

ABSTRACT

The present thesis considers the topic of English as a Lingua Franca as it is perceived and experienced by three groups: the ELF research community, ELT professionals, and ELF users themselves.

This thesis first presents an overview of the theoretical foundations of ELF research, identifying key topics with which the ELF research community has grappled in recent decades.

In order to determine how much closer the ELT community has gotten to aligning teaching policy, practices, and goals to students' specific needs and expectations, sociolinguistic research in the form of seven semi-structured interviews was conducted with L2 English speakers who use ELF to live, work, and study in their daily lives, and the ELT professionals tasked with developing their English skills in the classroom.

The content of these interviews is then analyzed with regard to the specific needs and expectations of ELF users and the concerns of ELT professionals, followed by a discussion of the key issues uncovered in these interviews in light of the theoretical background of ELF research. The author provides suggestions for further research aimed at improving the ELT community's role in developing ELF proficiency in the expanding circle.

Keywords: English as a Lingua Franca, English Language Teaching, Expanding Circle, ELF users, ELT professionals