

13 ELF and communication strategies

Aim

To help the students share and reflect on their experiences of English as a Lingua Franca – identifying ELF communication strategies, which help with understanding the *message*, and translanguaging practices, which help explain the *meaning*.

Rationale

ELF communication strategies include repetition, paraphrasing and utterance completion; translanguaging practices involve the use of various linguistic and semiotic resources.

Given the emphasis in ELF on understanding rather than on grammatical correctness:

- It is of great importance that the students identify and become aware of the strategies and practices used in ELF communication.
- It is sensible to explore the students' experiences of ELF and reflect on what worked or didn't work – and what they felt about it.

Task 1

To prepare for the class, ask the students to record an ELF conversation among their friends or acquaintances (please remember to ask for their permission before recording!). Alternatively, ask the students to find an online podcast or a video which represents English as a Lingua Franca communication for them.

Ask the students to transcribe roughly the video/audio recording – or write up the ELF experience they recorded.

In class, ask the students to share their experiences in groups or pairs. They can use the table of Prompts on the handout on page 91 for guidance.

Task 2

Now that they have shared and reflected on their ELF experiences, you can provide an example of an ELF conversation with multilingual resources, like the one reported on the handout.

Ask the students to read and analyse the 'Fleur bleue' transcript:

- It is a conversation involving Anna (Italian), Jean (French) and Karen (German).
- They are talking about the photos a recently married couple posted on their website.

You can find some explanation of ELF communication strategies and translanguaging here: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/glits-e/back-issues/english-as-a-lingua-franca/>

Ask the students to re-read the transcript and follow the instructions on the handout.

Ask the students these 'Transcript questions' as part of a class discussion:

- What are the multilingual resources used? How? What do they mean? What's their function?
- What other communication strategies can you identify? How useful are they?
- What is your impression of this kind of conversation? How does it feel to you?
- Why don't Jean, Karen and Anna just use Standard English? What does the use of other languages say about their cultural and linguistic background and identity?



See the handout on page 92.

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English as a Lingua Franca and communication strategies

Task 1

Record an ELF conversation among your friends or acquaintances (ask for their permission before recording):

- Alternatively, find an online podcast or a video which represents for you English as a Lingua Franca communication.

Transcribe roughly the video/audio recording – or write up the ELF experience you recorded:

- You can use the table of Prompts below for guidance.

Prompts	My comments on the transcript/experience
What was the video/audio discussion about?	
Who were the participants?	
What language backgrounds? What repertoires – ie all the languages they know/speak/learnt in the past?	
What did you notice in the way they speak?	
What was your impression of this kind of communication?	

Share your experiences in groups or pairs.

Task 2

Read the transcript below.

'Fleur bleue'

ANNA: Too much, eh?

JEAN: Cheesy.

KAREN: Ye ... ah!

ANNA: Ye ... ah!

KAREN: Yeah, a bit too much, I think.

JEAN: So ... blue flower, we say ... *fleur bleue*.

ANNA: Why? ... to say that it's cheesy?

JEAN: Yeah ... *fleur bleue* means ... you know, when you have these pictures with little angels ...

KAREN: Ah ... yeah.

ANNA: Yeah.

JEAN: Fleur bleue.

KAREN: Kitsch – kitschig.

JEAN: Kitschig ... yeah

Read the transcript again, and underline:

- the multilingual parts;
- the communication strategies;
- any other aspect you find interesting.

These findings can be shared as part of a class discussion.