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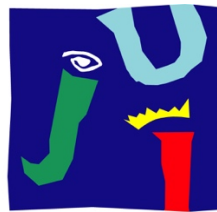
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ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

A PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE SPANISH EFL STUDENTS' ORAL SKILLS

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Abstract

English is the main language spoken around the world nowadays because of its expansion. However, most students tend to be misled when listening to native speakers. Hence, new needs have to be considered when teaching English as a Foreign Language. This work aims at analysing the needs of 21st century students in the Escuela Oficial de Idiomas in Castellón and it proposes a new way of teaching English in intermediate levels (B1): teaching English as an International Language (McKay & Brown, 2016). In order to accomplish this, different English Standard varieties are introduced in the English classroom. Moreover, the notion of English as a lingua franca and the importance of intercultural communication are addressed. For the purpose of this study, a literature review is presented. Afterwards, a teaching unit is proposed and since it is introduced in the classroom, results of the implementation are presented and commented. Results show that it is possible to introduce different English varieties in non-proficient levels and that students find them useful because it is important for their examinations. Finally, pedagogical recommendations for improvement of the English classroom are given, suggesting that curriculum developers could include more authentic examples of varieties of English and that contact with different English speakers (non-native or native) should be enhanced in and outside the classroom in order to boost oral competence.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the beginnings of the 21st century, English has become more than only an international language, it has become the international language spoken by millions of people. This spread has never been achieved before, no other language has ever had both the global expansion and the penetration of social strata and domains of use that English now has (Crystal, 2003). English language is heard either emerging from the mouths of the most important politicians, or when travelling around the world in signs, advertising, hotels and restaurants. Although it is impossible to know exactly the number of 'speakers of English', some researchers have shared that 'native speakers' are clearly outnumbered by 'non-native speakers' (Seidlhofer, 2011). Those who are non-native speakers tend to use English as a contact language, that is, as a *lingua franca*.

For the reasons mentioned above, English is the most demanded language at the *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* (henceforth EOI). The school is the hub of learning English in Spain because it is accessible to a wide variety of people regardless of their socioeconomic status. Moreover, people come to study English to the EOI because of many interests, not only for academic purposes but also for other purposes such as travelling or communication in the field of hospitality and tourism where they interact with people from all over the world. That is why *English as a lingua franca* (henceforth ELF) should be predominant in the language classroom and especially at EOI.

This dissertation will examine first why English has become the lingua franca of the globe and its importance in international communication and then it will present some activities for introducing English as an international language in the EOI and the results of this implementation.

2. DEFINING ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA AND INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

In the first place, any other language could have become the global language or lingua franca with which the world communicates, however English had the perfect characteristics to succeed and become the language 'on which the sun never sets' (Crystal, 2003). As David Crystal (2003) explains the success and expansion of a language does not depend on how many speakers a language has, but on who speaks the language and the power of its people. This power both economic and political, can be found, in the past and present of English-speaking nations, especially in the United States (Seidlhofer, 2011). The present-day world status of English is primarily the result of two occurrences: the expansion of British colonial power in 19th century, and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the 20th century. With reference to the first event, by means of the pioneering voyages to the Americas, Asia and the Antipodes, the trade with African slaves and then, reaching South Pacific in the mid-20th century; English became the official or semi-official language of newly independent states such as the isles of St. Helena, Seychelles and Pacific islands such as Fiji and Hawaii (Crystal, 2003). In addition, in 19th century Britain became the industrial and trading leader of the world due to the Industrial Revolution and innovations such as the use of coal, water and steam to drive heavy machinery; as well as the growth of textile and mining industries where a lot of goods for export were produced. As Crystal (2003) highlights, this led to the creation of new terminology of technological and scientific advance, adding tens of thousands of words to the English lexicon. Nonetheless more important, the fact that these innovations had their source in an English-speaking country meant that those foreigners who wished to learn about them would need to learn English adequately if they wished to benefit.

Secondly, the world presence of English was maintained and expanded through the new American superpower in economy in view of the fact that the language related to the US dollar was English. According to authors such as Crystal (2003) and Kirkpatrick (2007), those factors that helped to broaden English were: the growth of competitive industry and business, the explosion of international marketing and advertising, progress in science and technology and

the most important, the entertainment industries such as cinema and finally, the appearance of Hollywood and highlighting the quality of its movies (considering that it is difficult to find a blockbuster film produced in a language other than English). Additionally, America influenced worldwide with the invention of the gramophone and patenting both the magnetic tape and long-playing (LP) disk, and producing music such as blues, jazz and rock and roll. The last with Elvis Presley in USA and the Rolling Stones in UK. Furthermore, with singers such Bob Marley, the English language spread globally being a symbol of freedom, rebellion and modernism for the younger in 1960s-1970s and nowadays the same has been achieved with the hip-hop industry and the culture that is linked to it which has been expanded to several countries outside US (Canagarajah, 2006). Finally, USA is known to be the leading tourism industry, earner and spender as the World Tourism Organization showed in 2001 therefore, in the majority of tourist spots of the world people can find signs, indications, instructions, and even restaurant menus in the English version as well as locals who nowadays exert themselves to speak English.

Bearing the expansion of English language in mind and taking into account what has been mentioned above, the linguist Braj Kachru (1986) designed a diagram, based on three concentric circles, representing the spread of English around the world. In the diagram, the inner circle represents the places which English is spoken as the first language (USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) summing 320-380 million people; the outer circle involves settings where English language plays the role of second or additional language making the place a multilingual one, those countries are for instance Singapore, India or Nigeria, and the number of speakers arises 300-500 million; lastly the expanding circle concerns countries which have English as a foreign language and it is not presented in chief institutions however, it is the bigger circle with 500-1000 millions of speakers, and to which belong such important countries as China, Japan or Germany. Therefore, in view of this diagram, can be said that 'native speakers' are clearly outnumbered by 'non-native speakers' (Seidlhofer, 2011).

Having explained by what means English has become a global language, the role of ELF can now be tackled. To begin with, after the second World War, and

with the creation of many international organisations such as World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Health Organization, emerged equally the need of having a common language for international communication and since English had that power mentioned before, it became the lingua franca. Nevertheless, before continuing, a definition of what a lingua franca is should be provided. As the UNESCO (1953:46) defines, a lingua franca is "a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate the communication between them". Furthermore, as Seidlhofer (2011) suggests, the aim of ELF is to achieve the fullest communication possible therefore, norms are established as the conversation is developing and they are regulated by the interactional exigencies thus, the participants co-construct throughout the communication their own method to achieve a communicative goal. According to Jenkins (2015), research into English as Lingua Franca (ELF) in international communication was not carried until 1990s. However, at the present time, much research has been conducted and several books have been published. For example, Jenkins (2009) comments the following characteristics of English as a Lingua Franca: ELF is used in contexts where speakers with different L1 (mostly from the expanding circle) have the necessity to use it in order to communicate with each other; secondly, ELF is not as English as a Native Language (ENL): speakers do not have to use English perfectly and moreover, the usage depends on the speakers' potential needs and preferences; thirdly, speakers innovate when creating words and depending on the setting, they show different features when speaking ELF; finally, pragmatically speaking, depending on the context speakers use accommodation as well as code-mixing and code-switching between L1 and ELF which are used extensively by skilled ELF speakers.

2.1   Grammar and vocabulary characteristics of ELF

In order to reflect the characteristics mentioned in the previous section, data from Seidlhofer corpora (VOICE), the 7th edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, and Cogo and Dewey (2012), have been gathered

and summarised showing that the most common lexico-grammatical features found among ELF speakers are: the dropping of the -s in the third person present and using the same form for all persons (e.g. I like, she like); the confusion between the relative pronouns 'who' and 'which' interchanging them using 'which' for humans and 'who' for non-humans; the omission of definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in ENL, and the insertion of them where they do not occur in ENL (for example, or 'he is very good person' 'they have a respect for all'); the usage of pluralised nouns that do not have plural forms in Standard English (e.g. informations, knowledges, advices); the usage of the demonstrative 'this' even in plural forms (this country, this countries); the incorrect use of forms in tag questions (reduced mainly to 'isn't it?' or 'no?' instead of complex ones such as 'shouldn't they'?); the insertion of 'redundant' prepositions such as *about* (e.g. 'we have to discuss about', 'study about') and the omission of 'dependent prepositions' such as *to*, *at* or *on* (e.g. looking in the streets, listening classic music, depends the job); the overuse of certain verbs such as *do, have, make, put and take* (e.g. make a discussion, put attention); the replacement of infinitive-constructions with that-clauses (I want that..); and finally, being such explicit using 'black colour' rather than just 'black' or 'how long time' instead of only 'how long.'

According to Seidlhofer (2011) some French and German speakers have invented English words which did not exist in English, such as *lifting* or *wellness*, or *handy* or *pullunder*. Furthermore, in VOICE corpus Seidlhofer found regularisations, made in accordance to correct Romance origin verbs such as *investigate* or *negotiate*, but these were incorrect, for instance *examinate*, *pronunciate* or *financiate*. To conclude this point, it can be said that this creativity in lexical innovation is developed in order to fill the gap in the language when the necessity emerges and that these innovations are strong and spread quickly, nourishing English worldwide (Seidlhofer, 2011). The multiplicity of Englishes people bring with them transcends the established varieties. Languages are variable, mobile and mixed (Canagarajah, 2014).

Finally, to conclude this point, as David Crystal (2013) remarks, the concept *World Englishes* reflects a reality of what happens when English becomes a

global language. As soon as a country adopts a language and it adapts the language to suit certain situations happening in the country, it starts shaping it. People start to name new things and it only takes a few weeks for a variety of English to start to grow. Hence, most of the adaptations happen in vocabulary. For example, when giving directions in South African English, a person will say "turn left after you pass the robot" which means, "turn left after you pass the traffic light". This provokes that even native speakers of English do not understand other varieties. They are acquiring new words from the surrounding languages or because of the appearance of neologisms every day. As Crystal (2013) states "everywhere, in every country of the world, there's a new variety of English growing". In order to illustrate it better, another example could be a Londoner saying "it was like Clapham Junction in there" meaning that there was chaos in there. If the interlocutor does not know what Clapham Junction is, he or she will not understand. For this reason, vocabulary and pragmatics are important aspects to know for the learners of English.

2.2   Accommodation strategies

In addition to grammar and vocabulary characteristics, when speaking a lingua franca, several strategies are followed among speakers to conduct the discourse and achieve full communication. For example, the capacity of accommodation which is a crucial factor for communication success (Hülmbauer, Böhringer & Seidlhofer, 2008). According to Cogo and Dewey (2012), the accommodation theory suggests that speakers tend to converge towards the language of their interlocutor seeking for social approval, or they diverge away from them for showing distinct identity, affiliation or disapproval. These authors also remark that the process of accommodation needs the participation of both listener and speaker. When converging, speakers modify the complexity of speech (e.g. by decreasing diversity of vocabulary or simplifying syntax by, dividing sentences into small units, simple units or fronting the topic of the discussion) or increase clarity (vocally or by incorporating devices such as repetition, clarification checks or rephrasing). Related to the theme of increasing clarity, abundant processes are employed among ELF speakers. In related studies to lingua franca Jenkins (2000) for instance, found that speakers modified their pronunciation in order to

ensure greater intelligibility with the interlocutor. Other further characteristic of ELF for making one's words more accessible is to repeat, rephrase or use synonyms (Seidlhofer, 2011 ; Cogo and Dewey, 2012) which enhance the effectiveness of communication; for instance in an extract of a conversation (extracted from the VOICE corpus) between a German and a Greek speaker, paraphrasing can be identified as "you have to move, you have to move out totally, you have to take your things out of your room". Finally, when trying to increase clarity speakers also reach the level of innovation.

The creativity of the speaker to combine his or her repertoires in the interactions and texts in a way that attains intelligibility and communicative success is key. Canale and Swain (1980) strategic competence, embedded in communicative competence, is crucial for foreseeing these situations and repairing potential communication breakdowns in contexts of variable grammatical proficiency among interlocutors (Canagarajah, 2014). Likewise, as Hülmbauer, Böhringer and Seidlhofer (2008) mention, besides accommodation other strategies of interactional pragmatics can be observed. These strategies are for example, the use of verbal backchannels such as *mhm, yeah, uh huh, right*, etc., and non-verbal ones to ensure efficient continuation of the exchange; short response overlaps which give additional feedback and provide a quick clarification or support; and completion overlaps which complete the sentence of the current speaker and show co-operation and engagement in conversation.

3. TEACHING ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

Some scholars use the term ELF, however there are others who use EIL, English as an international language. These two terms are complementary. Both exhibit interest in the use of English as a medium of multilingual contact including both native/non-native and non-native/non-native interactions as an attempt to reflect the sociolinguistic reality of the largest group -Expanding Circle- (Jenkins, 2006 and Seidlhofer 2011). Scholars pay specific attention to uses that do not impede communication. Additionally, it is common that they also intersection in the methodological approaches many researchers employ when conducting empirical research, henceforward, I am going to use the term EIL in some points.

Nevertheless, from my point of view and if I had to make a distinction, I would say that the term of ELF refers to communication and EIL refers to the way of teaching English and presenting different varieties worldwide to students so that it becomes a lingua franca.

First of all, as Marlina (2014) highlights, the main characteristic of EIL pedagogy consists in guiding students from all Kachruvian circles in order to (1) gain knowledge and awareness of the diversity of English and the plurilingual nature of today's communication; (2) inspire students to give equal and legitimate recognition of all varieties of English; and (3) develop the ability to negotiate and communicate respectfully across cultures and Englishes in today's communicative settings that are international, intercultural, and multilingual in nature.

By the same token, as it is remarked by Brown (2012), when teaching English as an international language, it is crucial to bear in mind students' needs to adapt the content and set realistic goals. He classifies these needs into two perspectives of EIL teaching: local or global. Global reasons for teaching English may be (1) an important means of global communication, (2) a way to promote global trade (3) a channel for gaining and building intercultural understanding, (4) a key tool for accessing higher education at home or abroad and (5) the principal language for accessing worldwide information. On the other hand, local reasons for learning English are (1) communicating with their countrymen who speak other languages, (2) working with foreign tourists that are visiting their country, (3) competing favourably in business dealings with other local people, (4) communicating with family or friends who speak English and (5) getting prestige status among their friends and acquaintances by learning to speak in English. Hence, Brown (2012) introduces the term *locally defined EIL* based on the idea that local needs for English should be carefully considered, especially in Outer and Expanding Circle contexts. Moreover, he proposes key ideas to guide teachers, such as considering the aspirations of the students together with the needs and he creates a questionnaire with the reasons for learning English. In this questionnaire 10 reasons are pointed out and students have to check only four.

3.1 Challenges of teaching EIL

What is most remarkable in this topic is the fact that there is a considerable amount of work and studies talking about theories on a wide view of how to teach EIL but few putting EIL into practice. However, some guidelines are explained hereunder.

One of the questions that arises is what kind of English should be taught in the Expanding Circle, in this case, for the present work, Spain. If we are teaching students who want to work or live in the United States or in the United Kingdom, we could teach American or British English however, in the globalised world that we live in we have the aim of allow students to communicate across cultures, then we should teach English so that they will be able to understand or tolerate many accents and varieties through exposure. Since English moves faster due to globalisation and the technology, what Crystal (2013) recommends is to teach a standard variety, RP can be taught even though only 2% of the population speaks it, but teachers should improve students listening and reading comprehension exposing them to as many varieties as possible (and this is feasible due to internet) and also, study of this varieties are of local interest for the students. Always pointing out the differences between the main variety being taught and the other one. Besides, teachers can cope with the fast growing of English today thanks to the technologies. Students should be informed about the varieties and provided with opportunities to collaborate with other students or speakers in all three circles. Nevertheless, what is most important is the intelligibility of the uses of English in different countries or regions, not just in national boundaries This can be achieved providing World Englishes and ELF perspectives in their books, materials, and we can recur to online sources, such as BBC webpages, Al Jazeera interviews, China or Indian televisions, etc. Thus, awareness would be enhanced, and cross-cultural communication would be studied. Always bearing in mind that it is paramount to adjust the expectations of the students to the settings and local needs (Kilickaya, 2009).

Furthermore, as Herrando-Rodrigo (2018) mentions in her article, teachers have to make students reflect on how language varies (i.e. lexis, grammar,

pronunciation) along English speaking countries (i.e. United States, Canada, India, Singapore, etc.) because it will help them to accommodate linguistic understanding and comprehend certain socio-cultural values potentially associated to some linguistic varieties of English and their repertories. Besides, teachers should encourage students to develop linguistic mechanisms which help them to unveil chunks of information coded by native and non-native speakers of English.

3.2   Teaching oral skills

Finally, one of the most significant aspects to consider when addressing English as an international language is the notion of the native speaker. What most people, or even teachers, mean as a native speaker is described as a person who "speaks *good* English, or *grammatical, correct, educated* or *proper* English" (Brown and McKay 2016, p. 12). Others think about the political, social or cultural dominant dialects of English. Or they associate a person as a model to the native speaker, such as the Queen of England, the prime minister, Colin Firth or Donald Trump. What people are describing here, is an idiolect, and it is not a real person at all or even a group of people, but rather an idealised native speaker (Leung, Harris & Rampton, 1997). The idealised native speaker is a construct, not a person. On the contrary, Davies (2004, p. 431) describes the NS as "one that acquires their L1 in childhood or one that has intuitions about their idiolectal grammar and about features of standard English grammar that differ from their idiolectal grammar; display a wide range communicative competence; have a unique capacity to spontaneously produce fluent discourse, to write creatively, and to interpret and translate into English". However, the first thing that arises when addressing the concept of native speaker is pronunciation. Therefore, one of the main problems that arises when teaching English is the imposition of a goal of attaining near-native speaker proficiency and fluency in six or seven years of English instruction (either in primary or secondary school or in other educational centres which divide languages courses into that amount of years), which is what most students around the world get. Thus, language classes usually establish a model that students cannot achieve and then, the English curriculum, teachers, or students are blamed for that failure (McKay and Brown, 2016). In order to avoid

this, the notion of a native speaker should be removed and different accents and varieties should be introduced in the classroom (Seidlhofer, 2011; Marlina, 2014; McKay and Brown, 2016).

4. ELF/EIL PROPOSAL

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this section is to justify, present and analyse the ELF/EIL proposal aimed at improving EFL student's oral skills by introducing different oral comprehension and production activities, related to different varieties of English, in order to make students more competent when performing their final examinations.

Before continuing with the justification, is worth mentioning that these activities were designed for two groups of B1 level studying English at the *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* of Castellón, the education centre where I conducted the internship of the master's degree. During this period, I was allowed to implement an online didactic unit, designed and adapted for the same levels, dealing with conditional tenses, vocabulary describing homes and types of dwelling, as well as practising dialogues dealing with these topics. After this implementation and due to the outbreak of the coronavirus and the state of emergency declared in Spain, the implementation of the teaching unit had to be done online too, assuming some risks and difficulties. Consequently, this study needed to be rearranged amidst this complicated situation and because of the time constraints. Moreover, students had the final exams or certification exams at the end of May, hence the time devoted for these activities out of the curriculum was fewer. As a result, the activities needed to be adapted, to an extent, to the student's syllabus and they have to prepare students not only for their outside class use of English, but also for the certification exams. Therefore, the study was conducted for three weeks (from the first presentation of the pre-test to the post-test accomplishment) and the teaching unit was implemented in three sessions (one week and a half) in the month of April.

In the following subsections, a justification of the designed proposal would be given together with a clarification of its aims. Furthermore, the context where the teaching unit would be explained and finally, a detailed description of the activities designed and, afterwards, a description of the methodology would be specified.

4.2   Justification

There were three factors that motivated the research conducted for this final dissertation. In the first place, as observed in the placement period, the course curriculum does not consider several varieties of English or does consider them to be tackled in higher levels such as C1, and consequently they are not studied and practised in depth during the lessons. However, several varieties of English can be found in the listening recordings used for the assessment tests or activities. As a result, students in the EFL class are not completely conscious of the variety of accents and Englishes and when they are tested in the final exams, their performance in oral comprehension skills is low. Hence, they feel demotivated and they do not feel comfortable when fulfilling listening activities. For this reason, I decided to examine the documents of the *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* that regulate foreign language courses. These documents are the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) (2018), the Spanish decree-law 1041/2017 from the 22nd of December, the document *Proves de certificació 2019-2020. Guia del candidat,* and the curriculum of the English department in the Official School of Languages of Castelló (2019-2020). The first document needed to be examined because the rest of the documents are based on it, in here, the descriptors of all the skills are stated. The Spanish decree-law is based on its descriptors and the *Guia del candidat* and the curriculum are elaborated according to the indications of the preceding documents.

When analysing the CEFRL, it was discovered that the first chapter is devoted to oral comprehension, the third to oral production and the fifth to interaction, in all of them descriptors refer to higher levels when presenting different registers or non-standard varieties. In spite of this, the descriptors of the CEFRL do not consider different speaker idiosyncrasies and accents. That is to

say, they do not give the opportunity to view and tackle languages from a global view or intercultural perspective. Similarly, in the curriculum of the subject, there is not any indication of accents or varieties, only in higher levels and bad sound or background sound in the recordings are prioritised rather than accents or regional variations.

Another reason for conducting this study was that, during the observation period of the placement, it was detected that teachers and students relied to a great extent on the use of the textbook. The textbook was called *English File* and in here only the British variety of the language and the British life and culture were presented. Finally, the third reason to implement this teaching unit was that, as a former student at the *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas*, I noticed a lack of exposure to other varieties of English and when listening to oral activities or speaking in other contexts outside the classroom I recall a need of having been taught these varieties. Furthermore, as a future teacher and because a change is needed, I think it is necessary to expose the students to different varieties in accents and to enhance their communicative competence.

4.3   Aims

The objectives of this study are to improve students of B1 oral skills by presenting them different varieties of English and the concept of *English as a lingua franca.* By introducing the different accents in the EFL classroom, students become aware of the reality outside the classroom and authenticity of materials is enhanced as well. Furthermore, listening skills are improved since they get used to diverse accents and by demonstrating students how to use *English as a lingua franca,* communication and anxiety towards oral tests is lessened. In order to do so, students' perceptions on studying different varieties of English and the use of ELF, were studied before and after this study. Secondly, another aim was to explore the effectiveness of explicit instruction of English as an international language and understand the different accents and communicate with people from different language backgrounds. However, since some students could not participate due to the closure of the education centres by the COVID-19, only the following questions were possible to be answered.

(i)   What are students' perceptions towards learning EIL?

(ii)   What are students' views on ELF?

(iii)   To what extent can this ELF proposal change the way of communicating of EFL students?

(iv)   To what extent can this ELF proposal improve students' oral skills performance?

4.4   Context

This study was conducted in the *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* of Castellón de la Plana, a non-compulsory higher education centre. The building is located in the city of Castellón de la Plana, near Universitat Jaume I of Castellón and with access to different parts of the province. Therefore, people from the surrounding villages go there in order to learn languages. This organization offers lessons of many foreign languages; however, English is the most important one. Castellón and its surroundings are touristic locations and many travellers from around the world come to visit their coast and their villages. That is why a lot of Englishes can be heard emerging from the mouths of their visitors. For this reason, students from EOI need to be aware of the different varieties of English and different ways of speaking English by people from around the world.

On the other hand, as regards people attending the EOI, the majority of them are adults, from different nationalities, cultures and economic and social backgrounds who attend lessons either in the mornings or in the afternoons. This study was conducted with people attending in the mornings. A major part of the students from the morning are retired people, especially in the lower proficiency levels, and another large part are students from the university. Concerning students' motivation to go to this school, they are (1) in order to pass time, (2) as a hobby (because they like languages or they want English for traveling and other pleasures) and (3) because they need English for work. Furthermore, students have two lessons per week, which last two hours. Nonetheless, since attendance is not compulsory, they tend to be absent in some lessons for personal issues or they arrive late and leave earlier. Sometimes they even withdraw the course

because they have found a job. Finally, when designing the activities of this proposal, I considered these characteristics together with the fact that they were adult learners and there were 40 students in total.

4.5 Activities

The following section presents, justifies and explains in detail the designed activities that were implemented in the on-site online sessions. The activities were first designed to be conducted in class however, due to the closure of the education centres because of the coronavirus outbreak, the lessons had to be modified and redesigned for online lessons. To do so, the following conditions were considered: (i) activities should be adapted so as everyone could do them at home by their own means and (ii) they should be doable autonomously with the most basic tools such as the mobile phone.

The activities are presented in the format of a teaching unit in order to explain clearly and concisely the elements that constitute the proposal. The teaching unit at first was going to be composed of two sessions of two hours each; however, due to the adaptation for the online lessons, it has been divided into three different sessions of 50 minutes, the time that my tutor could give me to implement the proposal in the difficult situation. Finally, the activities were presented in three sessions the days 30th of March, 1st of April and 6th of April in one group and 31st of March, 2nd of April and 7th of April for the other group. In the first session, students are expected to distinguish and become aware of some different varieties of English and the expansion of it, an overall aim which is intended to be achieved by presenting a YouTube video and some questions through EdPuzzle, and a world map prepared with Padlet. On the other hand, the second session is aimed at knowing more in depth how English has been expanded and the why is the *lingua franca* nowadays and its characteristics, plus the focus in one specific variety, the American English. Finally, the third session is aimed at practising oral skills and consolidating the knowledge acquired in the previous sessions by performing an online debate. Furthermore, the three sessions have been divided into 4 parts: (1) Warm-up, in which the context of the session is set and background knowledge is activated; (2)

Instruction/Collaboration, in which contents are presented and/or put into practise with the guidance of the teacher; (3) Closure, in which it is checked whether the overall aim of the session is achieved; and (4) Follow-up, in which students practise, reinforce and/or reflect upon the acquired knowledge during teaching-learning process.

Since the overall aim of this study is to improve EFL learners' oral skills, the methodology of the didactic unit, following the guidelines of the EOI and its methodology, could be defined as communicative, interactive and dynamic approach. One of the main difference between the first designed teaching unit and the final one implemented was the fact that the final one is not as cooperative as thought originally, since during the lockdown, adult learners were responsible, for instance, of taking care of their children or doing the house chores among many other responsibilities therefore, they could not attend to every lesson. As a result, activities were designed to be done more autonomously and the focus was on students and self-evaluation. Contrarily, the teacher adopts a role of informing, motivating, making students feeling comfortable and, the most important one, guiding which has been crucial in the online sessions, both to lead the students through the activities and to conduct the rhythm of the sessions avoiding overlapping of students, uncomfortable silences and enhancing communication. In addition, it is worth mentioning that there was no assessment in order not to pressure the students and reducing anxiety, only a questionnaire was given to the students after having finished the unit in order to see the progress made by the students.

Considering the reasons why I chose ELF in order to improve students' oral skills, it must be highlighted that it is because ELF is closely related to the new skill that has been added to the curriculum of the EOI, the mediation. Since ELF tends to communicate students from different L1s, mediation tasks aim to do the same, as well as to teach students how to interpret the message (from native speakers or non-native speakers), paraphrase, summarise and explain concepts or the message in their own words. Another reason of why I chose ELF was due to time constraints and teacher's preferences, since the syllabus must be covered, and the students needed to do activities that could be useful for them

when being in contact with English speakers outside the class. Thus, after discussing different options with the teacher and the tutor, I decided to introduce this concept.

Finally, before presenting the tables that include the curriculum specifications of the activities and the didactic unit itself, it is important to remark that all the materials designed for the sessions are accessible to every student thanks to hyperlinks shared in the handout of the activities. Therefore, if students could not attend to online sessions, they could do the activities at home and do them at their own pace. In addition, materials can be found in the appendices.

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATIONS OF THE ACTIVITIES[1]			
ORAL TEXTS COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES			
CONTENTS	**EVALUATION CRITERIA**	**INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT**	**SESSION**
• Formal, informal, neutral register. • English standard variety. • Personal or daily aspects, indications, conversations, television and radio programmes.	• Understanding the main message of the extract. • Perceiving different patterns	• Understand essential and general information, opinions • Perception of sound patterns, accents, rhythms and common intonation, comprehension of general communicative intentions	1

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[1] Adapted and modified from *Real Decret 1041/2017, de 22 de desembre*, *Programació Didàctica del departament d'anglés de l'EOI de Castelló* (2019-2020) and *Proves de Certificació de la GVA (2019-2020). Guia del candidat.*

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATIONS OF THE ACTIVITIES			
WRITTEN TEXTS COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES			
CONTENTS	EVALUATION CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT	SESSION
- Formal, informal, neutral register. - English standard variety. - Brief argumentative or narrative texts - True/False comprehension activities. - Multiple choice activities	- Understanding the main message of the extract. - Formulating hypothesis about the content and context - Reformulating hypothesis from the comprehension of new elements	- Understand essential and general information, opinions - Find easily and understand relevant information in adverts, guides, brochures, official documents	1

CURRICULUM SPECIFICATIONS OF THE ACTIVITIES			
(CO-)PRODUCTION OF ORAL TASKS AND MEDIATION ACTIVITIES			
CONTENTS	EVALUATION CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT	SESSION
• Neutral/formal/ informal register • Compensating discursive strategies	• Daily content of personal interest, intelligible despite their foreign accent and intonation • Can do brief or medium-length (prepared beforehand) and structured presentations with visual aids and expressions of a general topic or of their interest • Application of intercultural attitudes such as observing, active listening, respect and balancing opinions.	• Express clearly and concisely the message • Compensate lack of linguistic formula by paraphrasing or defining, by paralinguistic or paratextual procedures (signalling, asking for help) and corporal language • Repeat or reformulate in a simpler way or more elaborated in order to clarify or make the message more comprehensible • Use backchannels to check confirmation of the message or repairment of a conversational breakdown	• 1, 2, 3

			ACTIVITIES OF THE PROPOSAL: SESSION 1			

TOPIC: TEACHING ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

OVERALL AIM: By the end of the lesson, students will become aware of the expansion of English and its different varieties

FOCUS: To know how English has become a global language and where it is spoken

LEVEL: B1(CEFRL)

TIME	AIMS	INTERACTION PATTERNS[2]	ROLES IN THE CLASSROOM[3]		ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES AND MATERIALS
	To get to know (vocabulary,	T→C	**TEACHER**	**STUDENTS**	**WARM-UP**	o Computer o Zoom

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[2] T (= teacher), S (= student), Ss (= students), C (= whole class)
[3] According to Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson, L. & Krathwohl, D., 2001)

| 10 | intonation and pronunciation) other English varieties | T→ S S→ T | Explains Describes Outlines Evaluates | Interpret Analyse Understand Deduce Recognise Remember Choose Contrast | **Getting to know other varieties: British English. American English and Australian English** Edpuzzle In this activity, students are expected to watch a video (see Appendix 1) and try to answer the questions that appear throughout the video. With the visualization of the video they start being accustomed to different English varieties, i.e. standard British accent, standard Australian and standard American. Moreover, in this video, different lexis to describe the same concept can be appreciated too. Therefore, students can become aware of the differences in pronunciation and vocabulary between the three varieties and can compare them. Once they have finished watching the video and have identified the peculiarities of the three varieties, they comment their results with the rest of the classroom and the teacher. By watching the video with this platform, Edpuzzle, the teacher can gather the answers of the students and see their performance. | ○ YouTube ○ Handout of activities |
| | | | | | **WARM-UP (bridge activity)** | |

| 10 | To identify, understand and reflect upon the complexity of English accents | T→C

T→ S

S→ T | Explains

Describes

Outlines

Evaluates | Interpret

Analyse

Understand

Deduce

Recognise

Remember

Choose

Contrast | **What if I do not speak perfect English**?: If required, students can also watch these two other YouTube videos (Scottish accent, NNS accent) in order to visualize other people speaking English. The first video is a humorous piece of informal conversation occurring in an elevator. The elevator has installed a voice recognition device and it cannot understand the two people because of their accent. It is worth watching the video with subtitles, since students can see the difference between what they read and the actual pronunciation of the speaker. Thus, they open their scope beyond what it has been showed until now to them, the British accent. The second video is a clip of the movie "the Pink Panther" in which the character has to pronounce in *perfect English* a sentence. In here, the frustration (because of the inspector's mispronunciation) of both, the teacher and the student can be appreciated. After watching the video, the teacher can ask the class: have you ever felt frustrated because of pronunciation? Have you ever felt the pressure for pronouncing a word perfectly? Thus, students can reflect upon both scenarios where a perfect pronunciation is needed but the reality is otherwise, there exist diverse pronunciations and accents. | o   Computer
o   YouTube |

					PARTICIPATION & COLLABORATION	
20	To have a clear view of the spread of English worldwide	T→ C S→ S S→ T	Explains Describes Outlines	Interpret Recognise Choose Contrast	**English around the world:** After discussing the varieties that appear on the video and commenting their personal views on the matter, a world map (see Appendix 1) is exhibited to the students. In here, they have to pin the countries where they think English is spoken. They have to highlight the uses of it (as a first, second or official language). Thus, they can become aware of and picture the expansion of English worldwide. This activity is thought to be conducted in pairs and if students have little knowledge on the topic, they to make some research on internet about the countries. Once they gather the information, they select it and post it online. It would be preferable that the couples do to post information about the same countries, however, they can add information if they want.	o Computer o Padlet o Handout of activities
					CLOUSURE	

10	To make sure students have comprehend and acquired the previous aims	T→ C S→ T	Explains Describes Outlines Evaluates	Understand Reflect Recognise	After having completed the world map, the teacher checks and comments upon the countries the students have selected and, if required, she adds other countries and comments with them. Students now have a visual image of the expansion of English. Here, the teacher, raises the question: Had you ever thought of such expansion? Are all these Englishes the same? How do you think these countries communicate with each other?	o Computer o Padlet
				FOLLOW-UP		

0	To make students know the basics of English as a global language and reinforce the knowledge they have acquired during the lesson.	T→ C	Explains Describes Outlines	Understand Recall Examine	**English as a Global Language:** Students have to read the text (see Appendix 2) and answer the questions at home. The text is adapted from Crystal (2003), Seidlhofer (2011) and other authors and explains explicitly the expansion of English and its importance in today's society. Also, it tackles some aspects of English as a lingua franca.	○ Computer ○ Handout of activities

TOPIC: TEACHING ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

OVERALL AIM: By the end of the lesson, students will know what is English as a lingua franca and its importance in intercultural communication

SESSION'S AIM (FOCUS): To learn strategies for communicating fluently and practice these strategies by learning some vocabulary from the American variety.

LEVEL: B1(CEFRL)

TIME (minutes) 50	AIMS	INTERACTION PATTERNS	ROLES IN THE CLASSROOM		ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES AND MATERIALS
10	To revise and learn with the classroom on English as a global language	T→ S S→ T	**TEACHER**	**STUDENT**	**WARM-UP**	o Computer o Zoom o YouTube
			Evaluates Outlines Verifies	Reflect Understand Check	Students put their answers of the questions from the text in common with the class and the teacher. They comment if they have any doubt or if they have any suggestion.	

			Justifies			
					INSTRUCTION	
15	Explaining ELF	T→ S S→ T	Outlines Explains Describes Illustrates Justifies Verifies	Interpret Analyse Understand Recognise Remember Deduce Choose	**English as a lingua franca (see Appendix 5):** After having corrected the text, the teacher makes a recapitulation of what the students have seen in the two sessions and explains the concept of *lingua franca* and its importance in international communication nowadays. Moreover, the teacher highlights the importance of "communicating" and making someone to be understood rather than having a great pronunciation or perfect grammar and remarks the role of the mediation tasks in intercultural communication and its relation to ELF. The teacher can have an aid of a Power Point presentation or comment from the text that students have read.	o Computer o PPT o Projector/Zoom
					PARTICIPATION & COLLABORATION	

| 20 | To become aware of some of the vocabulary differences between BrE and AmE | T→ C

S→ T

T→ S | Evaluates

Outlines

Verifies

Justifies | Reflect

Understand

Check | **British English vs American English:** students need to complete two activities (see appendix 3) in which the same concepts are expressed, first in British English, and then in American English. This activity can be done in groups or individually with a dictionary. After completing the activity, the teacher emphasises the fact of, although not knowing the word, students have to know how to explain or that by saying it in British English, American speakers, or someone who speaks the American variety should know it.

Learning only vocabulary from this variety was a choice made by the students as most of them answered in the pre-test that they did not want to study more varieties or only the American. Thus, it was thought that overwhelming them with extensive vocabulary was not the most appropriate thing.

Note: After this activity, it would be advisable to keep practicing these words. One way is to play "heads up". In this activity, students have to explain with their own words, the word and then the rest of the class has to guess it. Another way of working with these words would be to play in groups, for instance, to "the odd word" in which a | o Computer
o Dictionary
o Handout of activities |

					BrE word was introduced in a group of AmE words, and students have to spot the odd one.	
				CLOSURE AND FOLLOW-UP		
5	To prepare oneself a structured monologue for next lesson	**T→C** **C→T**	Outlines Explains Describes	Interpret Understand Practise	**Debate planning**: In order to finish the lesson, students are given some statements (see Appendix 4) and they have to think of them at home and prepare their answers for a debate in the next session. Guidelines are given to them in order to prepare for it.	o Computer

			ACTIVITIES OF THE PROPOSAL: SESSION 3			
TOPIC: DISCUSSING SOME TOPICS OF ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE **OVERALL AIM:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use strategies that enable them to improve their interaction activities **SESSION'S AIM** (FOCUS): To practice interaction skills and consolidate the knowledge about EIL **LEVEL**: B1						
TIME	**AIMS**	**INTERACTION PATTERNS**	**ROLES IN THE CLASSROOM**		**ACTIVITIES**	**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**
			TEACHER	STUDENTS	**WARM-UP**	o PPT presentation

						o Computer
5	To set the basis for students to start the debate	T→C	Outlines Explains Describes Illustrates Justifies Verifies	Interpret Understand Remember	Review: before starting the debate, the teacher reminds the most important points in the debate to make.	
				PARTICIPATION		
20	To perform a communicative task with the whole class, respecting the turns of the rest of the participants and to paying	T→C S→S	Guides Verifies Explains	Interpret Understand Remember Produce	DEBATE (PPT): In this activity, the students have to perform a debate all together in the classroom. The aim of this debate is to reflect upon and discuss about some statements that the students have to answer according to what they have learnt after doing the activities. Six questions are presented to the students to be discussed. The teacher acts as a mediator giving turns to the	o Computer o Online platform (Zoom, Google Meet)

| | attention to the other's answers and opinions | | | Recognise

Analyse

Evaluate | participants. The turn is thirty seconds for each student to support their idea for each statement.

Note: learners who cannot attend online sessions during the scheduled time because of the difficulties caused by the pandemic, would be able to answer a questionnaire and they would receive teacher's feedback through email. However, this would be evaluated in terms of content and evaluating the progress from the previous knowledge to the post-implementation knowledge. Whereas, in the real-time debate, the teacher could have a mark-sheet (see Appendix 6) in order to measure the general performance of the online activity, fluency, turn-taking, rephrasing, repairing strategies and opinion expressions used by the students. This was not done because of time constraints, the number of total students (only 11) and because my duty in the placement was not to evaluate them. However, this could be useful for teachers and for practising students' performance in certification exams. | |
| | | | | **CLOSURE** | |

5	To summarise the most important aspects arose in the debate and conclude the sessions	T→S S→S	Explains Indicates Analyses Evaluates	Understand Remember Analyse Recognise Recall Examine Self-evaluate	**Final reflection:** When the debate is finished, the teacher indicates the most salient topics or features that have appeared in the debate and comments them with the students. After this, the students are given a questionnaire to reflect upon what they have learnt and the implementation of teaching unit itself.	o Computer o Google Forms

4.6   Methodology of the study

4.6.1   Participants

The final sample of this study consisted of 18 participants from two different groups. The initial sample consisted of 32 students, but only 18 participated in the final research due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 and its direct consequences on education (lack of face-to-face interaction, impossibility to communicate directly with the students, difficulties for students' conciliation work-study-household affairs, etcetera). As regards to genre, there were 7 men and 11 women. Regarding their nationalities, as the EOI is a multicultural hub, the majority were Spanish but there were one Romanian, two Colombians and two Russian participants. The age ranged between 18 and 65. The main group where the study was conducted was a B1.2 group, whereas in the B1.1 group (since people of that group varied from one lesson to another and then, they could not be monitored as precisely as it should be) implementation was conducted with less demand of work and dedication in class to the tasks. Moreover, B1.2 students were more motivated, unified and hard-working, because the members had a higher level of English and the introduction of different accents was more appropriate there. Another important feature was age. As noticed in the observation period, students from this last group were from 30 years on; therefore, they were more focused and having the examination approaching, they were willing to learn. On the other hand, since B1.2 students were older, as observed in face to face class and during the implementation of the first teaching unit, they had more difficulty in using technologies and understanding the usage of some platforms whereas the first group were more able to respond the questionnaires and answer the online activities. Therefore, a mixture of ordinary and innovative activities was created.

4.6.2   Instruments

In order to conduct the study and collect data, two major instruments were designed: a pre-test questionnaire, to know the background of the students, and post-test, to evaluate the impact of the proposal. The first questionnaire,

consisting of a total number of ten questions, was designed and adapted from Brown's (2014) students' needs assessment with a combination of other previous research. On the one hand, the questionnaire wanted to know students' personal perception of the English language with four questions; on the other hand, five questions were designed in order to measure to what extent students use English in their daily life and the way they communicate with other English speakers. Furthermore, an open question to define the notion of English as a lingua franca was presented in order to know the previous knowledge of this concept by the students. The aim of this questionnaire was to have previous knowledge about the views of the students regarding the topic and to be able to work on these when designing the teaching unit. As regards to the post-test, the same questions were prepared however, different ones were designed as well to measure the changes occurred (and the acquired knowledge) after the implementation of the unit.

4.6.3 Procedure

Students were asked to complete the pre-test questionnaire before the explicit intervention. This questionnaire was sent by the teacher through a link via Telegram, a platform used at the EOI by the teachers to communicate information to the students. Although the teacher sent the form by this platform, the form was answered in class therefore, I could manage the time to answer it and help students with the doubts that might arise. Ten minutes were given to them in order to complete the questionnaire. A total of 32 questionnaires could be collected at this stage.

Due to time constraints and the coronavirus outbreak, the rest of activities were given by the teacher to the students. They were also delivered through Telegram; however, I did not have access to this platform. Thus, I sent the to the teacher and she sent them to the students. This situation led to some obstacles. First of all, in one group there was not enough time devoted to do the activities in the online lesson, therefore, they were completed by the students at home. Secondly, since the activities were not completed at the same time by all the students, they could not ask questions nor were all done for the next session.

Moreover, the teacher (operating as an intermediary between me and the students) could be sometimes misled when sending the links to each corresponding group in order to do the activities, for example, with the world map. Finally, considering that activities were done at home and few monitoring could be done, there were students who could not continue the activities or could not attend to lessons; consequently, information was missing.

With all these hindrances, some students did the activities at home and then doubts were solved in class or exercises were checked if they had any questions. With this methodology, self-learning and exploring the new concepts was paramount for students. Therefore, with these activities, for instance, in activity 3 of the first session, students could explore by themselves the countries where English was spoken and decide up to what extent they wanted to continue exploring, i.e. in terms of accent, new vocabulary or grammar idiosyncrasies. Or, for instance, in exercise 2 of the second session where students could research by themselves the different words in British English and in American English without needing a teacher to lead them.

Finally, after the teaching unit implementation, a post-test questionnaire was passed to the students in order to see whether the implementation of the unit had been meaningful to the students or not. The post-test was sent by the main teacher via Telegram after the implementation; however, due to the pandemic and the complex situation, only 18 students could complete it.

4.7   Results

4.7.1   Results of the pre-test

In this section, the results of the students' first questionnaire are going to be presented. The results are based on the two first research questions of this study: (a) What are students' perceptions towards learning EIL? (b) What are students' views on ELF?

In order to know the perceptions of students on learning EIL and the background knowledge, the following questions were asked: (1) What variety of English do you think you are learning at EOI? (2) Would you like to learn another variety? (3) If so, which one? (4) Why are you learning English? With which purposes?. On the other hand, regarding use and communication of English they were asked: (5) How often do you speak English? (6) Have you ever talked to a foreigner in English? Where was he/she from? (7) Did you understand him or her well? (8) How did you manage to communicate with him/her? (9) To what aspect do you pay more attention when speaking English? Finally, as regards to the second aim of the study, students' views on ELF, the following question was asked: (10) What is a lingua franca? After the data collection, the following results were obtained.

As regards the first question, concerning the pre-conception of the students towards the variety they believed they were learning, the results were clear. An 87.5% marked British English, in contrast to a 12.5% who thought they were learning English from an international perspective. It can be said that students at EOI mainly learn British English and no other variety is taught to them.

However, is the second question the one that stands out the most. When they were asked about learning a new variety of English, the majority of the students, an 84.4%, did not want to learn a new variety of English or they were not sure if they wanted. Only a 15.6% was eager to learn a new variety.

When asking the students who answer "yes" in the previous question for the reason why they wanted to study another variety of English, their answers were, for instance, the following: "Yes, I would like to learn another variety in order to know the differences, but I wouldn't do it until I master enough this variety"; "Yes, I would like to learn American English", or "I would like to learn a little bit of American English because most of TV series and films are in American English"; "yes, I would like to learn another variety because I could learn more words" ; "yes, because it is important to know Englishes from other countries" or "yes, because I want to learn several accents".

Finally, when asking students about their purpose of learning English at the EOI, the following data was gathered. The 34.4% was learning English for their jobs, whereas a 31.3% learnt English as a hobby that could entail travelling and past-time activities (for example, for retired people), and a 24.9% were studying English for other purposes such as for university (9.4%) or in order to gain points for the competition exam in their academic areas (3.11%).

On the other hand, regarding the use of English and how students manage to communicate within the language, some interesting answers could be gathered. First of all, regarding the frequency with which they used English, the majority of them, a 53.1% only used English in class, when communicating with their classmates. However, there was a high number, 43.8% of students that used English for job and other purposes outside the classroom, and only one person used it every day.

Following this trend, considering the next question, which deepens the focus on the use of English, especially, on the nationality of the speakers who the students addressed to, it can be seen that the nationalities of the people vary, but the most common ones are British, French and German. However, there are 3 people that had never spoken to any foreign person. When coping with the conversations with these foreign people. Most of the students when communicating with a foreigner, a 66.7% understood the complete message and a 33.3% understood part of the message. In relation to the strategies used when understanding part of the message most students (53.1%) managed to communicate reformulating the message, whereas a 34.4% of them used questions such as *pardon? what?* in order to make the interlocutor reformulate the question or the statement he or she was uttering.

Concerning their self-perception on learning English, students said that they tend to pay more attention to pronunciation (46.9%), followed by fluency (37.5%) and that grammar is not as important as some scholars may think.

Finally, as regards the main focus of this research, when being asked about a definition of English as a lingua franca, the majority of the answers were "I don't know".

4.7.2 Results of the post-test

This section tackles the results of the post-test questionnaire, based on the research questions: (c) To what extent can this ELF proposal change the way of communicating of EFL students? (d) To what extent can this ELF proposal improve students' oral skills performance? In order to accomplish these objectives, the following questions were displayed: (1) the major part of the speakers of English are… (2) which variety of English is the most spoken over the world? (3) Now, what do you think it is more important to pay attention to when speaking English? (4) Now, would you like to know more about the different varieties of English? (5) how would you define English as a Lingua Franca? and finally, (6) would you like to continue studying English as an International English?

The post-test was used as an instrument for assessing students but also as a way of measuring the progression of students' motivation towards learning other varieties of English.

In respect of the first question, a 55.6% of the students answered it right (non-native speakers), whereas a 44.4% answered it incorrectly (native speakers). Although it might be wrong, it denotes a meaningful improvement compared to the answers of the first questionnaire. This goes along with the second question which most of them answered wrong. A 33.9% kept thinking that the most spoken variety of English is British English, a 22.2% thought that the most spoken variety was American English and only another 38.9% thought that the widely spoken variety is International English or English as a *lingua franca.*

Nevertheless, there is a significant change in question 3, compared to the results of the pre-test questionnaire. A vast majority of students (77.8%), when asked about to what they paid more attention when speaking English, chose

"communication and making oneself understandable" in contrast to paying attention to grammar and, mainly, pronunciation that were their answers at the beginning. The variable of "communication and making oneself understandable" was introduced when explaining English as a lingua franca in the classroom.

In the fourth question, in relation to student's intrinsic motivation to continue studying other varieties of English, an 88.9% were convinced that they wanted to continue learning other varieties except for one person who, besides, was the one that did not participate in class nor did she the activities.

Concerning the acquisition of the concept "English as a lingua franca" and the ability of students of defining it, their responses were: "the way speakers have to understand each other", "an important language, since without it would be difficult to communicate with people from other countries and languages different to ours", "accessible and adaptable to everyone in order to understand each other", "a good tool for travelling and communicating with other people", "a necessary language to communicate with people from other countries", "coalition of countries for communication". Other students limited themselves to say "necessary", "useful", "important".

Finally, regarding their perception of learning EIL in further levels, the answers were overwhelming, all of them responded that they want to learn English from an international perspective in the future.

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of the present work was to investigate the consequences of introducing different varieties of English, besides the British one, in the classroom and the effect of the explicit instruction of the concepts English as a lingua franca or international language together with presenting the position that students have to adopt when speaking it. The following research questions were proposed (i) What are students' perceptions towards learning EIL? , (ii) what are students' views on ELF?, (iii) To what extent can this ELF proposal change the way of

communicating of EFL students?, (iv) To what extent can this ELF proposal improve students' oral skills performance?

First of all, dealing with the pre-test and the data extracted in order to answer the first research question, it can be perceived that the vast majority of students agreed that they were learning British English. This may be because of, as mentioned before and observed in the internship, the book they are working with, English File, which is a book published in the UK and its focus is on British life and culture. Moreover, it is reasonable that they think so because it is the variety and the country that is closer to Spain, hence it would be based on a local need as Brown (2012) states.

In second place, after gathering the results, surprisingly, students did not want to study another variety of English. This may be because of the age of the students and their pre-conception that they want to adhere to the old system of English, that is, grammar-based teaching and follow the exercises of the book mainly. Another reason could be because of the little exposure that they have to English language outside the classroom in their daily lives. Additionally, with respect to the ones that answered "yes", it was because they wanted to know other varieties because of being exposed to American blockbusters and TV series, as Crystal (2003) says is one of the main reasons of the expansion of English.

Further, when they were asked about their purpose of learning English, as expected, learning English as a hobby would be one of the major reasons because of the age of the students. The age of the students was not asked in the questionnaires but was observed during the placement period. Nevertheless, attending English lessons for work was also one of the major reasons and with difference to other education institutions such as high schools, in here students need English for their job and have an extrinsic motivation to study it.

As regards to the use of English and communication, the major part of them used the language only in class. This might be due to the lack of encouragement from the teachers to use it in other contexts. On the other hand,

when speaking to other people in English, most of them said that they understood their interlocutor and they said that the interlocutors' nationalities were others than British or American. This data was used after when explaining ELF in class and making students reflect upon the reasons why they had little problem when communicating with these speakers and how they communicated with them. Further, it was highlighted the importance of the question number 8 "*How did you manage to communicate with him/her?"* when addressing the term lingua franca and relating them with mediation tasks and interculturality.

On the other hand, regarding the data gathered after the implementation of the activities, as it can be seen in the results of the post-test, students' perception towards English as an international language changed considerably. It can be said that the implementation was successful in terms of raising interest in learning other varieties and knowing more vocabulary from different varieties. Moreover, when answering the third research question: (iii) To what extent can this ELF proposal can change the way of communicating of EFL students? Students said in the question number 3 of the questionnaire that they paid more attention to making themselves understandable in contrast to what they have answered earlier that was pronunciation.

Concerning the concept of *lingua franca* it seems that it was not very clear to all of them. This could be due to the time constraints and because of the situation and the online lessons, since there was no opportunity to answer many questions after explaining the concept. Moreover, this links to the last research question *To what extent can this ELF proposal improve students' oral skills performance?.* Since no data were gathered regarding the students' performance in the debate, because of the fact that it only was performed in one group, the question could not be answered. However, the debate was performed smoothly and in a comfortable environment, giving importance to communication, turn taking, rephrasing and avoiding conversational breakdowns between the interlocutors.

6. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The aim of this dissertation was to investigate and prove whether English as an international language could be taught at higher level institution such as the EOI, bearing in mind the needs of the learners and the usage of English on a daily basis and in the future of students.

As it has been demonstrated in this study, students can learn English as an international language at lower levels with simple activities. Different English varieties and accents can be introduced in the class without causing major trouble. Furthermore, due to globalisation, it is necessary to learn these varieties and to make students listen to different accents.

Nevertheless, this project has some limitations. The study could not be conducted as thought previously. First of all, there was some trouble in teaching some aspects that were out of the curriculum. Second, the interest of students to learn other varieties apart from British English was low hence, there was a lack of samples of different accents and the opportunity for the students to broaden their knowledge of international English. Further, direct contact between me and the students was not possible due to the state of emergency that the country has been experiencing therefore, it was difficult to monitor the students' performance.

In order to conclude, as further research and implementations, it can be suggested that the study of EIL should be tried in higher levels and in other contexts, for example, high schools where students are even more in contact with English internationally, through social networks, TV series, YouTube, etc. Furthermore, it could be more profitable to high school or university students since they are going to work in an international environment in the future. Additionally, students or speakers from different Englishes, living in the area, could be brought to class in order the students to listen to different accents, and see the variety in their local area. This activity was thought to be done at the beginning but to the lack of time and facilities, it could not be conducted.

Finally, teachers' views on the matter should be considered to study as well, they should be aware of the 21st century demands and the use of English as a global language in order to reach higher spheres and thus make changes in the curriculum.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

NAME AND SURNAME:_____   GROUP:_B1A_____

1. ENTER ON THE LINK BELOW AND WATCH THE VIDEO. PAY ATTENTION TO IT BECAUSE YOU'LL HAVE TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS WHILE WATCHING IT

LINK:
HTTPS://EDPUZZLE.COM/MEDIA/5E14FDFE2806D23F03BDB8B6

English Language Learning Tips – Varieties of English
Sara Fuentes Bidoz

2. COMPLETE THE MAP ADDING PINS IN COUNTRIES WHERE YOU THINK ENGLISH IS SPOKEN AS A FIRST OR SECOND LANGUAGE:

HTTPS://ES.PADLET.COM/AL_28(43(c/OVc3DAE3KKIS

Appendix 2

English, a global language

English has not always been the most widespread language in the world. In the middle ages, people spoke Latin when they wanted to communicate with foreigners. In the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries French was the international language. But today, at the start of the 21st century, English language the one that is spoken in every country of the world.

How did this happen? English is not a simple language to learn. Its spelling doesn't give much help to pronounce a word, and its grammar is difficult –think about word order!- The reason is politics and power. In the 18th century Britain was a powerful industrial nation and it also exported the English language to its new colonies around the world. In the 20th century the cultural power of the US spread English all over the world through newspapers, television, advertising and films. It's now the common language for international travel, science, industry and, in the most recent years, technology and the Internet.

English is spoken by about 400 million speakers as a first language in Australia, Britain, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa and the USA. It's spoken by another 400 million people in countries like Ghana, India, Nigeria and Singapore as the language of government, education and trade. The number of non-native speakers of English is about 900 million, it's the most important foreign language that children will learn at school, because it's essential for tourism, international business, entertainment, and the technology. So now approximately 1.5 billion people, or a quarter of the world's population speak English.

So, who 'owns' English? The answer is everyone who speaks it, the English, we all contribute to its richness. It changes every year with new words and expressions. There may be variations in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling, but as long as we use English and we understand each other, we all belong to the World English Speaking community. We all own English.

English, a global language

NAME AND SURNAME:_____ GROUP:_____

3. AFTER READING THE TEXT, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES:

1. French was the language spoken in Middle Ages. T F

2. The number of native speakers of English is higher than the native speakers T F

3. In what countries is English spoken as a first language?

4. Why is English so widespread language in the world?

5. What country did spread English all over the world through newspapers, TV and Internet?

6. Would you guess from which country borrowed English the following words from?

1. zero   a. French
2. kindergarten   b. Spanish
3. siesta   c. Arabic
4. chaos   d. German
5. restaurant   e. Greek

Appendix 3

4. PUT THE WORDS INTO THE CORRECT COLUMN, LEFT COLUMN IF THEY ARE SAID BY A BRITISH GUARD OR RIGHT COLUMN IF THEY ARE SAID BY AN AMERICAN SOLDIER

football, soccer, crisps, stove, baggage, vacuum, garbage, chips, vacation, loo, truck, luggage, chips, pants, French fries, cooker, sweets, lorry, hoover, trousers, rubbish, holiday, bathroom, candies

1. football	1. soccer
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.
11.	11.
12.	12.

5. READ THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES AND IDENTIFY WHETHER THE WORD UNDERLINED IS BRITISH OR AMERICAN ENGLISH. THEN INDICATE THE CORRESPONDING WORD IN BRE OR IN AME.

a) Where's your flat in London?_____

b) She needs a flash light to go to the attic. _____

c) When I approached the bus stop I saw a long line of people _____

d) You shouldn't ride your bike on the sidewalk _____

e) Doreen lives on the 8th floor. Let's take the lift _____

f) Waiter, can I have the check please? _____

g) David always wears jeans and trainers everywhere he goes._____

QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE

- Someone who doesn't have a native-like speaker pronunciation, shouldn't try to speak English

- There is only one correct variety of English and we must learn only that one.

- My English won't be valid because I won't achieve the fluency and accent of a native speaker.

- It's better a native teacher than a non-native teacher.

- Being able to communicate is more important than grammar.

- I won't speak good English unless I spend at least three months living in an English speaking country.
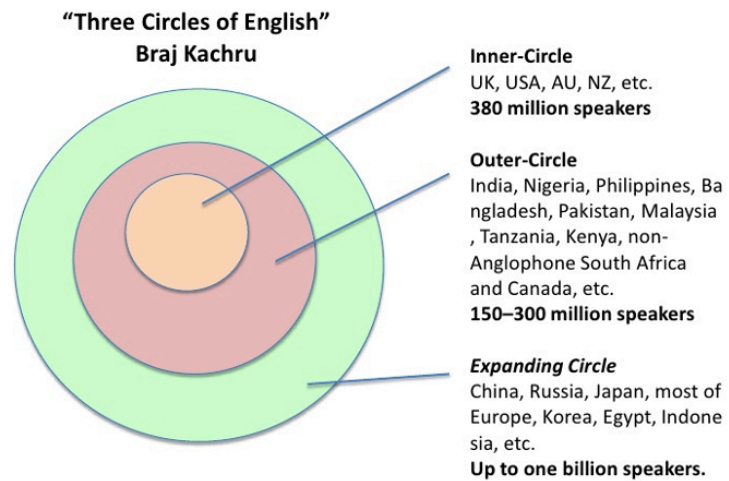
Expressions for debate:
- In my view,...
- From my point of view,...
- I (strongly) believe that,...
- Personally, in my opinion,...
- As far as I know/ I am concerned
- I'd say that...
+ agreement & disagreement expressions

Appendix 5. Some of the slides of the Power Point

What is *English as a lingua franca?*

- "a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate the communication between them"

If you lack of a word

➤you can use a similar word

➤You can define, paraphrase ➡ **MEDIATION**

➤You can point at something, use gestures or actions that clarify meaning

Appendix 6

DEBATE'S MONITORING GRID[4]					
Name of the student:					
HOLISTIC SCALE *GOAL-ORIENTED ONLINE TRANSACTIONS AND COLLABORATION* *SITUATION (& ROLES)* Can interact online with a group that is working on a common goal, following straightforward instructions, seeking clarification and helping to accomplish the shared tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
ANALYTICAL SCALE *FLUENCY* Can develop an argument well enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time and can state, explain and justify the main points (with precision). Moreover, can say whether or not he/she approves of what someone has done and give reasons to justify this opinion.					

RANGE-COMPENSATING STRATEGIES
 	
Possess a good linguistic command and:
   o can define the features of something concrete for which he/she can't remember the word,
   o can convey meaning by qualifying a word meaning something similar (e.g. a truck for people = bus).
   o can use a simple word meaning something similar to the concept he/she wants to convey and invites 'correction'.
   o can foreignise a mother tongue word and ask for confirmation					

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[4] Adapted from *CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors* and *Prova de certificació GVA 2019-2020. Guia del candidat*.

ACCURACY- MONITORING AND REPAIR STRATEGIES Shows a high grammar control and can correct mix-ups with tenses or expressions which lead to misunderstandings, can ask for confirmation that a form used is correct and is able to start again using a different tactic when communication breaks down.					