by students as well. In addition, the teacher seems to have forgotten to bring the local expressions by, maybe, asking students how they say it in their places/local language/culture or even bringing other cultural expression related to the subject.

And again, this example corroborates Moita Lopes’s (1996) *apud* Sarmiento (2004) in which he states that 70% of English teachers make use of American Standards, while 30% make use of British Standards and the other Standards are not considered. The teacher here could create awareness by contextualizing other Standards or even by bringing local expressions and negotiating them with the students.

Other aspects that Jess seemed to value in her class are the cultural topics her students bring to class. She commented that she was always open to improvising in class if the students brought some new information and that there was always room for students’ interests and previous knowledge in class, as can be seen in the following answer she gave in the interview:

### Excerpt 7

R: Existe algum aspecto cultural de outros lugares/países que você valorize?

J: Como é que eu valorizo isso nas minhas aulas. Como eu não tenho conhecimento em outras culturas, a não ser um pouco da cultura italiana

que eu posso expor se estiver num contexto, **os alunos sempre trazem**, como a menina trouxe (...) a cultura africana que foi muito legal, né... uma outra apresentação, que nem fui eu que coloquei sobre isso, foi a, a menina, ela veio falar sobre a época que ela ficou lá (Inglaterra), ela falou que foi muito interessante. Os alunos se empolgaram ela falou sobre *squatting*, e os alunos ficaram, o que que é *squatting*? E ela disse que quando ela foi pra Inglaterra, justamente *she went to a squat*. É muito interessante porque é a invasão de um prédio, e isso é legal na Inglaterra, quer dizer, era até (inaudível) agora mudou, quer dizer, não era ilegal você invadir um prédio e ficar lá e morar lá. Talvez o ato de invasão fosse ilegal, você tinha que fazer isso naquela hora da madrugada, sem ninguém ver, mas a partir do momento que você entrou no prédio, fechou a porta ninguém pode te tirar de lá de dentro. Inclusive eles têm sites onde eles dizem como proceder certinho pra você fazer isso. Quando você entrou você já cola na porta as cláusulas com as leis, que justamente eles não podem te expulsar, te jogar pra fora, não podem usar violência, não podem isso, não podem aquilo, monte de coisa. E usam da lei. Impressionante, né. Até o ano passado que mudou a lei, que acabou sendo ilegal fazer isso. Fazer a invasão.

R: Então eu posso entender que nas tuas aulas acontece bastante troca de informação?

J: Com certeza. Com certeza. Bastante troca de informação. **(Interview, in October-2013).**

Jess, therefore, by being open to this cultural exchange with students, seems to do what Maley (2009) suggests when she encouraged the students to make use of the English language according to their needs and culture present in form of information, which would be a signal of an ELF way of teaching. There was an episode in one of Jess' class, about *typical dishes*, where she also brought local aspects to class by asking about her students' places of origin in order to make them talk about *their places' typical food*. She used this good strategy to bring the

students' voice and local culture regarding habits (Sarmiento, 2004) to class, consequently engaging all of them in the conversation.

Regarding cultural beliefs, Jess stated she would not work with Japanese culture or culture from a community or people she did not know about, for instance, although, she was open to student's knowledge sharing about varieties of cultures. In her opinion, for teachers to work with a specific culture in class, they must have knowledge about the subject. And in case of a cultural aspect brought by her students, she would then accept as exchange of information, matching Sarmiento's (2004) idea that information is one aspect of cultural representations.

During her classes, Jess also enjoyed promoting debates and cultural comparisons to broaden the students' points of view regarding the *other*. By doing so, Jess created a comfortable atmosphere to her class. She accepted and incorporated the students' backgrounds and choices to her discourse/class, negotiating and giving the students voice. She positioned herself as a mediator of information, not the source of it (Mattos, 2011; Berto, 2009; Canagarajah, 2006; Widdowson 1994; Rajagopalan, 2003).

As for Jay's answers about cultural preferences, he first answered that he liked to work with every aspect of culture. His statement: "*não tem como falar*" (falar tudo), related to culture, seems to confirm Quaranta's (2011) suggestion that it is impossible to wrap culture in one single concept. On the other hand, he also seems to consider highly important to deal with local culture, as we can see in the following excerpt:

### Excerpt 8

R: Quais os aspectos culturais que você gosta de trabalhar em sala de aula?

J: Todos. Adoro o Brasil.

R: Algum exemplo específico que você usa em sala de aula?

J: Tanta coisa. Tanta coisa. A música brasileira, a história do país, a história de Florianópolis, a vida do país, o dia-a-dia, essas coisas todas, **não tem como falar** (tudo). (Interview, in October, 2013)

Regarding his practice, I noticed that Jay allowed the exchange of information among students and let them bring and share their opinions freely in class, as shown in the excerpt, in which they talk about law.

### Excerpt 9

St<sub>1</sub>: There is a **law in Blumenau** that said that no **airplane could cross the area** and government would not flight there. They would go by car.

T: Is it institutional?

St<sub>1</sub>: No, no. **stupidity**.

St<sub>2</sub>: In some **cities of South Africa you can't buy alcohol** in the supermarket on Saturday and Sunday. They put you in a jail.

T: Oh, they lock it!

St<sub>4</sub>: Here **in Florianópolis they did the Law to not listen to music in the bus**. I like it. But there is no punishment! (**Class observation 3, - September 2013**).

After understanding the participants' beliefs about culture and observing their practices regarding culture during the class and from the interview, I analyzed the data in order to answer the third question of this research: **3) Do the teachers focus more on meanings or on formal aspects of the Standard English language? Do the teachers correct students' errors/mistakes during the class? How do they do it? Does it reinforce linguistic prejudice?**

In the case of Jess, the analysis of the classroom transcripts shows that, in most of her English classes, the focus is on the messages, not on accents or grammar rules. Yet, in the interview, she acknowledged that she is concerned about accents or grammar rules and corrects her students sometimes, especially Brazilian students, because she believes Brazilians are able to pronounce the words *accurately*. Then, I asked her objectives as a teacher of English, to know if she approached the English language in a Standard-based or in an ELF-based. The following excerpt brings her perception of the question made:

## Excerpt 10

J: Humn,**propiciar a comunicação** deles com a língua (inaudível)

R: Vc vê seus alunos no futuro podendo se comunicar...

J: Exatamente, **quanto mais accurate melhor.**

R: Qual o seu ponto de vista sobre os sotaques da língua inglesa e os sotaques do brasileiro quando fala inglês?

J: Então, eu acredito que quando o brasileiro quer falar, ele não tem preguiça de posicionar, fazer as posições corretas, ele...ele **tem a capacidade de pronunciar, né, de falar inglês sem muito sotaque**, agora depende da onde, né. Se tiver um manezinho falando às vezes dá uma boa influenciada, eu conheço bastante gente que fala inglês fluentemente, professores e coordenadores que são daqui que falam inglês bem cantado.

R: Com sotaque local.

J: Com sotaque local. Daí é mais forte o sotaque local, do que o sotaque por ser brasileiro. Mas eu acredito que o brasileiro consegue sim **reproduzir os sons corretamente**. Consegue. **(Interview, in October, 2013)**

A tension of beliefs in Jess' words is noticed. On the one hand, she values messages and meanings, showing an implicit adherence to theories related to ELF, in which free communication and negotiation are allowed to meet the objectives of the discourses/messages, regardless of accents or pronunciations, which diminishes linguistic prejudice. On the other, Jess says she insists on correcting her students, because she knows they are able to pronounce the words in English **as they really are** and, thus, showing an implicit adherence to standard ways of teaching the language, focusing on specific sounds, syllables and words, rather than on messages, which may reinforce linguistic prejudice. In this matter, as mentioned in the review of literature, Rajagopalan (1997 *apud* Sarmento, 2004) says it is important to **demystify the superiority of the native speaker**, and Cox and Assis Peterson (1999 *apud* Sarmento, 2004) suggest that teachers should stop emphasizing accuracy or fluent repetition since, for the authors, accents are part of people's identities.

Furthermore, the analysis of her practice showed something different: only once Jess *interrupted the flow of the class to explicitly correct the students*. Therefore, although she believed correction to be important, *this was not her common practice*. She was more inclined to continue talking and ignore some minor mistakes (the ones she considered did not affect intelligibility). This can be seen in the following excerpt from a class about food where she was using the course-book:

### Excerpt 12

T: If you were a food, what kind of food you would like to be?

St: I would like to be pasta because it's easy to prepare and you **didn't lose** too much time in the kitchen.

T: Oh, that's nice, you **don't waste** time in the kitchen. (Class observation 1- September 2013)

Here, again, by not correcting explicitly the student when he said 'didn't lose', Jess **echoed** the student's answer with the correct form. Thus, she seemed to be inclined to construct a freer environment of learning and teaching. Accordingly here, we can see a close connection between her practice and the theories of ELF which support the view that meanings should be considered more important than the formal aspects. The ELF teaching approach/perspective does not mean that teachers are not going to correct mistakes. Language teachers have to make corrections. But this can be made indirectly. In the above excerpt Jess noticed the inappropriate use of an expression – lose time – and corrected it, **paraphrasing** the student's contribution. The inappropriate use of lose in excerpt 12 may impair comprehension and the teacher's role is to correct. The positive point of the correction was that the teacher was very subtle in making the correction. This way of correcting may avoid linguistic prejudice or feelings of inferiority.

According to Rajagopalan (2003, 2004), there is no need to focus on inner circle varieties in order to teach English, accordingly, the class has more natural environment, and, in real life we can always adapt our discourses in whatever language we are speaking.

Also, in Jess's practice there were many examples in which she was really interested in negotiating real meanings with the learners, as for example, in a classroom situation where she and the students were

talking about food in the grandma's house and childhood memories. In that specific class, she mentioned and told a story of a tasteless banana, focusing more on the message than on Standard patterns of the language. This kind of practice encourages the learners to become intercultural communicators and prevents them from having feelings of inferiority or timidity in regards to their accents or utterances (Maley, 2009; Widdowson, 1994; Rajagopalan, 2004).

Similar instances could be noticed in the excerpt below, where Jay favors a non-Standard and free interaction.

### Excerpt 13

T: Have you ever had anything stolen?

St<sub>1</sub>: While I was traveling they entered my apartment...they stole TV.

T: How long after you discovered?

St<sub>1</sub>: I think it was a few hours ago.

T: Oh, after?

St<sub>1</sub>: Yes, few hours after. I think they had the information I was traveling.

Jay, in excerpt 13, did not correct the learner by mentioning how a native would have said in that case, but he simply continued interacting, checking to better understand the message.

Finally, I can say that, in some cases, Jess' choices for correction may promote inferiority feelings, since the teacher left aside the focus on **local meanings** to focus on the form or culture of a Standard model. On the other hand, from Jay's data from classroom, no examples were found that could lead to linguistic prejudice.

Regarding the fourth question of this work: **4) What are the cultural themes that teachers deal with in class?**, both teachers worked with the book themes, but each one using different approach. For example, regarding culture in Jess's classes, the book brought the themes *Taste*, which included activities and texts about food from many countries; the other theme was *Cities*, which highlighted many cultural aspects from known world cities. Jess played a crucial role as a mediator bringing examples, using the internet to illustrate conversations, either by students' suggestions or by personal preference, fostering discussions and negotiation, without stopping conversations for grammar correction. It seems possible to affirm that, in Jess' classes, ELF is used in a natural and freer environment.

As for Jay's classes, the themes were *Law* and *Night*; the first was developed in deep discussions, although Jay stopped sometimes for grammar illustrations, causing a break in the flow of the interaction. He also brought personal and professional examples to class, to illustrate the topics, but the use of the internet was very rare. There were cases in which the students had room for sharing their views and bring their own themes to class, such as dance and traveling, cultural aspects as the main source for interaction. In Jay's classes, negotiation was frequent, when cultural themes were brought, but this did not happen when the class was just based on the book's exercises. By using cultural themes for negotiation, every student can add some information, and the interaction and negotiation of meanings tend to be more effective, as we can see in the following excerpt from Jay's class:

#### Excerpt 14

T: Do you like soccer?

St<sub>1</sub>: Yes, I like to play. I like volleyball and basketball. Nowadays I ...**to watch**. My team is Grêmio.

S<sub>2</sub>: I don't like because they get a lot of money. A nurse **don't**.

T: Oh, but this is different. You can't compare.

T: Nobody will pay to see a nurse, but and artistic...

**St<sub>2</sub>: What would you say about Michel Teló?**

(...) inaudible

St<sub>3</sub>: I think it's unfair!

T: They get money because they bring emotion to people.

(...) inaudible

T: Nobody who drink in stadium provoke confusion. They drink outside and go inside. People who drink beer don't create confusion inside the stadium.

St<sub>4</sub>: In Porto Alegre they sell whiskey and **the problem is...**

T: **The problem is *torcida organizada!*** There is a lot of money involved in it. They travel by bus and they drink *cachaça*. **(Class observation 3-September 2013)**

We can see that the students speak freely because Jay let the conversation flow, focusing on the meaning of the topic. The teacher does not interrupt the conversation to correct the students at any moment. We see that students wanted to participate and Jay discussed with them their preferences, values, and cultural aspects. Consequently, this interaction is not a theatrical conversation preparing students to face native people; instead, it is a real conversation where they are sharing their own views and opinions. This is a freer and real communication in an ELF class. By asking the question: “*What would you say about Michel Teló?*”, the students seemed to be interested in the teacher’s opinions and they tried vehemently to interact clearly and understand the utterances, to find meanings and formulate their own argumentations. The teacher abandoned the position of the source of information and gave room to an exchange of values and opinions. This confirms Mattos’ ideas (2011), when she says that learning is not a set of knowledge fragments, but the aggregation of many meanings, and that includes local aspects.

In the last section of this study, I will summarize the findings presented in this section and show some of the limitations of this study.

## 5 FINAL REMARKS

As suggested throughout this study, the ELF perspective seems to be strongly recommended. It promotes changes in the teaching of English as an additional language, is intercultural, promotes less linguistic prejudice, and gives more importance to the local culture and language. The traditional way of foreign language teaching with an emphasis on one privileged culture, such as the one of the inner circle countries, is, nowadays, obsolete, since it does not meet the purposes of post-modern society. Instead, the ELF perspective is an intercultural approach which promotes less prejudice and gives more importance to the local culture and language.

In the previous century up to now most English books and classes were/are based on American or British culture and their linguistic aspects as the main source of language teaching-learning; this scenario has been changing. Globalization and technology have contributed to this change. In this study, it was perceived that **there are some signs of natural change in the approach of English teaching towards the ELF perspective**, but **some** characteristics of the traditional approach are present in the participant-teachers' practices and discourses.

Both teachers work in a similar way, using the same course-book, and each of them seem to have contradictory beliefs in regards to Standard English (traditional approach) and a new perspective, ELF approach(ELF/varieties of English). They acted in different ways along their practices, sometimes in a more traditional and sometimes in ways which would match the ELF approach.

For instance, while Jay hold some traditional beliefs about the use of the Standard English in regards to Grammar, in some moments of his discourse/practice, he seems to favor a freer work/approach in regards to culture. On the other hand, while Jess' corrections promote the teaching-learning of the Standard English and value the British culture in some instances, her class environment, in many cases, is free and promotes natural interaction.

The participants' differences in practices and discourse could be explained by the teachers' personality and backgrounds. Jess is an easygoing and talkative person, always sharing moments with her students, while Jay works in a more serious manner, following the book and seems to see himself as the source of information in class. Their teaching styles might influence their pedagogical practice choices. Both teachers seem not only to prepare students for real interaction outside

the classroom, but also to give them opportunity for real interaction in class. Jay had more serious discussions with his students and tried to create global/local cultural awareness, although, he shared his opinions more than accepted new ones. On the other hand, Jess was always telling stories and creating a friendly environment, rarely stopping the class to focus on grammar points, which were normally illustrated in the interactions. In sum, both teachers worked with some aspects of the ELF perspective in their pedagogical practices, trying to negotiate meanings and bring the students' reality to class. Also, the book brought themes that were relevant to the students and dealt with different cultures.

This study was based on the observation of two English teachers of two groups of learners in the south of Brazil. More specifically, teachers and learners from the extracurricular course of UFSC, in Florianópolis, SC; therefore, the results cannot be generalized. Other English teachers and learners of the same course, as well as other teachers, learners and courses in other regions of Brazil would perhaps show different results and needs, helping to broaden the understanding of the ELF and culture. Another limitation of this study was the amount of classes observed due to time issues.

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## APPENDIX A - AUTHORIZATION LETTER

## UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA

## AUTHORIZATION LETTER

I, MARIA ESTER W. KOEHLER, coordinator of the Extra Curricular courses at UFSC, hereby authorize the undergraduate student Halessa Fabiane Regis under the number of 11102514 enrolled in this institution, to collect data from the Extra Curricular classes every Tuesdays and Thursdays from the second week of September 2013 to the first week of October 2013, for her TCC research. This authorization is valid only for the time specified above. After this cited date it becomes null and void.

Signatures below:

maria ester w. koehler

Coordenadora de Cursos  
EXTRA-CURRÍCULO - UFSC  
SHAPE 1789/93

Halessa Fabiane Regis

Student

Florianópolis, 09/09/2013.



APPENDIX B - TERM OF AGREEMENT IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA  
CENTRO DE COMUNICAÇÃO E EXPRESSÃO  
DEPARTAMENTO DE LÍNGUA E LITERATURA ESTRANGEIRAS  
FORMULÁRIO DE CONSENTIMENTO LIVRE E ESCLARECIDO

Prezado (a) professor (a),

Gostaríamos de lhe convidar a participar de um projeto de pesquisa sobre Inglês como língua franca intitulado “ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (ELF): CULTURAL ASPECTS IN BRAZILIAN EFL CLASSES”, realizado por mim, Halessa Fabiane Regis, graduanda do curso de Letras Inglês e Literaturas desta universidade, e supervisionado pela Profa. Dra. Gloria Gil. Você está sendo convidado (a) a participar deste estudo por estar no processo aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa em nível avançado do Curso Extracurricular da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina. Por favor, leia este termo de consentimento e, se concordar com a informação aqui apresentada e aceitar participar, assine no local indicado.

**Título do Projeto:** ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (ELF): CULTURAL ASPECTS IN BRAZILIAN EFL CLASSES

**Objetivo do estudo:** O objetivo deste estudo é tentar encontrar instâncias, elementos ou sinais nas práticas dos professores que apontem para a influência da ELF nas aulas de inglês como prática social. Investigar como professores de língua inglesa estão trabalhando com os discursos local e global, bem como os aspectos culturais que estão priorizando no ensino de Língua Inglesa.

**Procedimentos:** Se você aceitar participar deste estudo, terá apenas que seguir normalmente com suas funções nas aulas do extra como professor, responder um questionário por escrito em forma de entrevista. Ainda, eu, como professora (ou pesquisadora?), poderei gravar ou filmar alguns trechos ou algumas aulas no decorrer das observações. Desta forma, para facilitar o contato, peço que preencha, neste formulário, seu nome, endereço e telefone.

**Riscos e benefícios:** Não há riscos em participar deste estudo. Caso você tenha dúvidas sobre o estudo e os procedimentos, poderá tirar suas dúvidas comigo. Ao participar do estudo você poderá ampliar seu conhecimento sobre a língua inglesa e também sobre diferentes culturas. Ao final da pesquisa, os resultados deste estudo serão tornados públicos, mas sua identidade será totalmente preservada e não será incluída nenhuma informação que possa identificá-lo (a). Seu nome e telefone são úteis apenas para uma possível necessidade de contato no futuro.

**Natureza voluntária do estudo:** Sua decisão de participar ou não do estudo não irá afetar você ou sua relação com seu estabelecimento de ensino.

**Contato:** A pesquisadora responsável por este estudo é a Profa. Dra. Gloria Gil. Para contatá-la você pode telefonar para (48)3721-9288, dirigir-se à sua sala, 118, prédio B do CCE, ou mandar um e-mail para glorigil@gmail.com

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### **Declaração de consentimento:**

Declaro que li a informação acima. Quando necessário, fiz perguntas e recebi esclarecimentos. Eu concordo em participar deste estudo.

Nome completo: .....

Telefone: ..... E-mail: .....

Florianópolis, \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Assinatura: .....

## APPENDIX C - INTERVIEW GUIDE

Nome: \_\_\_\_\_

Idade: \_\_\_\_\_

Origem: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Nível de Formação:

 Superior incompleto     Superior completo Especialização     Mestrado     Doutorado

2. Número de horas semanais que leciona: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Anos de experiência como professor de LE: \_\_\_\_\_ anos

4. Como você aprendeu inglês?

5. Qual é o seu objetivo para com os alunos ao ensinar inglês?

6. Qual é a sua concepção de cidadão?

7. Como você se considera como um falante de inglês? (ex. nativo, bilíngue fluente etc.) Você sempre se sente confortável falando inglês? Como são esses momentos?

8. Qual é o seu ponto de vista sobre sotaques na LE? E o sotaque de um brasileiro falando inglês?

9. Você já morou fora do país? Se sim, foi para estudar ou trabalhar? Como foi essa experiência?

10. Você sentiu dificuldades em relação à cultura estrangeira?

11. Existe algum aspecto cultural brasileiro que você admire?

12. Você tentou, em algum momento, se adaptar à cultura estrangeira? Foi fácil para você? Por quê?
13. Quantas línguas você fala? Você gostaria de aprender outras?
14. Ao aprender uma nova língua é importante para você aprender a cultura do país da língua aprendida? Por quê?
15. Em sua opinião, quais as vantagens de se aprender inglês? E quais as vantagens de saber sobre outras culturas?
16. O que você valoriza no ensino de cultura e língua?
17. Existe algum outro aspecto cultural, ou uma cultura de algum outro país, que você valorize?
18. Você trabalharia, por exemplo, aspectos da cultura japonesa ou francesa em suas aulas de inglês? Por quê?
19. Você ensina seus alunos a se comunicarem com e/ou aceitarem outras culturas? Como você faz isso?
20. O que a tecnologia trouxe às suas aulas? Você pode citar alguns exemplos de uso?
21. O que significa para você o mundo globalizado?
22. Você trabalha aspectos de cultura global e cultura local em suas aulas? Como você faz isso?
23. Se seus alunos pronunciam palavras em inglês diferente da norma padrão, qual é sua reação?
24. Quais os usos da língua você pretende que seus alunos sejam capazes de fazer?

25. O que é para você trabalhar com cultura em sala de aula?
  
26. Quais aspectos culturais você gosta de trabalhar em sala de aula? (Ex. música, comida, filmes, hábitos, crenças, atitudes ou religião, política, sociologia etc.).