

Research Project

The Role of English as a Lingua Franca in the Foreign Language Classroom

Project funded by own resources

Project title The Role of English as a Lingua Franca in the Foreign Language Classroom

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Research on language use and learning during study abroad has primarily investigated students' use of the target language (TL) in a TL environment and the convergence of their TL skills towards a native speaker norm. To date, little is known about the multilingual practices that students engage in while studying abroad. From the perspective of multilingualism, contexts in which a local language is used, of which the students may have little or no previous knowledge, represents a fascinating case as students often heavily depend on English as a lingua franca (ELF) to interact with the host community and other international students. The present study aims to shed light on the role of ELF in mediating the learning of local languages in different ELF contexts. The goal is to investigate the extent to which ELF is employed in the foreign language classroom, by whom, under what circumstances and for what purposes. Additionally, the study aims at gaining a deeper understanding of course instructors' and students' attitudes toward the use of ELF in the foreign language classroom.

Previous research on foreign language learning in the classroom has mainly focused on the role of students' first languages and the mobilization of other linguistic resources to enhance the language learning process. While the role of ELF for the English language classroom or the use of ELF as the medium of instruction in non-language courses continue to be discussed and investigated, the role of ELF as a mediating language for teaching and learning a third language remains underexplored (for exceptions, see Ife 2008; Wang 2013; Turnbull 2018). The present study aims to enhance our understanding of the use of ELF in local language courses offered at higher education institutions or language schools and targeted at international students with different linguistic backgrounds. To address the research questions, in a first step, videos of classroom interaction will be recorded, transcribed and analyzed focusing on incidents of ELF use. In a second step, reflexive online-interviews with the course instructors and students will be conducted. Excerpts of the videos will be used to discuss examples of actual ELF use in the classroom.

Keywords ELF, classroom

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Add publication

Add documents

Specify cooperation partners