

Challenges of ELF-informed teaching in the classroom: Insights from a classroom-based teacher development programme

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Recent significant developments in the field of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) have highlighted the fluidity and diversity of English as a global contact language. Teacher education and development has been seen as crucial to the success of ELF-informed classroom pedagogy. However, although previous research illuminated ways to raise teachers' awareness of ELF, there is a dearth of research exploring what problems teachers might encounter in ELF-informed teaching and how a teacher development programme could support this process. To fill this gap, seven South Korean elementary school teachers' experiences during a teacher development programme designed to encourage ELF-informed teaching were investigated.

The findings indicate that the research participants faced three major challenges when implementing ELF-informed teaching: (1) insufficient pedagogical knowledge of ELF-informed teaching, (2) a lack of suitable ELF-related resources, and (3) difficulty in meeting parental expectations. Firstly, although participants had a good understanding of ELF-related concepts, they were less clear about how to implement them in the classroom. It was discovered that reflecting on their lessons with the programme facilitator was helpful for discovering effective teaching methods and techniques. Secondly, a lack of ELF teaching resources made it difficult to carry out lessons in the ways that the teachers wished to. To overcome this challenge, participants shared materials and actively sought help from the facilitator in sourcing suitable materials. The last major challenge that the participants faced was the difficulty of meeting parental expectations while conducting ELF-informed teaching. Some participants were reluctant to conduct ELF-informed lessons because parents felt strongly that they should prioritise students' test results which are measured by Standard English. It was suggested by some participants that ELF-informed teacher development should involve providing guidance on how to consult and negotiate with parents in a constructive way. This study has implications for designing more pedagogically-oriented ELF teacher development programmes which could better help teachers to tackle on-the-ground challenges in ELF-oriented pedagogy.