**An ELF-aware approach to English Language Teaching**

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As Seidlhofer and Widdowson point out, ‘the global learning of English needs to be based on its global use’ and that this means that English as a lingua franca ‘corresponds more closely for what is real for learners, and is a more realistic objective for them to achieve’. It is also important to note that there are a myriad different contexts in which ELF occurs. My own work (Kirkpatrick 2010) shows a range of contexts in which ELF is used in Asia. ELF is seen throughout the world and in many different contexts.

People therefore will have different reasons and motivations for using ELF and this complexity must somehow be considered when developing an ELF-aware approach to teaching. As Kohn notes, ELF communication is not about using a special variety of English. ELF communication depends on the context, the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the speakers and the ways in which the speakers negotiate meaning. In this it exemplifies a social constructivist understanding of language use in which people learn and use a language ‘by creating their own version of it in their minds, hearts and behaviour (Kohn 2011:80). This also means that their need for ELF will change depending on circumstances and contexts. And while it is sensible to note that mutual intelligibility is a key aim for all ELF communication, it may not be the only aim an ELF user has in mind.

In this talk I shall outline an ELF-aware approach to English language teaching which takes into consideration the diversity and complexity of ELF and which will illustrate ways in which English language teachers can adopt an ELF-aware approach to their classrooms. I will, however, make Southeast Asia the primary context, using data from the Asian Corpus of English (ACE).