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Introduction

The global spread of English as a lingua franca (ELF) has obvious repercussions on the practices of translation and interpreting. While international interactions in the twentieth century were predominantly facilitated by means of translation and interpreting practices, the twenty-first century is marked by an overwhelming use of ELF as a global means of communication in ever more such interactions. The main challenge seems to be not, as far as we can see, that interpreters and translators will soon be made redundant, but rather that the number of source texts and source speeches produced in ELF is growing exponentially and that the consequences of this growth for the profession of translators and interpreters are to date largely unknown. While ELF use and its impact have been widely discussed in applied linguistics and pragmatics generally, its importance for translation and interpreting has not received the same attention.

In order to get at the heart of the impact which ELF might have on translation and interpreting, we need to first take a closer look at the phenomenon of ELF so as to identify just what it is that makes ELF so potentially influential or even pre-carious for translation and interpreting. The most important characteristic of ELF is its great variability and functional flexibility. The consequence of this is that there can be no established norm, and also no generally valid conventional rules seem to be available. Rather ELF is a kind of open source phenomenon – a resource for speakers of other languages to take advantage of the English language, on which ELF is, of course, based but from which it more often than not diverges due to users' maintaining and blending features from their other languages (Cogo and House 2018; Firth 2009). ELF thus typically contains elements and structures from many different linguacultures, most often those from ELF users' mother tongues (House 2016). Cross-linguistic transfer is, in fact, among the most common features giving rise to comprehension difficulties in translation and interpreting (Albl-Mikasa 2018). ELF as a vehicular language is always negotiated *ad hoc* thus varying ac-cording to context and its users' proficiency and communicative purpose, i. e. ELF use is individually shaped by its users – a condition that is critically different from

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the supra-individual conventions and rituals holding for native language use. ELF also differs from what translators and interpreters know from language learning and specialist training such that mismatches with the multilingual resources they have built up and stored may occur.

Given this variability and flexibility and the fact that ELF users are actually multilingual speakers (see Cogo 2018; House 2003) who readily integrate linguistic items from other languages, it is clear that translators and interpreters are faced with a new set of challenges and problems, as well as opportunities for more efficient communication and more assignments. The new situation of massive ELF presence in the translation and interpretation business clearly demands a greater awareness of the nature of ELF. And beyond that, more empirical studies that provide insights into the real and perceived effects of the spread of ELF on the translation and interpreting industry and into the impact of ELF-specific features in source texts on translation and interpreting processes and performance are clearly needed. The current special issue sets out to help fill this research gap.

The issue's contributions are part of research into interpreting, translation and English as a lingua franca (ITELF), a subdiscipline of TIS (Translation and Interpreting Studies) which has only evolved over the past decade (Albl-Mikasa 2018). It has generally taken a less positive stance towards ELF, because of its focus on the investigation of interpreters' and translators' observed problems with ELF. Many of these problems seem to arise from the monologic, non-interactive context of interpreting or translating ELF-produced oral and written texts, where meaning negotiation and other pragmatic strategies do not apply. More precisely, interpreting and translation are more often than not related to monologic source texts rather than interactive, dialogic settings – hence meaning negotiation, co-construction, etc. is not possible. Similarly, let-it-pass strategies are not an issue, because interpreters and translators have to be faithful to the source text producer and the source text in its entirety. Taking the interpreters' and translators' perspective therefore places the emphasis on the cost associated with working and processing in ELF contexts. As the six contributions in this special issue will show, comprehension and reception difficulties may increase for interpreters and translators, communicative effectiveness may decrease in such settings and heightened cognitive load may be among the more adverse consequences.

Before providing an overview of the special issue's contributions, an item of ITELF-specific terminology needs to be introduced. Since ELF is treated as a mode of communication rather than a variety of English, the term "ELF speaker" is often avoided in the specialist ELF literature and "ELF user" is preferred. In ITELF-related work, the "ELF speaker" is a prominent term. It basically refers to the (conference) speaker that provides the source speech and input for the interpreter in ELF contexts. The interpreter is an intermediary *speaker* mediating between the

source *speaker* and the target *listener*. In this constellation, (source language) "speaker" and (target language) "user" are firmly established terms in interpreting studies, just as "native or non-native speaker of English" and "ELF user" are in ELF studies. In ELF settings, interpreters are particularly concerned about the non-native use of English, which is also reflected in ELF research efforts. In ITELF research in general and this special issue in particular, the term "ELF speaker" is used to refer predominantly to the non-native speaker of English in interpreter-mediated settings who provides the input to be rendered for a target (language) listener/audience. All other participants in the ELF settings are referred to as "ELF users." This terminological discussion is also an indicator of the prominence of spoken over written ELF in ITELF research, just as is the case with ELF research. The greater volume of interpreting- rather than translation-related ITELF research efforts is also reflected in the contributions in this issue.

The first contribution by **Karin Reithofer** is based on her PhD study which finds higher comprehension scores for participants listening to the interpreter than those listening to the original ELF speaker. In this follow-up paper she examines the factors affecting intelligibility on the part of those listening to the ELF speaker. The results show that familiarity with ELF is a better predictor of comprehension success than sharing the speaker's domain knowledge or even English language skills. In the second contribution, which also focusses on a particular aspect of a larger study, **Cristina Scardulla** has professional EU Commission interpreters assess, in a questionnaire survey, the "communicative effectiveness" of the great number of ELF speakers they listen to in their daily work settings. According to the results, only half of the ELF speakers in EU institutional meetings are perceived to succeed in expressing themselves effectively with repercussions for communication quality, interlocutors' participation rights and multilingualism.

The related difficulties in extracting meaning from non-native English input that interrupt interpreting and translation flow and affect interpreters' and translators' performance have the potential of increasing cognitive load not only for interpreters and translators but also for other multilinguals. **Maureen Ehrensberger-Dow**, **Michaela Albl-Mikasa**, **Katrin Andermatt**, **Andrea Hunziker Heeb** and **Caroline Lehr** present a range of mixed methods addressing this issue in the context of an interdisciplinary research project.

Following-up on previous perception studies of interpreters' views on ELF (Albl-Mikasa 2010; Gentile and Albl-Mikasa 2017), **Claudio Bendazzoli** carries out a large-scale online survey among professional translators and interpreters in Italy. The study reveals similar challenges, such as comprehension difficulties and adverse effects on the job market, but also some new opportunities in more specialized settings. A smaller-scale survey by **Mariá Dolores**, **Rodríguez Melchor** and **Andrew Samuel Walsh** addresses similar questions for the Spanish

interpreting market, where the growing prevalence of ELF seems to be perceived as more of a threat to the profession.

Finally, the focus shifts to Finland and public service translation and interpreting settings, which differ markedly from the former conference interpreting settings in the EU institutions or on the private Italian and Spanish markets. Public service or community interpreting refers to intra-national interpreting in migrant settings, or more specifically in hospitals, police stations, educational and administrative contexts. **Simo Määttä** explores the translation of child protection assessments and decisions from Finnish into English for an ELF audience. He discusses the number of accommodation strategies employed in the translations so as to render them more accessible. He also stresses the need for more effective translation services in such specific ELF contexts.

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