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English as a Lingua Franca.
The Decolonial Option in Migratory Contexts

Abstract: The aim of the present paper is to explore decolonial practices carried out by migrants in intercultural encounters. Drawing on a corpus-based approach, the study explores the use of code-switching made by migrants and underlines how this is not an automatic process that takes place within the conversational setting but rather represents a conscious "decolonial option", a way for co-constructing meaning and identity in multicultural contexts.

Keywords: *ELF*, *code-switching*, *decolonial*, *identity*, *corpus linguistics*

1. Introduction[1]

The cultural turn in linguistic studies, begun in the 1980s, has led to a shift of focus from merely linguistic issues – centered on the study of words and/or texts – to the idea of language intended as an essential part of a broader cultural, literary, historical and ethical-anthropological system. For the specific purposes of this research, the present contribution will lead to a deepening of the nature and role of the English language in its move from hegemonic to contact language decreeing the end of monolingualism and the purist idea of language as an ideological construction, historically rooted and marked by the nation-state borders. These considerations will also allow us to observe the formation of new geo-localities contaminated by multiple global cultural flows and to embrace new practices of linguistic and cultural crossover towards a decolonial horizon.

The common ground between linguistic and cultural reflections provided here is the deconstruction of the traditional knowledge of language as a social projection of territorial unity and to the development of the alternative epistemological paradigm based on English as a contact language and a translingual practice. The importance of rethinking such concepts as language, territory, unity, and English, among the others, coincides with the challenging possibility to articulate new visions as advocated by several linguists and decolonial thinkers in the last decades. Among the promoters of this rethinking, attention will be paid to socio-linguists Vertovec,[2] Blommaert and Rampton,[3] Tsuda,[4] ELF scholars Guido,[5] Seidlhofer,[6] Meierkord[7] and Cogo,[8] as well as decolonial linguists Pennycook,[9] Canagarajah,[10]

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[1]Although this research was jointly conducted by both authors, Annarita Taronna is responsible for Sections 1, 2.1 and 2.2; Laura Centonze for Sections 2.3, 3, and 4; the Conclusions section was jointly written.

[2] Steven Vertovec, "Super-diversity and Its Implications", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29.6 (2007), 1024-1054.

[3] Jan Blommaert and Ben Rampton, "Language and Superdiversity", *Diversities*, 13 (2011), 1-20.

[4] Yukio Tsuda, "English Hegemony and English Divide", *China Media Research*, 4.1 (2008), 47-55.

[5] Maria Grazia Guido, *English as a Lingua Franca in Cross-cultural Immigration Domains* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008).

[6] Barbara Seidlhofer, "Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca", *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24 (2011), 209-239; Barbara Seidlhofer, *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[7] Christiane Meierkord, "Syntactic Variation in Interactions across International Englishes", *English World-Wide*, 25.1 (2004), 109-132.

[8] Alessia Cogo, "Accommodating Difference in ELF Conversations: A Study of Pragmatic Strategies", in Anna Mauranen and Elina Ranta, eds., *English as a Lingua Franca: Studies and Findings* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 254-273.

[9] Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998).

[10] Suresh Canagarajah, *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Suresh Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

Kumaravadivelu;[11] Motha;[12] Phillipson,[13] Fiol-Matta,[14] Macedo[15] whose studies, though from different disciplinary perspectives, make explicit various recommendations for investigating the complex relationship between colonialism, power and the English language. Attention will be drawn to their theoretical reflections in order to discuss the content of a selection of semi-structured interviews between asylum seekers and intercultural mediators who use English as the Lingua Franca for mutual understanding. More specifically, such interdisciplinary theoretical framework will support the analysis of some of the most relevant excerpts taken from the *English as a Lingua Franca in Migration Domains* corpus (henceforth the ELF MiDo corpus)[16] with the attempt to demonstrate that a pragmatics of decoloniality may be emerging within a new *linguascape*. On this background, uncommon language combinations occur on a significant scale due to mobility, migration and displacement and trace the manner in which English can be used as a form of translingual practice beyond the borders of the speakers' mother tongues and homelands. This move may also situate its speakers in a condition of experiencing English in a decolonial dimension. To this end, some concrete examples of the use of code-switching as a decolonial option in ELF domains will be provided and discussed.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. *Retracing the Rhetoric of Naturalization and of English Language Supremacy*
Retracing the main dynamics through which the process of colonization and the most recent globalization trends have led to the hegemony of the English language helps to problematize the dissemination of the myth of English and the rhetoric of naturalization. Among these is the diffusion of a model based on a culture of "monoglot standardization", which Silverstein defines as the constitutive base of a linguistic community that influences the structure of different communities of speakers.[17] Drawing on a purist idea of language, this cultural model exerts its influence within a linguistic community that is linked to the idea that there is a rule that allows an individual to use his/her own language for denotative purposes, by reproducing a natural social and linguistic order.[18] More specifically, such standardization is consolidated as a hegemonic colonial process through different phases and methods: it emerges as a process of social codification and reflects the functional usefulness of language as a means of representation or denotation; the social processes that regulate communication and are activated for the purposes of standardization are presented as naturalized when the search for a "common agreement" is activated within the denotative value of the words that become shared by an even larger group of people. Finally, the cultural model of monoglot standardization, by imposing itself

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[11] B. Kumaravadivelu, "The Decolonial Option in English Teaching: Can the Subaltern Act?", *TESOL Quarterly*, 50.1 (2016), 66-85.

[12] Suhanthie Motha, *Race, Empire, and English Language Teaching: Creating Responsible and Ethical Anti-racist Practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2014).

[13] Robert Phillipson, "Linguistic Imperialism and Linguicism", *Linguistic Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 50-57; Robert Phillipson, "The Linguistic Imperialism of Neoliberal Empire", *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 5.1 (2008), 1-43.

[14] Licia Fiol-Matta, "Teaching in (Puerto Rican) Tongues: A Report from the Space in-between", *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 24.3-4 (1996), 69-76.

[15] Donaldo Macedo, "The Colonialism of the English Only Movement", *Educational Researcher* 29.3 (2000), 15-24; Donaldo Macedo, "Imperialist Desires in English-only Language Policy", *The CATESOL Journal* 29.1 (2017), 81-110.

[16] Laura Centonze, "Illocutionary Force and Perlocutionary Effect Recognition in the (Semi-)automated Pragmatic Annotation of ELF Spoken Discourse", *IPERSTORIA*, 11 (2018), 133-144; Laura Centonze, *Assessing the Feasibility of (Semi)automated Pragmatic Annotation in ELF Domains*, Doctoral Thesis (University of Vienna / Università del Salento, 2019).

[17] Michael Silverstein, "Monoglot 'Standard' in America: Standardization and Metaphors of Linguistic Hegemony", in Donald Brenneis and Ronald K.S. Macaulay, eds., *The Matrix of Language: Contemporary Linguistic Anthropology* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 284.

[18] Bent Preisler, "Functions and Forms of English in a European EFL Country", in Tony Bex and Richard J. Watts, eds., *Standard English: The Widening Debate* (London-New York: Routledge, 1999), 239-267.

as a natural process, brings out parallel social phenomena in an exercise of authority that affects the future of language.

In investigating these domains, several linguists have detailed the establishment of a global narrative of English language supremacy and hegemony[19] and consistently point to the need for fundamental changes in the global discourse of English, one that denaturalizes the privileged, superior status it has been imbued with.[20] The process of changing and demystifying such a narrative of supremacy has also critically undermined the positivist label of English as a neutral and objective language[21] as well as the rhetoric of standardization in the form of the naturalization of language. This latter has consolidated two dichotomous value models: possessing the standard (*possession-of-standard*) gives the individual a high social and cultural status; not having the standard (*lack-of-standard*) becomes a negative indicator of the social and cultural status of the speaker.[22] In both cases, however, pursuing a model based on a standard language becomes unsuccessful when it must be taken into account that the purist idea of language is only an ideological construct historically marked by stories of colonization, diasporas, forced migration, nationalism, abuse and sometimes even fanaticism. In this context, along with Widdowson,[23] influential linguists have started to question what standard English is or, more precisely, what "proper English" is:

> We can talk about proper English in terms of conformity to encoding convention. But this is not the only answer. We can also think of words being in their proper place with reference to their communicative purpose. Here we are concerned not with the internal relationship of words as encoded forms, but with the external relationship of words with the context of their actual occurrence, and propriety is not now a matter of their correctness of form in a sentence, but of their appropriateness of function in an utterance.[24]

"Proper English" therefore refers to a form of English taken as a model of correctness and appropriateness for successful communication. For these reasons, every linguistic variety born in time as an alternative to the standard English model has been defined in terms of broken English, globish, or English with an accent.[25] These expressions are used to underline that the emerging varieties of English spoken throughout the world can affect the purest variety of English that belonged to the so-called natives by right. As a result, albeit dismissive, these labels bring to the center of the linguistic debate another implication deriving from the diffusion of the myth of the English language and of the rhetoric of naturalization and colonization: the re-reading of the concepts of nativeness and native speaker. Traditionally, the ideology that underlies the nativeness model reproduces a series of myths according to which the variety of English – but we might say, of any language in general – spoken by a native is a model of preferable and desirable correctness.

On this issue, the overcoming of the ideological implications developed by the concept of nativeness and the category of native speaker, as well as that of the mother tongue, takes place thanks to the

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[19] Julian Edge, "Imperial Troopers and Servants of the Lord: A Vision of TESOL for the 21st Century", *TESOL Quarterly* 37.4 (2003), 701-709, Nelson Flores, "Silencing the Subaltern: Nation-state/colonial Governmentality and Bilingual Education in the United States", *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 10.4 (2013a), 263-287. See Macedo, "The Colonialism of the English-only Movement", 15-24 and Macedo, "Imperialist Desires in English-only Language Policy", 81-110.

[20] Canagarajah, *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*, Kumaravadivelu, "The Decolonial Option in English Teaching: Can the Subaltern Act?", 66-85, Angel Lin and Allan Luke, "Coloniality, Postcoloniality, and TESOL. Can a Spider Weave Its Way Out of the Web that it Is Being Woven into Just as It Weaves?", *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 3.2-3 (2006), 65-73, Alain Pennycook, *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* and Robert Phillipson, "The Linguistic Imperialism of Neoliberal Empire", *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 5.1 (2008), 1-43.

[21] David Crystal, *English as a Global Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1997).

[22] Annarita Taronna, *Black Englishes. Pratiche linguistiche transfrontaliere Italia-USA* (Verona: Ombre Corte, 2016).

[23] Henry Widdowson, *Defining Issues in English Language Teaching* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2003).

[24] Ibid., 27.

[25] Taronna, *Black Englishes.*

contribution – among the others – of Bourdieu and his idea of the 'legitimate speaker' that would replace, at least apparently, a more discriminating and ambiguous terminology such as that of native or non-native speaker or mother tongue.[26] For Bourdieu, legitimacy derives from the symbolic power attributed to the form of capital and is the result of a disregard of power and the view that individuals are given the time and space to talk. In the light of the composite contemporary geo-linguistic scenario characterized by the constant evolution of the linguistic models that speakers can use, it would be of little use to speak of "proper English" or to replicate a hierarchy of English defined as more or less valid, given the heterogeneity of its domains. In the light of the dynamics that has led to the diffusion of English at an international level, one might perhaps agree with Rajagopalan when he provocatively affirms that "English has no native speakers", sanctioning, to some extent, the transfer of ownership of English from its (former) native speakers to new speakers.[27]

Today, the plurality of languages, and thus a reconsideration of concepts such as language, belonging, contact, nation, identity and community is more visible largely due to migration and mobility. The experience of migration (whether voluntary or involuntary) dislocates people as well as languages, and only the acceptance of language plurality, polyphony of stories, linguistic habits, and cultures, will facilitate hospitality and translation. In contemporary scenarios, this is particularly easy to observe when taking into consideration the interactions between the newly arrived migrants who have crossed the Mediterranean and the mediators who work in the contact zones (e.g. ferries, camps, conflict zones, reception and detention centers, etc.) since they resort to a common communicative practice that holds in its interstices the double threshold of a contagious and unexpected hospitality in a new language. In their interactions, an unprecedented vision of language and language contact is unfolded with different linguistic and cultural heritages, thus problematizing the traditional understanding of language as a social projection of territorial unity held together by shared behavioral norms, beliefs and values. Indeed, this old view of language originated at a time when society consisted of human populations confined within geographical boundaries and structured by local imaginings of their social identity. Since then, the increasing mobility of people has created what Jacquemet identifies as the "transidiomatic practices of de-territorialized speakers" occurring in such open spaces and ensembles of contact zones as those crossed by most of the interviewed migrants found along the transatlantic and Afro-Mediterranean routes.[28]

From this renewed language perspective, the voices of the migrants who have reached our Mediterranean coasts are represented as de-territorialized social identities taking shape around a sentiment of belonging that can no longer be identified with a purely territorial dimension, and finds its expression in the mixed idioms of translingualism. However, the most important social implication of this language process is not the dissolution of identities, cultures or nation states in a global environment, but the question of how such groups of people, as those selected for this study, think about their multiple voices, shape transidiomatic practices and recombinant identities. To this end, we resort to Pratt's "linguistics of contact"[29] as the epistemological lens through which we can interpret the "randomness and disorder of the flows of people, knowledge, texts and objects across social and geographical space, in the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, and in fragmentation, indeterminacy and ambivalence".[30] Within this framework, we propose to examine the migrants-mediators' interactions as instances of de-

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[26] Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, trans. by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1991).

[27] Kanavillil Rajagopalan, "The Concept of 'World English' and its Implications for ELT", *ELT Journal*, 58.2 (2004), 11.

[28] Marco Jacquemet, "Transidiomatic Practices: Language and Power in the Age of Globalization, *Language and Communication*, 25 (2005), 257-277.

[29] Mary Louise Pratt, "Linguistic Utopias", in Nigel Fabb et al., eds., *The Linguistics of Writing* (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1987), 48-66 and Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone", *Modern Language Association: Profession* (1991), 33-40.

[30] Ben Rampton, "Speech Community", in Jef Verschueren et al., eds., *Handbook of Pragmatics* (Amsterdam/New York: John Benjamins, 1998), 125.

territorialized and multilingual forms of communication, in other words, "transidiomatic practices"[31] which resort to ELF in the context of migration in order to negotiate rather than to prescribe the linguistic norms, agency, locality and context of the speaker during interaction. Only an awareness of the need for alternative methods and re-readings opposing the monolithic and hegemonic vision of English language use can lead to the affirmation of the interdisciplinary and intercultural space that Ortiz defined as "transculturation", namely a zone in which different languages and cultures converge syncretically, without hierarchies or censorship.[32]

2.2. *Towards a New Paradigm: English as a Translingual Practice and a Decolonial Option*
The rethinking of the nature and role of English as a hegemonic language as introduced in the previous section can be traced back starting from the contributions by the socio-linguists Vertovec,[33] Blommaert and Rampton[34] who coined the term "superdiversity" to define the complexity generated by the migratory experience in the United Kingdom starting from the 1990s, and to highlight the change of migratory models:

> [superdiversity] is a notion intended to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything the country has previously experienced. Such a condition is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple- origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade.[35]

The paradigm of superdiversity is also an epistemological one, considering that the emerging phenomena of social contact and diversification generated by globalization, mobility and migration also encouraged the proposal of new concepts, replacing that of "speech community". One example is the term "supergroups" to define de-territorialised and transidiomatic communities of speakers that move within the new scenario of superdiversity.[36] These supergroups –an example of which may be the one that includes migrants and intercultural mediators who reciprocally resort to ELF in their conversations as a translingual practice– represent new social and linguistic groups that problematize the relationship between the notions of "linguistic community" (intended as a form of cultural development) and "nation-state" (intended as a political institution).

Against this background, this research proposes here the possibility of developing an ELF communication that can be recognized and even shared by both migrants and intercultural mediators. With this purpose, it might be worth specifying that "ELF" is a term including "the conventional notion of 'fossilized interlanguages', as well as of those varieties of English defined as pidgin and creole", as

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[31] Marco Jacquemet, "Transidiomatic Practices: Language and Power in the Age of Globalization", *Language and Communication* 25 (2005), 257-277. His concept of idiomatic practices is particularly relevant to fleshing out the experience of cultural globalization, and the sociolinguistic disorder it entails, which cannot be understood solely through a dystopic vision of linguistic catastrophe, but demands that we also take into account the recombinant qualities of language mixing, hybridization and creolization.
[32] Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (1947) (Durham and London: Duke U.P., 1995).
[33] Steven Vertovec, "Super-diversity and Its Implications", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29.6 (2007), 1024-1054.
[34] Jan Blommaert and Ben Rampton, "Language and Superdiversity", *Diversities* 13 (2011), 1-20.
[35] Steven Vertovec, "Super-diversity and Its Implications", 1024.
[36] Ibid., 1024-1054; Blommaert and Rampton, "Language and Superdiversity", 1-20.

stated by Guido,[37] Seidlhofer,[38] Meierkord,[39] Cogo.[40] To Guido this awareness can guarantee communicative success that is essential to specialist interaction domains such as those related to intercultural mediators interacting with migrants.[41] In cases like this, the dialogic co-construction of an ELF discourse that is accessible and acceptable for the migrants may be obtained through linguistic and extra-linguistic strategies, which intercultural mediators can adopt during their interviews with migrants, not only for communicative purposes, but also to "accommodate" the migrant in the new country as shown in the next section. More specifically, Meierkord identifies a series of language features generated in the contact zones that can be summarized as: total correspondence to the rules of L1 English varieties;[42] transfer phenomena, development models and nativized forms; simplification, regularization and levelling processes. Simplification is but one of the language accommodation strategies adopted to ease communication or to enhance understanding.[43] Among others, it might be worth mentioning morphological adaptation through the use of simple grammar structures, lexical repetition for the sake of clarity and unambiguous messages,[44] reassuring tone of voice and pronunciation, slower elocution and length of both utterances and pauses.[45] However, accommodation strategies also include extra-linguistic components such as body language (e.g. smiling eyes, body positioning, gestures, facial expressions) and behavior – for example when ignoring (standard-violating) "mistakes" and redundancy. Hesitations and silences are often used strategically, too, as they are helpful when amending, clarifying or contextualizing a misunderstanding, according to what Firth defines as "let-it-pass" and "make-it-normal" principles.[46]

Both linguistic and extra-linguistic strategies may shape a sort of pragmatics of decoloniality[47] to enhance the role of ELF in contact zones as a collaborative negotiation practice that does not necessarily imply the vision of contact as a harmonic, neutral or apolitical zone. Contact zones as border zones are places where it is possible to experiment with both a dynamic and cultural exchange and the power asymmetries that make the interacting subjects' experiences conflictual and even painful. The use of English as a translingual practice and decolonial option in migratory settings also reminds us of another recent theoretical paradigm elaborated by Japanese sociologist Yukio Tsuda: he describes global society as a hierarchically structured one, on top of which are L1 English speakers followed by L2 speakers, and speakers of English as a foreign language; the bottom includes those speakers who do not have any command of the language.[48] In particular, to contrast the threat represented by the sole use of English as a hegemonic language, Tsuda proposes a model defined as "the ecology of languages"[49] that calls for an

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[37] Guido, *English as a Lingua Franca in Cross-cultural Immigration Domains*, 24.

[38] Seidlhofer, "Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca", 209-239, and Seidlhofer, *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*.

[39] Christiane Meierkord, "Syntactic Variation in Interactions across International Englishes", *English World-Wide*, 25.1 (2004), 109-132.

[40] Cogo, "Accommodating Difference in ELF Conversations: A Study of Pragmatic Strategies", 254-273.

[41] Guido, English *as a Lingua Franca in Cross-cultural Immigration Domains*, 26.

[42] Christiane Meierkord, "Syntactic Variation in Interactions across International Englishes", 128.

[43] Cogo, "Accommodating Difference in ELF Conversations", 254.

[44] Anna Mauranen, "Hybrid Voices: English as the Lingua Franca of Academics", in Kjersti Flottum et al., eds., *Language and Discipline Perspectives on Academic Discourse* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 244-259.

[45] Mette Rudvin and Cinzia Spinzi, eds., *Mediazione linguistica e interpretariato. Regolamentazione, problematiche presenti e prospettive future in ambito giuridico* (Bologna: Clueb, 2013), 135-152.

[46] Alan Firth, "The Discursive Accomplishment of Normality: On 'Lingua Franca' English and Conversation Analysis", *Journal of Pragmatics*, 26 (1996), 237-259.

[47] A pragmatics of decoloniality is proposed here by Taronna as an echo of "the grammar of decoloniality" envisioned by those scholars (Mignolo 2011; Kumaravadivelu, 2016; Veronelli, 2016) who have advised an ideological recuperation of indigenous, alternative, and local knowledges to produce more empowering English learning conditions. For references see note 54.

[48] Yulio Tsuda, "English Hegemony and English Divide", 47-55.

[49] The expression was first used by Ernst Haugen in 1972 and was borrowed by Yukio Tsuda thirty years later. More specifically, the paradigm of language ecology is identified with the following features: respect for human rights, equality of communication

education to multilingualism through efficient and democratic strategies. Such strategies may be the above-mentioned ones of accommodation, aimed at spreading the use of English as a Lingua Franca without necessarily neutralizing the presence of other languages and cultures, providing speakers with an awareness of equality in communication, language rights, cultural and linguistic pluralism. The linguistic reflections proposed so far encourage an innovative theoretical and methodological approach, including analyses concerning the plurality and pluri-centrism that characterize English nowadays, in the growing and complex polyhedral nature of its contexts of use. As a consequence, we are guided to perceive and recognize the creative power of the new linguistic models born around English – a language that is becoming less and less monolithic and more adaptable for negotiation, as outlined by the decolonial linguist Pennycook who, in defining the new varieties of English as "plurilithic Englishes", tries to systematize and problematize the principles and conditions that might shape these new variations of English (i.e. "Englishes").[50] In particular, we accept Pennycook's invitation to free ourselves from the academic obsession with reproducing circles, tubes and boxes – which has been done by linguists such as Kachru and McArthur for a long time.

All these theoretical assumptions seem to be evolving towards what decolonial linguist Canagarajah defines as "translingual practice": one that, while recognizing norms and conventions established by dominant institutions and social groups within given contexts, is more closely focused on the fact that speakers can negotiate such norms according to their own repertoires and translingual practices.[51] In this perspective, since languages are not necessarily in conflict with each other but desirably complete each other, their interrelation has to be tied in more dynamic terms – abandoning the duality intrinsic in labels such as mono/multi, mono/pluri and mono/poly. The hybrid, permeable and translingual nature of ELF is experienced in the first person by numerous intercultural mediators and migrants, as shown in the empirical section of this study. The analysis of the excerpts in the next section foregrounds the emergence of experiential implications in the use of ELF in language mediation practices, but it also refers to a more specifically linguistic level that helps to re-think the concept of English itself as a Lingua Franca and contact practice. According to Canagarajah, English as a translingual and decolonial option needs to be regarded as a variety in its own right, moving and transforming along with the migration flows of subjects transiting through border zones and who, while interacting with language mediators, resort to personal English varieties.[52] Some of the excerpts also seem to echo Canagarajah's motto according to which "we are all translinguals" in contact zones and we speak a flexible, contingent, unstable bridge language, suited to the cooperative co-construction of meaning, leading to successful intercultural communication.[53] A consequence stemming from this practice is not only the sense of ease and familiarity that the migrants may feel towards the Lingua Franca during the interviews, but also the creation of hybrid and inclusive language formulas for contact with other languages, reflecting both the re-territorialization needs and the will of the speakers.

Such considerations almost inevitably remind us of the various recommendations for reconciling the complex relationship between colonialism and the use of English, and for building openings for decolonial options.[54] In the words of Phillipson, decolonizing the English language requires us – in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's words,[55] to "decolonize our minds" in order to collectively identify its hegemonic

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rights, multilingualism, linguistic and cultural preservation, protection of national sovereignty, the stimulation of foreign-language learning (Tsuda, 2008).

[50] Pennycook, *English and the Discourses of Colonialism*, 194.

[51] Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 2.

[54] Kumaravadivelu, "The Decolonial Option in English Teaching", 66-85; Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, NC: Duke U.P., 2011); and Gabriela A. Veronelli, "A Coalitional Approach to Theorizing Decolonial Communication", *Hypatia*, 31.2 (2016), 404-420.

[55] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind* (London: James Currey, 1986).

impositions and to respond justly.[56] Such foundational re-conceptualizations are central to designing such practices as language mediation in migratory contexts which present decolonial options, of which the prioritizing of "critical intercultural dialogues and local-to-local connections" is "imperative".[57] In line with these re-conceptualizations, the use of ELF as a translingual and a decolonial option also reflects both Kumaravadivelu[58] and Flores and Rosa's[59] model known as a "postmethod" which seeks to present an alternative to the dominant model of the standard and proper English. Indeed, ELF can share as follows some of the characteristics distinctive of the postmethod model: the parameters of particularity, practicality and possibility, the local context and repertoire, the objective of empowering speakers to practice the communicative forms of the intercultural dialogues and local-to-local connections that shape their lives as post-colonial, migrant, translingual or de-territorialized subjects.[60] Finally, the importance of thinking from the decolonial perspective emerges as an important theoretical and spatial site to begin conceptualizing new creative linguistic and cultural possibilities.

2.3. *Code-Switching in ELF Settings*
Code-switching (henceforth CS) represents a very important factor within any communicative event and, most of all, among people who can master different languages at different levels: ELF itself, as Klimpfinger states, "per definition involves typically three languages: the speaker's first language and English".[61] Despite its pivotal role, little attention has been paid to the use of CS on the part of multilingual couples, and the few studies dealing with this have concentrated on the analysis of exchanges in informal contexts of interaction. Mauranen sheds light on the functions served by CS in ELF encounters and points to two main roles played by CS, i.e. (1) displaying social and interactive properties of the communicative event, thanks to which CS helps the speaker emphasize certain aspects which s/he believes to be important, and (2) characterizing the cognitive process which is taking place in the conversation ("cognitive slips").[62] Among the very first scholars dealing with ELF couples is Pietikäinen who identifies six main functions carried out by CS in ELF exchanges, i.e. (1) demonstrating use of a language, (2) automatic code-switching, (3) replacing or clarifying unfamiliarities, (4) replacing non-translatables, (5) specifying addressees, and (6) emphasizing the message.[63] The analysis of CS in ELF couples is later further investigated again by Pietikäinen,[64] with an analysis of interactions between couples using English as their lingua franca highlights how speakers and, more specifically, ELF couples tend to automatically switch from a language to another without even being aware of it according to a process that she defines "subconscious switches of language";[65] she also notices how CS actually facilitates the construction of meaning without preventing the interlocutor from understanding the

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[56] Robert Phillipson, "The Linguistic Imperialism", 39.

[57] Gabriela A. Veronelli, "A Coalitional Approach to Theorizing Decolonial Communication", *Hypatia*, 31.2 (2016), 404-420.

[58] Kumaravadivelu, "The Postmethod Condition: (E)merging Strategies for Second/Foreign Language Teaching", *TESOL Quarterly*, 28.1 (1994), 27-48, and B. Kumaravadivelu, *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching* (Hartford, CT: Yale U.P., 2003).

[59] Nelson Flores and Jonathan Rosa, "Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education", *Harvard Educational Review*, 85 (2015), 149-71.

[60] Kumaravadivelu, *Beyond Methods*, 544.

[61] Theresa Klimpfinger, "'She's Mixing the two Languages Together'. Forms and Functions of Code-switching in English as a Lingua Franca", in Anna Mauranen and Elina Ranta, eds., *English as a Lingua Franca: Studies and Findings* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 348-371.

[62] Anna Mauranen, "Lingua Franca Discourse in Academic Contexts: Shaped by Complexity", in John Flowerdew, ed., *Discourse in Context: Contemporary Applied Linguistics* 3 (London: Continuum, 2013), 225-245.

[63] Kaisa S. Pietikäinen, *English as a Lingua Franca Couples in Interview: Code-switching Stimuli* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle University MA thesis, 2012).

[64] Kaisa S. Pietikäinen, "ELF Couples and Automatic Code-switching", *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 3.1 (2014), 1-26.
[65] Ibid., 9.

conversational content and thus recognizes that in the future CS may become automatic to some extent by virtue of a "linguistic relaxedness" principle.

In the light of the above-mentioned studies, the present paper attempts to demonstrate that unlike the automatic component which has emerged from previous studies, CS in multicultural encounters may rather represent – with reference to our study corpus – a decolonial option, a self-conscious way of (co-)constructing meaning and identity in migration encounters – as Myers-Scotton had already emphasized, a marked set of code choices which are made in order to index Rights and Obligations (ROs) with respect to a given community code.[66] The migrant, within this framework, appears to "challenge" an already-existing normative community code in favor of new ROs.

3. Data Collection and Methodology

The corpus that has been taken as a reference point for the present study is the English as a Lingua Franca in Migration Domains corpus (henceforth the ELF MiDo corpus),[67] a selection of 10 semi-structured interviews (approximately 45 minutes each) between asylum seekers and intercultural mediators in both institutional and non-institutional encounters. The content of the interviews mainly focuses on positive as well as negative aspects of the migrant's experience upon arrival in Italy, on the migrant's journey across the Mediterranean and any unpleasant episodes which they might have come across. The interviews, which were conducted within the activities of the local CIR (*Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati*, Italian Council for Refugees, Lecce, Italy), were characterized by the use of English as a common language, i.e. a lingua franca for mutual understanding among people belonging to different lingua-cultural backgrounds.[68] Migrants came from Mali, Libya and Ghana, with only a couple of them coming from Pakistan. Their backgrounds were rather diversified, with some of them escaping difficult situations and war in their home country and some others crossing Italy in order to reach countries like Germany. Their reasons for addressing CIR were mainly related to their search for job opportunities either in Lecce or in the neighborhood, their requests for asylum, permit to stay and family reunion. The following table contains a breakdown of the study corpus accompanied by some relevant information concerning the topic of the conversations as well as the speakers' origin:

	No. words	Speaker's origin	Topic
#1	2,803	Mali	culture; job opportunities; migration
#2	3,055	Ghana	migration; permit to stay; family
#3	2,841	Ghana	family; leisure activities; money
#4	3,989	Mali	hardship of life; problems; migration
#5	3,277	Mali	school; family reunification
#6	2,456	Ghana	home country; host country; culture
#7	3,466	Ghana	money; family; children

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[66] Carol Myers-Scotton, "A Theoretical Introduction to the Markedness Model", in Carol Myers-Scotton, ed., *Codes and Consequences: Choosing Linguistic Varieties* (New York and Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1998).

[67] Centonze, *Assessing the Feasibility of (Semi-)Automated Pragmatic Annotation in ELF Domains*.

[68] Barbara Seidlhofer, "Closing a Conceptual Gap: The Case for a Description of English as a Lingua Franca", *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11 (2001), 133-158.

#8	2,279	Mali	everyday life; family; home country
#9	4,765	Mali	family; children; home country; reunification
#10	3,971	Ghana	culture and traditions; home vs. host country
Tot.	32,902		

Table 1. Breakdown of the ELF MiDo corpus.[69]

Given the highly-sensitive data collected for research reasons, all interviews were first anonymized and then transcribed. The transcription of the exchanges was carried out following Jefferson's glossary of transcript symbols,[70] which represented a preliminary phase prior to the annotation process; this final step concerning the pragmatic annotation turned out to be crucial for the analysis of speech acts in multicultural settings (which represented the object of another study):[71] as will be seen in the examples illustrated in Section 4, after a preliminary transcription phase following Jefferson's indications, the ELF MiDo corpus was also pragmatically annotated by means of a semi-automated software tool, i.e. the *Dialogue Annotation Research Tool* (DART)[72] in order for the corpus to be easily interrogated and made accessible in a digital format. Although the present study does not focus on speech acts in ELF encounters but rather aims at identifying CS as a decolonizing practice in ELF environments, it is possible to observe excerpts of the pragmatically-annotated conversational turns in Section 4. The digitalization of the corpus allowed us to identify CS patterns for decolonizing practices in ELF encounters, where ELF and, in a much broader sense, English was not used as a hegemonic language but rather appears to be a means for shaping one's own identity within the conversational turns. The following section aims at providing examples for this specific function attributed to CS in ELF interactions. In addition to this, in the excerpts of the interviews which constitute the object of our study we shall see the extent to which exchanges between migrants and asylum seekers do not encourage monolingual usage but rather tend to favor the use of "translingual practices", in Canagarajah's terms,[73] at different interactional levels.

4. Decolonizing Strategies in ELF Encounters: Code-Switching Findings

As the object of the present analysis is the exploration of CS as a decolonial option in ELF domains, instances of CS were isolated and sorted out following the categories of CS function highlighted by Mauranen.[74] It goes without saying that instances for CS across the study corpus display lower figures with respect to other discourse elements and phenomena; however, as Rastier states, a corpus is not

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[69] Centonze, "Illocutionary Force and Perlocutionary Effect Recognition in the (Semi-)Automated Pragmatic Annotation of ELF Spoken Discourse", 133-144.

[70] Gail Jefferson, "Glossary of Transcript Symbols with an Introduction", in Gene H. Lerner, ed., *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), 13-31.

[71] Centonze, "Illocutionary Force and Perlocutionary Effect Recognition in the (Semi-)Automated Pragmatic Annotation of ELF Spoken Discourse", 133-144.

[72] Martin Weisser, *DART-Dialogue Annotation Research Tool*, *32bit Windows* (2015), http://martinweisser.org/ling_soft.html#DART, accessed 25 November 2020.

[73] Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations.*

[74] Mauranen, "Lingua Franca Discourse in Academic Contexts: Shaped by Complexity", 225-245.

representative of the language but it has to be seen in relation to the aims for which it is explored.[75] The following Table 2 summarizes the distribution of CS across the study corpus and classifies them according to the functions highlighted Pietikäinen.[76]

CS in the ELF MiDo Corpus (38 instances)					
#1 demonstrating use of a language	0	#3 replacing or clarifying unfamiliarities	1	#5 specifying addressees	0
#2 automatic CS	0	#4 replacing non-translatables	0	#6 emphasizing the message	37

Table 2. Instances of CS in the study corpus.

In the analysis which was carried out in ten selected interviews the most recurrent pattern in the narration of the traumatic events on the part of the asylum seeker was CS with the function of emphasizing the message (#6, 37 instances found), followed by only one instance of CS used for replacing or clarifying unfamiliarities (#3). The sole instance of CS clarifying unfamiliarities can be observed below, where there is a misunderstanding between what is conceptualized as *pommes* (English: apples; Italian: *mele*), *pommes de terre* in French (English: potatoes; Italian: *patate*), and *pommes* in Italian (English: chips; Italian: *patatine*). The migrant resorts to a CS strategy in order to make the concept more accessible to the Italian intercultural mediator who might get the wrong end of the stick. The choices operated are represented below:

```
<frag n="492" sp-act="refer" mode="partial-decl">
in i east wid de pan de de bread <punc type="stop" />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="298" speaker="b">
<yes n="494" sp-act="acknowledge">
yeah <pause />
</yes>
<frag n="495" sp-act="acknowledge" mode="awareness">
and den i know <pause /> ?? <pause /> ?? pomme<pause />i mean i like pomme in my country no pommes yeah
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="299" speaker="a">
<frag n="496" sp-act="reqInfo" mode="query">
potatoes <punc type="query" />
</frag>
</turn>
```

In these turns, the migrant is talking about cooking traditions in both home and host countries. In order to clarify and disambiguate the meaning of the word *pomme* which the intercultural mediator could misunderstand in his/her native language (Italian), the intercultural mediator resorts to ELF in order to explain the type of *pommes* which s/he likes ("I like *pomme* in my country") and, by providing the

[75] François Rastier, "Enjeux épistémologiques de la Linguistique de Corpus", *Texto!* (2004), http://www.revuetexto.net/Inedits/Rastier/Rastier_Enjeux.html, accessed 25 November 2020.
[76] Pietikäinen, *English as a Lingua Franca Couples in Interview: Code-switching Stimuli*.

expression "in my country" s/he disambiguates – or at least s/he makes an attempt to – the semantic meaning of the term *pomme*.

The CS in the exchange provided below represents an interesting example, in that it also incorporates the "iconic" properties of the turn itself: namely, the Italian-English CS in the example below is intended to convey a sense of temporal and spatial displacement on the part of the migrant and, at the same time, aims at clarifying a previous misunderstanding related to the reasons why the migrant is escaping from his/her home country. The *adesso*/there opposition emphasizes the sense of displacement and confusion concerning a situation which is 1) from a temporal point of view, very close (and this is highlighted by the adverb *adesso*) but, at the same time, 2) from a spatial point of view, very far (dere… problem dere). The sense of displacement and worry which is present in these turns is backed up by the sentence following this passage ("…e: i go dere maybe somebody kill me").

<turn n="60" speaker="a">
ok <overlap type="stop" />
because you dont have the documents <punc type="stop" />
</turn>
<turn n="61" speaker="b">
no not de problem document but i have problem <u>dere</u><pause /><u>adesso problem dere</u> <pause />e: i go dere maybe somebody kill me <punc type="stop"/>
</turn>
<turn n="62" speaker="a">
ah ok <punc type="stop" />
</turn>
<turn n="63" speaker="b">
yes <punc type="stop" />
</turn>

The following instance illustrates the subsequent interaction between the migrant and the intercultural mediator, always relating to the disambiguation of *pomme*. Here the use of CS to becomes evident and eventually makes it clear to the intercultural mediator what the term *pomme* actually refers to – *mela* (apple) rather than *potatoes*. In particular, CS here is used to provide some direct correspondence between the Italian term *mela* and the English term *apple*.

<turn n="300" speaker="b">
<no n="497" sp-act="answer-negate">
no
</no>
<frag n="498" sp-act="elab-state" mode="decl">
<u>mela</u> <punc type="stop" />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="302" speaker="b">
<yes n="501" sp-act="confirm-acknowledge">
<overlap type="end" /> si mela <pause /> yeah
</yes>
</turn>
<turn n="307" speaker="a">
<frag n="509" sp-act="confirm-state" mode="decl">
<u>mela pomme is apple</u> <overlap type="start" /> in english <punc type="stop" />
</frag>

Other less widespread translingual practices in ELF in migration encounters are represented by repetitions and paraphrases in dialogues. These both appear to be a linguistic strategy in order to clarify or disambiguate any context in which either the intercultural mediator or the migrant do not seem to fully understand what is taking place:

```
<frag n="50" sp-act="state" polarity="negative" topic="time" mode="decl">
you a <pause /> you as a black man in libia you are not safe <pause /> even when you sleep inside dey can come anytime <punc type="stop" />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="34" speaker="a">
<frag n="51" sp-act="" polarity="positive" mode="disflu">
<overlap type="start" /> and
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="35" speaker="b">
<frag n="52" sp-act="state" polarity="positive" topic="direction" mode="decl">
<overlap type="end" />dey can take you away<punc type="stop" />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="36" speaker="a">
<frag n="53" sp-act="echo" polarity="positive" topic="direction">
<overlap type="start" /> dey can take you away
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="37" speaker="b">
<decl n="54" sp-act="expressPossibility" polarity="positive" mode="poss3">
and they could do
</decl>
<q-wh n="55" sp-act="reqConfirm" polarity="positive" mode="exclaim-partial-query">
<overlap type="start" /> what <punc type="query" />
</q-wh>
</turn>
<turn n="38" speaker="a">
<frag n="56" sp-act="confirm-state" polarity="positive" mode="reason-decl">
<overlap type="end" />dey can take you dey can take you to prison because youre a black man<punc type="stop" />
</frag>
```

In the excerpt provided above, the subject of the dialogue exchanges is the reason why the migrant ran away from his/her own home country. What is taking place here is a repetition of turns in order to emphasize the fear that the migrant has and the extent to which the situation which s/he experienced in his/her country was very dangerous and risky (e.g. "dey can take you away … dey can take you away"); moreover, the "dey can take you away" paraphrase is further re-used and expanded in the last turn of the selected exchanges above, which includes the motivations and the stigmatization of the migrant's condition so that it becomes even clearer to the intercultural mediator ("dey can take you dey can take you to prison because youre a black man"). Hence, repetition here, drawing on Lichtkoppler, combines

the double function of "utterance-developing repetition" as well as ensuring accuracy of understanding.[77]

The last extract of the ones provided throughout the present contribution offers an instance of paraphrase:

```
<frag n="26" sp-act="" polarity="positive" topic="day" mode="report-reason-preference2">
i really enjoyed being in libia because i was every day <unclear /> you cant do whatever you like as you <unclear />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="18" speaker="a">
<decl n="27" sp-act="reqInfo" polarity="positive" mode="preference2-query">
<vocal type="laugh" /> why couldnt you do what you like <punc type="query" />
</decl>
</turn>
<frag n="26" sp-act="" polarity="positive" topic="day" mode="report-reason-preference2">
i really enjoyed being in libia because i was every day <unclear /> you cant do whatever you like as you <unclear />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="18" speaker="a">
<decl n="27" sp-act="reqInfo" polarity="positive" mode="preference2-query">
<vocal type="laugh" />why couldnt you do what you like<punc type="query" />
</decl>
</turn>
<turn n="19" speaker="b">
<frag n="28" sp-act="answer-state" polarity="negative" topic="problem-location" mode="report-correct-decl">
becau you know a in libia theres no freedom in libia <pause /> ?: even in dat country dere was problem in dat country during di regime of geddafi <pause /> during di regime of geddafi i was in libia <punc type="stop" />
</frag>
</turn>
<turn n="20" speaker="a">
<dm n="29" sp-act="acknowledge" mode="tag">
ok <punc type="stop" />
</dm>
</turn>
<turn n="21" speaker="b">
<frag n="30" sp-act="state" polarity="negative" topic="problem" mode="report-correct-preference2-decl">
and dere was war dere was problem i was in libia even <unclear /> black <unclear /> black man you are not free in libia to do whatever you want to <punc type="stop" />
</frag>
```

More specifically, the excerpt above has to do with the explanation of the reasons for leaving the home country on the part of the migrant. After an initial and rather quick conclusion (i really enjoyed being in libia because i was every day <unclear /> you cant do whatever you like as you <unclear /></frag>), the intercultural mediator asks for more details about the migrant's statement ("why couldnt you do what you like") and the answer provided by the migrant is a clarification of the situation by resorting to paraphrase strategies ("becau you know a in libia theres no freedom in libia <pause /> even in dat country dere was problem in dat country during di regime of geddafi <pause /> during di regime of geddafi i

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[77] Julia Lichtkoppler, "'Male. Male.' – 'Male?' – The Sex Is Male. The Role of Repetitions in English as a Lingua Franca Conversations", *Vienna English Working PaperS* 16.1 (2007), 39-65.

was in libia"): at the beginning, the statement is rather general ("becau you know a in libia theres no freedom in libia"), then the migrant specifies, by means of a paraphrase why there is no freedom in Libya ("even in dat country dere was problem in dat country during di regime of geddafi") and then moves on to create a connection between the lack of freedom in Libya and why this affects him ("during di regime of geddafi i was in libia"). Paraphrasing in the example provided above serves more than a simple need in the exchange, as it is not just a way for explaining the actual situation of the migrant in his/her home country, but is also aimed at revealing more information about the personal status of the migrant him/herself and putting emphasis on the personal and identity dimensions of the migrant's story.

By considering the excerpts illustrated below which consider face-to-face interactions between asylum seekers and intercultural mediators, one could say that the use of ELF within such social practices and, more specifically, the use of CS, repetition and paraphrase in order to talk about personal experience in migration contexts may still be considered one of the most recurrent features within decolonizing contexts. Here, English eventually no longer appears as a monolithic tool for self-identification but rather becomes a "virtual language", in Seidlhofer and Widdowson's words, or "meaning potential", which "… serves the variable and ever-changing communicative needs of language users".[78] In the very specific case of the examples taken from the MiDo corpus, ELF acquires the function of decolonizing tool, a set of pragma-linguistic choices which, in the very case of CS, allows for contamination between the different lingua-cultural backgrounds of the speakers involved in the communicative event. Hence, as meaning potential the use of ELF which is negotiated and constructed in the conversational exchanges by means of accommodation strategies does not appear to be an incorrect or inappropriate choice, but rather represents the starting point for a re-consideration of the dynamics for language processes. Drawing on Flores and Rosa,[79] one could argue once again that with respect to the excerpts analyzed in this study, the local character of the conversation exchanges is actually re-considered as fertile ground for new decolonized forms of identity and meaning, thus dismantling the misconception which classifies certain pragma-linguistic choices as more appropriate than others. If we adopt terminology, one could say that ELF actually plays the privileged role of "border language"[80] casting doubt on colonized constructions and ideologies.

5. Concluding Remarks

By means of the case studies illustrated here, the present contribution has attempted to provide a starting point for a wider reflection on language and, more specifically, ELF use as a translingual practice and a decolonial option in migratory contexts. The intercultural encounters engendered by migration flows and marked by the use of ELF have cast doubt on issues of appropriateness and correctness in favor of a decolonized space, in which biased and "raciolinguistic' ideologies"[81] are put aside and identities are re-developed and re-shaped accordingly. In the configuration of this decolonized linguascape, the migrants and the mediators interactions embrace the local connection that turns to be a situational context in which each of the interactive parts bring their own socio-cultural backgrounds and influence the ultimate purpose of the speech event. Such socio-cultural backgrounds and repertoires are reflected in the translingual use of ELF and, with regards to the instances analyzed in the present study, repetition, CS and paraphrase appear to be among the commonest expedients for the construction of accommodation strategies in the discourses of decoloniality. It follows that ELF encourages the *mis-en-scène* of self-interpretation concerning one's own linguistic and cultural identity, and promotes counter-

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[78] Barbara Seidlhofer and Henry G. Widdowson, "Competence, Capability and Virtual Language", *Lingue e Linguaggi*, 24 (2017), 23-36.
[79] Flores and Rosa, "Undoing Apropriateness", 149-71.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.

discourses aimed at disrupting misconceptions. This reflection could be of course extended to further domains - e.g. the pedagogical field, in which students belonging to different linguacultural backgrounds come into contact and racist phenomena put at serious risk any attempt for integration. Developing a decolonial counter-discourse of acceptance and accommodation - one which is not only linguistic but first and foremost cultural - would definitely be possible if we encourage and provide "border language" practices where possible. Furthermore, the use of a corpus-linguistic approach for the analysis of the data would be revealing for future investigation carried out both quantitatively and qualitatively: the digitalization of the dataset and its implementation would allow us to draw more general conclusions about emerging patterns in multicultural encounters; it would also represent a very useful means for the training of intercultural mediators by providing guidelines for interaction in cross-cultural domains in order to avoid the consolidation of prejudiced practices.