ELF and Transcultural Communicative Practices in Multilingual and Multicultural Settings: A Theoretical Appraisal of Recent Advances

Antonio Taglialatela[1]

[1] Department of Human Sciences, University of Basilicata, Italy

Correspondence: Antonio Taglialatela, University of Basilicata, Via Lanera 20, 75100, Matera, Italy.

Abstract

Transcultural communicative practices (TCPs) have become increasingly important in English language pedagogy due to the growing number of multilingual and multicultural educational settings. In this study, I theoretically appraise these practices and place them in the context of English as a lingua franca (ELF) and transcultural communication in the English language classroom. Drawing on Takkula et alii's (2008) claim that all people are products of their native culture and mother tongue from the moment of birth, the paper argues that language students must be educated to overcome their culture-bound assumptions and beliefs and acquire the necessary skills for transcultural exchanges and to this end, ELF is a valuable transcultural communication tool. The benefits and challenges of such practices are also discussed. The benefits for students include enhanced critical thinking, improved communication skills, and increased cultural sensitivity, whereas the challenges include class time constraints, cultural differences, and language barriers. The study concludes with some hints that English language teachers and practitioners can customize and put into practice to implement TCPs in their classrooms and promote students transcultural understanding and communication.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca, English class, transcultural communication, transcultural communicative competence, transcultural communicative practices

1. Introduction

The notion of *transculturation*, initially introduced by Fernando Ortiz in 1942 and later adapted to *transculturality* by Wolfgang Welsch in the late 1990s, has progressively evolved as an engaging field of research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. It has facilitated the development of a new perspective on cultural and communicative globalization, focusing on the multifaceted intersections and rapid growth of "diversity" rather than standardization. Research has demonstrated that communicating transculturally, that is, across rather than between cultures, has become a crucial skill for any individual in today's globalized world (Baker, 2009, 2016, 2020, 2022; Pennycook, 2007; Takkula, Kangaslahti, & Banks, 2008). This has led to an increasing number of studies concerned with the employment of transcultural communicative practices (TCPs) in domains where language and cultural exchanges occur. One such domain is English language pedagogy in multilingual and multicultural settings; here, English tends to be used as a *lingua franca* and is generally employed by non-native speakers as the preferred inter- and trans-cultural communication tool.

However, a theoretical appraisal of the application of TCPs in English language classes is still worthwhile, as this subject continues to be an issue to be tackled in educational contexts where conventional Anglo-centered teaching practices are dominant. Hence, this article aims to add to the current literature on English as a lingua franca (ELF) and transcultural communication through a theoretical discussion of the latest advances regarding the integration of TCPs in English classes and provides English language teachers and practitioners with some hints regarding possible activities to be practically developed by themselves to incorporate TCPs in the classroom. The position and function of ELF and its connection with the development of students' transcultural communicative competence (TCC) are also addressed. In doing so, this study presents a fresh comprehensive view on this topic.

The discussion draws on the premise that people from different languages and cultural backgrounds are products of their native culture and mother tongue, and are engaged in the process of learning their native cultural and communicative skills from the moment of birth (Takkula et al., 2008). Therefore, they must be educated to overcome cultural ties and acquire appropriate skills for intercultural exchange. Thus, I highlight that the field of English language pedagogy plays a vital role in shaping learners' minds and attitudes regarding cultural

awareness and, consequently, needs to be reviewed for adequate implementation of TCPs.

Hence, the following points will be addressed accordingly:

- How do ELF and transcultural competence interplay in the English class?
- What are the TCP's implications for English language pedagogy?
- What are the benefits and challenges associated with TCPs?
- How can English language teachers and practitioners tackle these challenges when implementing the TCPs in their classes?

It must be stressed that when English classrooms or classes are mentioned in this article, I refer specifically to multilingual and multicultural classrooms or classes in which English is used as *lingua franca*, that is, as a co-constructed means of transcultural communication (Cogo, 2015; Lopriore & Grazzi, 2016; Seidlhofer, 2011).

I discuss TCPs and ELF as approaches to teaching English in multilingual and multicultural classrooms where the development of transcultural competence and language proficiency does not only aim to nurture students' language skills but also their competences to understand and engage with the cultural contexts in which the language is used (Byram, 1997, 2021; Kramsch, 1993).

TCPs and ELF are particularly relevant as they are constantly negotiated in such settings (Jenkins, 2015; Mauranen, 2018). While the incorporation of transcultural practices in English classes is essential for enhancing meaningful interaction among students from different lingua-cultural backgrounds (Note 1), ELF highlights the fluidity and diversity of communicative practices in transcultural interactions (Hepp, 2015). Therefore, both are valuable approaches for students to co-construct, use, and shuttle between local, national, and global orientations toward language and culture (Baker, 2022; Seidlhofer, 2011).

Finally, I include indications of the benefits and challenges of integrating TCPs in English language teaching and offer some suggestions to language teachers and practitioners on how to possibly bring them into class.

2. Literature Review: ELF and Transcultural Communication

In recent decades, the global role of English has significantly increased the demand for English instruction. According to the British Council, over 1.5 billion people worldwide are learning English as a second or foreign language (British Council, 2021), with non-native speakers outnumbering native speakers by 3:1. This has inevitably impacted the overall view of English not only as a language but also as an intercultural communication (IC) medium. Brumfit (2001) and Widdowson (2012), for instance, suggested that the high proportion of non-native speakers would result (or has already resulted) in a reduction in the influence and authority of original Anglophone users in terms of ownership of the language and practices of communication. However, English continues to play a dominant role in IC. The term "English as a lingua franca" captures this scenario, making a full understanding of its meaning worthwhile.

Jenkins (2006, p. 159) stated that "ELF refers to English when used as a contact language across lingua-cultures," thus providing a functional definition of ELF. Likewise, Seidlhofer (2011, p. 7) highlighted the critical role of ELF in IC, arguing that ELF is "any use of English among speakers of different first languages [and cultures] for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option." Both claims acknowledged the cultural aspect of ELF communication, which is notable, as stressed by Baker (2011), with the development of relationships between English and other languages involving the multilingualism of most ELF users. ELF users often employ their entire language repertoire to interact, including their first, second, and/or third languages, all of which interweave to create meaning.

Jenkins (2015) reconceptualized her functional definition, redefining ELF as *English as a multilingua franca* (EMF), which reflects a situation of "multilingual communication in which English is available as a contact language of choice but is not necessarily chosen" (p. 73). In the scholar's view, EMF as a construct unfolds the profound nature of ELF inclusively, as most ELF users are multilinguals who "may choose to move strategically in and out of various languages within their entire multilingual repertoires" (p. 73). This also reflects the intrinsic multilingualism of global encounters and fosters the strategy of *translanguaging*, which implies that learners use their entire linguistic repertoire to develop their communication skills in a new language (L2, L3, etc., Note 2). Nevertheless, in this study, I stick to the enduring concept of ELF instead of EMF, since when used for inter- and trans-cultural communication, ELF in itself entails linguistic encounters which are not fixed and static, but rather dynamically negotiated through fluid and adaptable interactions (Baker & Ishikawa, 2021, p. 251), as I aim to underline here.

From a research perspective, Baird, Baker and Kitazawa (2014, p. 191) described ELF as a "field that enquires

into various aspects of the use of English among speakers who do not share a first language," in this sense underpinning its conceptualization of how different communities, cultures, and languages can be understood in the context of contemporary global communication.

An important notion emerging from ELF studies is the aspect of inter- and trans-cultural communication in the development of speakers' TCC, namely, the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in transcultural exchanges. TCC requires a speaker's linguistic, sociocultural, and pragmatic competencies, including knowledge of cultural norms, values, beliefs, and communication styles. Tomokazu (2011), for example, underlined the importance of TCC in promoting intercultural understanding and effective communication, arguing that it represents "the ability to understand and communicate effectively with people from different cultures in a way that respects their cultural norms and values" (p. 143).

Similarly, Baker (2015) defined TCC as "the ability to understand, appreciate and effectively use language and other communication systems across cultures and intercultural settings" (p. 2). These affirmations stress the importance of TCC in facilitating successful communication and fostering mutual understanding between speakers from different lingua-cultural backgrounds. By developing TCC skills, individuals can bridge cultural gaps, navigate diverse communication contexts, and establish meaningful connections with people from various cultures.

TCC is particularly important in English language pedagogy because of the global spread of ELF and the diversity of English language students (Baker, 2022; De Bartolo, 2023). Making those English teachers, who are still reluctant to implement ELF-informed practices in classrooms, aware of this key point must therefore be the core of pre- and in-service teacher training (Takkula et al., 2008). Consequently, students can benefit from their teachers' acquaintances in ELF practices and become ELF-aware. Rethinking traditional pedagogy by considering the effective integration of TCPs in language classes requires resilience and great effort, and not all teachers are willing to review or challenge their established pedagogical methods, as this requires time, dedication, and self-denial which not all teachers possess.

2.1 Redefining the Prefix inter- as trans-

The most influential theoretical framework informing TCC in English language pedagogy is the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) model proposed by Byram (1997, 2021). The ICC model stems from the combined development of an individual's IC and communicative competence (CC) and emphasizes the importance of developing learners' awareness of their own and others' cultures, attitudes, and values, as well as their ability to adapt their communication style and language use to diverse cultural contexts. IC is often used synonymously with ICC (Jandt, 2004); however, Byram (1997) proposed the ICC model, clarifying that although IC and CC differ, they should be combined if ICC is to occur successfully (cf. Taglialatela, 2022).

IC refers to people's "ability to interact in their own language with people from another country and culture" (Byram, 1997, p. 71) and is grounded in an individual's cultural awareness and positive attitude toward accommodating cultural differences (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Garrote & Agüero, 2016; Jackson, 2014). As Choy, Singh and Li (2017, p. 2) put it, the prefix *inter-* "suggests a reciprocal exchange of knowledge across cultures. The assumption is that the cultures are tightly bounded and fixed, and the exchange occurs in a common language, usually English, without any significant change to either culture" (see also Singh & Doherty, 2004). There is however one potential criticality in Choy et alii's claim lying in the expression "across cultures" when related to IC since the prefix *inter-* mostly operates in the mode of "between cultures" rather than the mode of "across cultures," as detailed later in the section.

CC develops from an individual's awareness of the sociolinguistic rules and sociocultural contexts in which interaction occurs (Balboni, 2015; Hymes, 1972) and represents a mental dimension achieved through the reification of human experiences in daily interactions. Combining IC with CC results in ICC, which describes a speaker's ability to navigate linguistic and intercultural differences for successful communication. ICC plays a fundamental role in helping students become competent intercultural speakers, particularly in English language pedagogy, with English as key in the teaching process (Taglialatela, 2022).

Baker (2009, 2011, 2016, 2021, 2022) reframed ICC as TCC, contending that transcultural communication occurs through, across, and beyond cultures rather than between or among cultures, as proposed by Byram's notion of IC. This relatively new approach to IC is based on the concept of *transcultural* and *transnational flows* (De Bartolo, 2023; Pennycook, 2007; Risager, 2006), which describes the connection between culture and language as a complex system of fluid and dynamic networks that create different cultural spaces. The notion of transnational and transcultural flows was once used by postcolonial scholars who introduced the term "contact zones" to refer to any social spaces where different cultures interact and confront each other (Baker & Ishikawa, 2021).

This makes transcultural communication the most appropriate construct for the global spread of English because the prefix *trans-* provides a less static view of culture than the prefix *inter-* and is the most suitable metaphor for use in ELF research. Baker (2009) posited that "cultural frames of reference are perceived and made use of in a hybrid, mixed, and liminal manner, drawing on and moving between global, national, local and individual orientations" (p. 145) and argued therefore that it would be more prudent to regard ELF as *transcultural* as opposed to *intercultural*, since it may not be so obvious what the "communication of cultures through ELF is between."

The fields of ELF and TCC studies appear inherently intertwined because the prefix *trans-* is associated with "movement" through and across geographical and sociocultural boundaries in the same way as ELF. ELF research has revealed how English and speakers' multilingual repertoires have been enacted flexibly and contextually in communication across geographical and sociocultural boundaries since the emergence of ELF itself (Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2011). The aforementioned concept of *culture* has gained relevance as a critical aspect of ELF, especially when viewed from a transcultural communicative perspective, as it can be characterized as multiple, complex, changing, emergent, and continually negotiated. I accept the definition of Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2012) who described culture as "too large a concept to capture the complexity of inter-discourse communication" and, therefore, I do not deal with it thoroughly in this paper for the sake of brevity (Note 3). However, it can be affirmed that the rise of cultural diversity in classrooms worldwide has a bearing on the daily issues that English language teachers encounter in providing effective language instruction (Tran, 2010). In response to this diversity, cultural studies need to be included in foreign language pedagogy through TCPs to foster students' transcultural understanding and communication.

3. Method

The methodological framework revolves around the view that people from different languages and cultural backgrounds are products of their native culture and mother tongue and are involved in the process of learning their native cultural and communicative skills from birth (Takkula et al., 2008). Within this framework, a qualitative systematic literature review was employed as a research method (Grant & Booth, 2009; Rubio-Alcalá et al., 2019; Snyder, 2019) to identify and critically appraise relevant research. Specifically, a strict systematic review process was used to collect articles, and a qualitative approach was used to assess them (Grant & Booth, 2009).

This literature review on the context of ELF and transcultural communication in language classrooms was primarily conducted by searching the following databases: Google Scholar, ERIC, JSTOR, and Scopus. Since studies and research in the fields of ELF and transcultural communication abound, many are not fully pertinent to the objectives of this study. Our research method was therefore based on specific keywords, that is, "English language teaching/ELT", "transcultural competence," "transcultural communication," and "English as a lingua franca/ELF+transcultural communication," to ensure theoretical relevance while limiting it to peer-reviewed articles, chapters, and books in English published approximately in the last 20 years.

The selection involved screening titles and abstracts according to pre-determined inclusion and exclusion criteria: studies were included if they focused on the above keywords and were empirical or theoretical; studies were excluded if they did not focus on the discussion of TCPs and the role of ELF as a transcultural means of communication in English classes, were not available in full text, and/or did not contribute significantly to the understanding of how TCPs can serve and be implemented in English classes (cf. Ordóñez Procel, Poma Tacuri, López López, & Correa Criollo, 2023).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The Interplay of ELF and Transcultural Competence in the English Class

The question of which English to teach cannot be overlooked in English pedagogy. As Yazykova, Goncharova and Budnikova (2020, p. 1198) argued, "the linguistic transformation of the English language set the stage for the revolutionary shift in modern language teaching theory. [Therefore, a] conventional approach to teaching English as a foreign language with its accentuation of the UK and the US cultures does no longer meet the requirements of modernity." As different varieties of English have equal dignity, validity, and legitimacy, it is essential to bring this plurality into the classroom as an integral part of a course program. Students must be aware that English is used as *lingua franca* in many contexts and exists in the form of peculiar national varieties (Taglialatela, 2022). The responsibility for deciding which national variety of English and which native-speaker model to conform to lies with the teachers. To enhance students' language skills, it is recommended that they be exposed to an array of English varieties rather than focusing on one. However, certain factors may influence this decision, such as the regulations set by the Ministry of Education at the national level, which vary across

countries. Students must be equipped with specific learning materials and resources to facilitate the creation and acquisition of English-related TCC. What type of English should be used depends more on the "appropriateness" to the context of use than on "correctness."

Regarding ELF, some have claimed that it is not an English variety (Cogo, 2012; Laitinen, Lundberg, Levin, & Lakaw, 2017; Laitinen, 2018), nor is it a "focused variety" (Laitinen, 2020, p. 427), but rather a *variant* used as a flexible and co-constructed means of communication by people from various lingua-cultural backgrounds. Either way, it is crucial to consider the teaching goals required for each context of use (Leung, 2013) and promote the creation of students' ability to understand which English is best suited to any situation (Ehrenreich, 2009). For example, using a standard variety of English in formal settings may ensure clear communication. Conversely, when communicating in multicultural environments, using ELF can be beneficial in achieving mutual understanding through accommodation strategies that aim at effective communication, such as the ability to ask for clarification, pose questions, repeat utterances, use double negations, and paraphrase (De Bartolo, 2023; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2013).

Therefore, on the one hand, through an ELF perspective, teachers can structure their lessons according to the requirements of the type of class they teach and within the limits of their didactic autonomy (Jenkins, 2012; Kohn, 2019; Leung, 2013; Lopriore & Grazzi, 2016); on the other hand, learners can acquire particular communicative awareness because they are encouraged and helped to think critically about how language is used (Seidlhofer, 2015) and to appeal to their entire language repertoire. Thus, students can rely on their ELF competence (i.e., the competence to use it in ELF situations), which is inherently inter- and trans-cultural, as it promotes respect for cultural diversity (Kohn, 2015, 2019; Lopriore & Grazzi, 2016).

In this scenario, the main teaching objective is to enable learners to develop and use the right form of English to communicate successfully under ELF conditions (Kohn, 2014). We refer to *ELF communicative competence* as the process of mobilizing personal knowledge, skills, competencies, and language resources to find suitable solutions for any communicative event in a personal, independent, and responsible manner. The reference model associated with the native English speaker is that of the competent intercultural communicator (Canagarajah, 2013; Mansfield & Poppi, 2012) which, in the English classroom, becomes a competent communicator in ELF situations (cf. Taglialatela 2022).

Reassessing the position of English across the curriculum reveals that intercultural speakers and their evolution as transcultural speakers overlap with that of ELF speakers. Consequently, an ELF-aware pedagogical approach is beneficial for enhancing learners' TCC in traditional English classrooms.

4.2 Implications of TCPs for English Pedagogy

As claimed by Choy et al. (2017), "*trans*-cultural […] practices assume that cultures are not fixed, static, or tightly bounded." The term "transcultural" refers to movements across cultural boundaries that merge to form one's identity. In transcultural interactions, students are encouraged to transcend their language proficiency and explore the cultural aspects of their target language. They can understand and appreciate different cultural perspectives, values, customs, and ways of communication and develop an open mind, empathy, and effective communication across cultural boundaries (Kumaravadivelu, 2008).

TCPs have several implications for English pedagogy, some of which are listed below:

- These practices need to be included in language curricula and materials with a focus on authentic tasks and materials that reflect the diversity of English language learners (De Costa & Norton, 2017), such as literature, films, music, and other cultural artifacts that naturally expose students to the target culture.

- Teachers must be trained to integrate transcultural communicative strategies in their classes, including developing inter- and trans-cultural awareness as well as critical cultural awareness (Kramsch, 1993) (Note 4). Interactive and collaborative activities such as role-playing, discussions, and project-based learning can help promote meaningful exchanges and reflections on cultural differences.

- Assessing learners' acquisition of TCC should be included in language assessment, with a focus on formative assessment to encourage self-reflection and assessment (Deardorff, 2006), as the development of TCC can be considered a lifelong process that extends beyond the language classroom. For instance, learners must be encouraged to engage in transcultural experiences outside the classroom, such as studying abroad, language exchanges, and cross-cultural interactions or projects with local communities.

The development of TCC is a collaborative process that involves learners, teachers, and the wider community. Students should be taught how to share their own cultural background and experiences, as well as learn from others. This process should be facilitated by creating a classroom environment that is inclusive and respectful of diversity

and encouraging them to engage in dialogue across cultural boundaries. When TCPs are implemented in language pedagogy, they can help students become more competent and confident communicators in real-world situations as they learn to navigate cultural differences (Byram et al., 2002), adapt their communication styles, and develop strategies to overcome intercultural misunderstandings.

4.3 Benefits and Challenges of TCPs

Benefits and challenges exist when integrating TCPs in English language classes. This section discusses some benefits and issues that may be encountered during the implementation of TCPs. I have also added ideas for English language teachers and practitioners seeking to approach these practices.

4.3.1 Benefits

- *Enhanced critical thinking*—By exploring facts about different cultures and views, students can improve or acquire the ability to analyze and evaluate information from different sources, such as multicultural literature, news, media from around the world, social media and online discussions, contrastive analysis of texts, and cross-cultural collaborative projects. This enables them to become more self-reliant and think more critically about the world around them (Byram, 2008).

- *Improved communication skills*—TCPs can improve students' communication skills with people from different lingual and cultural backgrounds. This involves developing an awareness and understanding of different communication styles, nonverbal cues, and language usage in different contexts (Kramsch, 2014).

- *Increased cultural sensitivity*—Including TCPs in English language pedagogy can help students become more culturally sensitive. In fact, by learning about different cultures and perspectives, students can develop empathy and understanding toward people from different lingua-cultural backgrounds, avoid stereotypes and prejudice, and promote inclusivity in the classroom (Byram, 2008).

4.3.2 Challenges

- *Class time constraints*—Implementing TCPs in English-language pedagogy can be time consuming and challenging, particularly in classes with limited time. Therefore, teachers must find ways to incorporate cultural content into their lessons without compromising language instruction (Kramsch, 2014). For instance, teachers could encourage students to prepare short cultural presentations in English (or other foreign languages) on topics such as traditional festivals, customs, social norms, or popular art forms. Students could conduct research and present overviews of cultural aspects relevant to English-speaking countries or any other region of interest. By doing so, the teacher can incorporate cultural content without requiring extended class time, schedule short presentations at the beginning or end of a lesson, and allow students to share their findings and insights. This task could raise students' lingua-cultural awareness.

- *Cultural differences*—Students may have different attitudes, beliefs, and values, which may affect their communication styles and preferences; however, they must be educated to overcome culture-bound assumptions. For example, in countries such as Germany, Israel, Russia, the Netherlands, and the United States, direct communication is highly valued and people may overtly express their opinions or feelings. In contrast, in other cultures, such as China, India, and Japan, indirect communication is preferred, and people may use gestures, facial expressions, or body language to convey their messages. When integrating TCPs in English language classes, teachers need to consider such differences and help students understand and adapt to various communication styles; for example, by providing cross-cultural communication tasks in which students can practice both direct and indirect communication techniques.

- *Language barriers*—Students from different lingua-cultural backgrounds may have different levels of English proficiency and regional accents, which can make communication difficult. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of such obstacles and provide students with appropriate support to overcome them (Kramsch, 2014). For example, encouraging students to use different communication strategies such as translanguaging and rewording can be helpful. In addition, creating a supportive classroom environment can benefit English language learners who lack confidence. This can be achieved by encouraging students to take turns speaking, actively listening when others speak, and offering respectful assistance to classmates who speak multiple languages (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

4.4 Ideas for implementing TCPs in the English Class

There are various methods for English language teachers and practitioners to implement TCPs in their classes. However, it is crucial to remember that no one-size-fits-all solution exists to the complexities of cultural diversity, regardless of the approach adopted.

- *Development of teacher's cultural awareness*—English teachers should develop their cultural awareness and understanding before integrating TCPs into their lessons. This involves learning about different cultures through adequate training, attending workshops or conferences, and participating in cultural exchange programs. This is vital because students can benefit from their teachers' acquaintances with such practices and shape their own transcultural awareness.

- *Encouraging student transcultural communication*—Language teachers should encourage communication between students from different lingua-cultural contexts through ad hoc group activities, online discussions, and projects requiring students to network, collaborate, and share their perspectives (for example, see the EU eTwinning Project, where all these activities can help learners broaden their worldviews and expand their horizons) (Note 5).

- *Incorporating cultural content* – English teachers should incorporate cultural content such as literature, music, and art from different countries, as this can help students learn about and appreciate diverse cultural perspectives and traditions (cf. Section 4.3.2).

- *Providing language support*—Teachers should provide language support to students struggling to achieve proficiency. This may include extra language instruction, pairing "weaker" students with more proficient ones, designing specific lesson plans, and if necessary, resorting to monitored support from technologies and artificial intelligence platforms such as DUOLINGO (Note 6), DIFFIT (Note 7), TALKPAL (Note 8), or TWEE (Note 9), among others.

- *Using authentic materials*—Language teachers are advised to use authentic materials such as newspaper articles, podcasts, and videos related to the culture being studied to expose students to real-life language and cultural practices (cf. Section 4.2). However, it is important to clarify that no material is inherently authentic; it is the responsibility of both the teacher and learner to bring authenticity to these materials through usage (cf. Widdowson, 1978).

These ideas can constitute a useful first step in encouraging transcultural understanding and communication among students; however, it is essential to contextualize them in the classroom, and to this end, the teacher's preparation, creativity, and class monitoring capabilities are constantly required.

5. Conclusions

I have considered the most recent advances in the implementation of TCPs in English classes and discussed the connections between ELF and the development of students' TCC in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, where English is used as a co-constructed means of communication.

I argued that TCC is essential to English language pedagogy in today's globalized world and that ELF is a valuable transcultural communication tool for fostering students' transcultural communicative awareness; particularly in contexts where conventional, Anglo-centered teaching practices are dominant. Theories and research on TCC emphasize the significance of cultural knowledge, awareness, and skill development in achieving effective transcultural communication. English language teachers must first hone their TCC skills and then incorporate them into their teaching methods to facilitate their students' preparation. They must expose students to different cultural contexts and implement strategies to adapt their communication styles and language use. In this endeavor, all stakeholders should offer professional training and updated materials.

I discussed the benefits of TCPs, drawing attention to the centrality of students' cultural sensitivity and communication skills and the need to enhance their critical thinking. I then highlighted the challenges of TCPs, insisting on language barriers, cultural differences, and class time constraints, stressing that such practices should be addressed appropriately if certain objectives are to be achieved. As mentioned, by combining tasks and materials that address specific cultural differences, incorporating short cultural presentations to make efficient use of limited time, or employing technologies and AI, teachers can successfully integrate TCPs in their multicultural classes. This approach can foster transcultural understanding and enhance language learning in different classroom settings.

One limitation of this study was its theoretical focus. While theory can be useful, incorporating empirical evidence from real-world scenarios may improve its effectiveness. This limitation can be addressed by teachers

by using some of the hints in the paper to develop practical activities. Another limitation is the vast amount of literature on the domains of ELF and transcultural communication, which makes it difficult to identify all the pertinent research. Nevertheless, the current study has embedded the most influential works on the topic in the discussion, to my knowledge, and presented a comprehensive theoretical appraisal of recent advances including advice that can be empirically developed by English language teachers and practitioners to incorporate TCPs in the classroom.

It is recommended that future research be focused on developing TCC assessment tools and/or investigating the impact of TCC on language acquisition outcomes to gather more practical and confirmatory results.

References

Baird, R., Baker, W., & Kitazawa, M. (2014). The complexity of ELF. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *3*(1), 171–196. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2014-0007

Baker, W. (2009). The cultures of English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, *43*(4), 567–592. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2009.tb00187.x

Baker, W. (2011). Intercultural awareness: Modelling an understanding of cultures in intercultural communication through English as a lingua franca. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *11*(3), 197–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2011.577779

Baker, W. (2016). *Culture and language in intercultural communication, English as a lingua franca and English language teaching: Points of convergence and conflict*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783095100-007

Baker, W. (2020). English as a lingua franca and transcultural communication: Rethinking competences and pedagogy for ELT. In C. J. Hall & R. Wicaksono (Eds.), *Ontologies of English: Conceptualising the Language for Learning, Teaching, and Assessment* (pp. 253–272). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108685153.013.

Baker, W. (2021). From intercultural to transcultural communication. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *22*(3), 280–293. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2021.2001477

Baker, W. (2022). *Intercultural and transcultural awareness in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108874120

Baker, W., & Ishikawa, T. (2021). *Transcultural communication through Global Englishes*. London/New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367809973

Balboni, P. (2015). La comunicazione interculturale e l'approccio comunicativo: Dall'idea allo strumento. *Language Education*, *4*(1), 1–20

Brumfit, C. (2001). *Individual freedom in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2008). Intercultural competence and foreign language learning in the primary school. In M. Byram (Ed.), *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship: Essays and Reflections* (pp. 77–86). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847690807

Byram, M. (2021). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence: Revisited* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781800410251

Byram, M., Gribkova, B., & Starkey, H. (2002). *Developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching*. Strasbourg, France: Language Policy Division, Directorate of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education, Council of Europe.

Canagarajah, S. A. (2013). Redefining proficiency in Global English. In T. Z. Nugrahenny & C. Manara (Eds.), *Contextualizing the Pedagogy of English as an International Language: Issues and Tensions* (pp. 2–10). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Chicherina, N. V., & Strelkova, S. Y. (2023). Translanguaging in English language teaching: Perceptions of teachers and students. *Education Sciences*, *13*(1), 86. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13010086

Choy, S., Singh, P., & Li, M. (2017). Trans-cultural, trans-language practices: Potentialities for rethinking doctoral education pedagogies. *Education Sciences*, *7*(1), 19. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci7010019

Cogo, A. (2012). English as a lingua franca: Concepts, use, and implications. *ELT Journal*, *66*(1), 97–105. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccr069

Cogo, A. (2015). English as a lingua franca: Descriptions, domains and applications. In A. Cogo & H. Bowles (Eds.), *International Perspectives on English as a Lingua Franca* (pp. 1–12). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137398093_1

De Bartolo, A. M. (2023). From intercultural to transcultural communication: ELF in multilingual settings. *EL.LE*, *12*(3), 433–448. https://doi.org/10.30687/ELLE/2280-6792/2023/03/002

De Costa, P, & Norton, B. (2017). Introduction: Identity, transdisciplinarity, and the good language teacher. *Modern Language Journal*, *101*(supplement), 3–14. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12368

Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *10*(3), 241–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315306287002

Ehrenreich, S. (2009). English as a lingua franca in multinational corporations: Exploring business communities of practice. In A. Mauranen & E. Ranta (Eds.), *English as a Lingua Franca: Studies and Findings* (pp. 126–151). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Friedrich, P. (1986). *The language parallax: Linguistic relativism and poetic indeterminacy*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press.

Garrote Salazar, M., & Agüero, M. F. (2016). Intercultural competence in teaching: Defining the intercultural profile of student teachers. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching and Learning Language and Literature*, *9*(4), 41–58. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/jtl3.670

Ginsberg, M. B., & Wlodkowski, R. J. (2009). *Diversity and motivation: Culturally responsive teaching in college* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, *26*, 91–108. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x

Hepp, A. (2015). *Transcultural communication*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394261390

Holland, J. H. (2000). *Emergence: From chaos to order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hopper, P. (1987). *Emergent Grammar* (vol. 13, pp. 139–157). Proceedings of the 13th Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Mellon University. https://doi.org/10.3765/bls.v13i0.1834

Hymes, D. H. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings* (pp. 269–293). Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books.

Jackson, J. (2014). *Introducing language and intercultural communication*. London, New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315848938

Jandt, F. E. (Ed.). (2004). *Intercultural communication: A global reader*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(1), 157–181. https://doi.org/10.2307/40264515

Jenkins, J. (2012). English lingua franca from the classroom to the classroom. *ELT Journal*, *66*(4), 486–494. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccs040

Jenkins, J. (2015). Repositioning English and multilingualism in English as a lingua franca. *English in Practice*, *2*(3), 49–85. https://doi.org/10.1515/eip-2015-0003

Kankaanranta, A., & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2013). 'What language does global business speak?' – The concept and development of BELF. *Ibérica*, *26*, 17–34.

Kohn, K. (2014). *Teaching towards ELF competence in the English classroom*. Proceedings of the ELF7 Conference, Athens, Greece, September 4–6, 2014.

Kohn, K. (2015). A pedagogical space for ELF in the English classroom. In Y. Bayyurt & S. Akcan (Eds.), *Current Perspectives on Pedagogy for ELF* (pp. 51–67). Berlin: De Gruyter/Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110335965.51

Kohn, K. (2019). *Lingua franca pedagogy. Emancipating the foreign language learner*. ASIA TEFL 2019, Bangkok, Thailand, June 27–29, 2019.

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kramsch, C. (2014). Teaching foreign languages in an era of globalization: Introduction. *The Modern Language Journal*, *98*, 296–311. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2014.12057.x

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2008). *Cultural globalization and language education*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Laitinen, M. (2018). Placing ELF among the varieties of English: Observations from typological profiling. In S. C. Deshors (Ed.), *Modelling World Englishes in the 21st Century: Assessing the Interplay of Emancipation and Globalization of ESL Varieties* (pp. 109–131). John Benjamins, Amsterdam. https://doi.org/10.1075/veaw.g61.05lai

Laitinen, M. (2020). Empirical perspectives on English as a lingua franca (ELF) Grammar. *World Englishes*, *39*(3), 427–442. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12482

Laitinen, M., Lundberg, J., Levin, M., & Lakaw, A. (2017). Revisiting weak ties: Using present-day social media data in variationist studies. In T. Säily, M. Palander-Collin, A. Nurmi & A. Auer (Eds.), *Exploring Future Paths for Historical Sociolinguistics* (pp. 303–325). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/ahs.7.12lai

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2011). A complexity theory approach to second language development/acquisition. In D. Atkinson (Ed.), *Alternative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 48–72). London/New York: Routledge.

Leung, C. (2013). The 'social' in English language teaching: Abstracted norms versus situated enactments. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *2*(2), 283–313. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2013-0016

Lopriore, L., & Grazzi, E. (Eds) (2016). *Intercultural communication: New perspectives from ELF*. Roma: Roma TrE-Press. https://doi.org/10.1037/10762-000

Mansfield, G., & Poppi, F. (2012). The English as a foreign language/lingua franca debate: Sensitising teachers

of English as a foreign language towards teaching English as a lingua franca. *Profile*, *14*(1), 159–172.

Mauranen, A. (2018). Conceptualizing ELF. In J. Jenkins, W. Baker & M. Dewey (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of English as a Lingua Franca* (pp. 7–24). London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315717173-2

Miller, J. H., & Page, S. E. (2007). *Complex adaptive systems: An introduction to computational models of social life*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ordóñez Procel, G. J., Poma Tacuri, M. A., López López, K. A., & Correa Criollo, P. I. (2023). The influence of cultural context on English teaching. *Ciencia Latina Revista Científica Multidisciplinar*, *7*(4), 784–800. https://doi.org/10.37811/cl_rcm.v7i4.6920

Ortíz, F. (1942). The social phenomenon of transculturation and its importance. In A. A. Knopf (Ed.), *Cuban counterpoint: Tobacco and sugar* (pp. 97–103). New York: Duke University Press.

Pennycook, A. (2007). *Global Englishes and transcultural flows*. London/New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203088807

Risager, K. (2006). *Language and culture: Global flows and local complexity*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853598609

Rubio-Alcalá, F. D., Arco-Tirado, J. L., Fernández-Martín, F. D., López-Lechuga, R., Barrios, E., & Pavón-Vázquez, V. (2019). A systematic review on evidences supporting quality indicators of bilingual, plurilingual and multilingual programs in higher education. *Educational Research Review*, *27*, 191–204. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2019.03.003

Scollon, R. Scollon, S., & Jones, R. (2012). *Intercultural communication: A discourse approach*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0555

Seidlhofer, B. (2002). *A concept of International English and related issues: From "real English" to "realistic English"*? Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0243

Seidlhofer, B. (2015). ELF-informed pedagogy: From codefixation towards communicative awareness. In P. Vettorel (Ed), *New Frontiers in Teaching and Learning English* (pp. 19–30). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Singh, P., & Doherty, C. (2004). Global cultural flows and pedagogic dilemmas: Teaching in the global university 'contact zone'. *TESOL Quarterly*, *38*(1), 9–42. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588257

Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, *104*, 333–339. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039

Taglialatela, A. (2022). ELF- or NES-oriented pedagogy: Enhancing learners' intercultural communicative competence using a dual teaching model. *Applied Linguistics Review*. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2020-0154

Takkula, H., Kangaslahti, J., & Banks, J. (2008). Teaching transcultural competence: From language learning to experiential education. Policy & Practice. *A Development Education Review*, *7*(Autumn), 88–95.

Tomasello, M. (2010). *Origins of human communication*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Tran, H. T. (2010). *Teaching culture in the EFL/ESL classroom. Los Angeles Regional California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*. San Diego, California, September 11, 2010. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED511819.pdf

Welsch, W. (1999). Transculturality: The puzzling form of cultures today. In M. Featherstone & S. Lash (Eds.), *Spaces of culture: City, nation, world* (pp. 195–213). SAGE Publications Ltd, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446218723.n11

Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Learning language as communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Widdowson, H. G. (2012). ELF and the inconvenience of established concepts. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *1*(1), 5–26. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2012-0002

Yazykova, N. V., Goncharova, V. A., & Budnikova, A. A. (2020). Transcultural approach to teaching English as an international language: Goal setting. In E. Tareva & T. N. Bokova (Eds.), *Dialogue of cultures – Culture*

of dialogue: From conflicting to understanding (vol. 13, pp. 1195–1202). European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences. European Publisher. https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2020.11.03.126

Notes

Note 1. The term *lingua-culture* was coined by American linguistic anthropologist Paul Friedrich in 1986 to encompass the relationship between language and culture as experienced by individuals in their languages and language varieties.

Note 2. Translanguaging provides opportunities to choose linguistic units and learner strategies to communicate meaning based on the learner's experiences of L1, L2, L3, and so on. The basic idea of translanguaging is that one language reinforces the other to improve understanding and intensify learners' engagement in class activities in two or more languages (Chicherina & Strelkova, 2023), depending on the situation.

Note 3. For more details on the concept of "culture," see Byram (2021), Holland (2000), Hopper (1987), Larsen-Freeman (2011), Miller and Page (2007), and Tomasello (2010).

Note 4. Critical cultural awareness is one of Byram's (1997, p. 34) "five *savoirs*" (i.e., attitudes, knowledge of self and others, skills to interpret and relate, skills to discover and interact, and critical cultural awareness), and refers to the ability to critically reflect on one's own cultural beliefs and assumptions and recognize the ways in which culture shapes communication (Kramsch, 1993).

Note 5. For details on the project, please visit https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/etwinning.

Note 6. DUOLINGO is an online language-learning tool. It offers a digital method to learn a host of new languages for students of various ages and abilities. Owing to its smart algorithms, it has even adapted to help specific students in areas of need (https://en.duolingo.com/).

Note 7. DIFFIT can create automatically generated summaries, comprehension checks, vocabulary, and so on for students with different levels of language proficiency (https://beta.diffit.me/#topic).

Note 8. TALKPAL is a GPT-powered AI language tutor. It was created with the belief that language learning should not be a luxury but accessible to everyone worldwide (https://talkpal.ai/about/).

Note 9. TWEE is designed for English language teachers and practitioners and is used to (1) obtain YouTube video scripts and create related questions; (2) generate dialogues, stories, letters, or articles on any topic and for different linguistic levels; (3) create reading comprehension activities, such as multiple-choice questions, open questions, and true/false questions; (4) develop discussion questions; and (5) practice grammatical topics (https://twee.com/).

Copyrights