ONLINE CONFERENCE 2020

Balancing accent, identity and culture
for successful international communication

Katrin Lichterfeld

Balancing accent, identity and culture

1. Linguistic diversity
2. Accent and attitudes
3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

1. Linguistic diversity

How many languages are there worldwide?

7,117

1. Linguistic diversity

Top 5 languages ('native speakers' only)?

1. Chinese
2. Hindi-Urdu
3. English
4. Arabic
5. Spanish

2/3

12

1. Linguistic diversity

Top 5 languages – total usage worldwide 2020

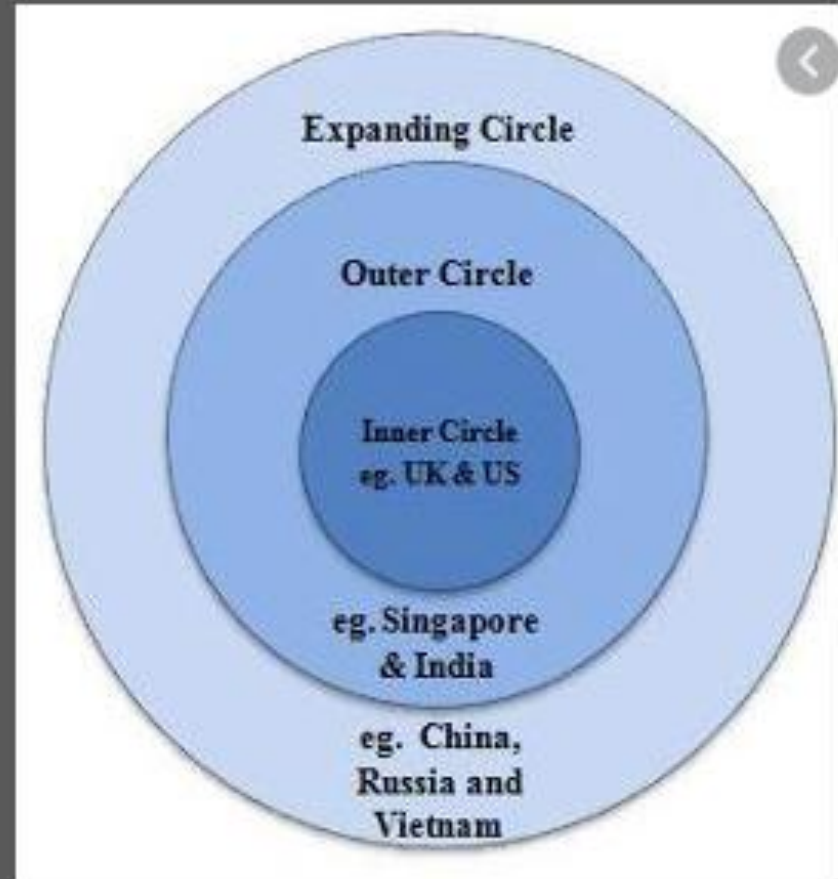1. English
2. Chinese
3. Hindi
4. Spanish
5. French

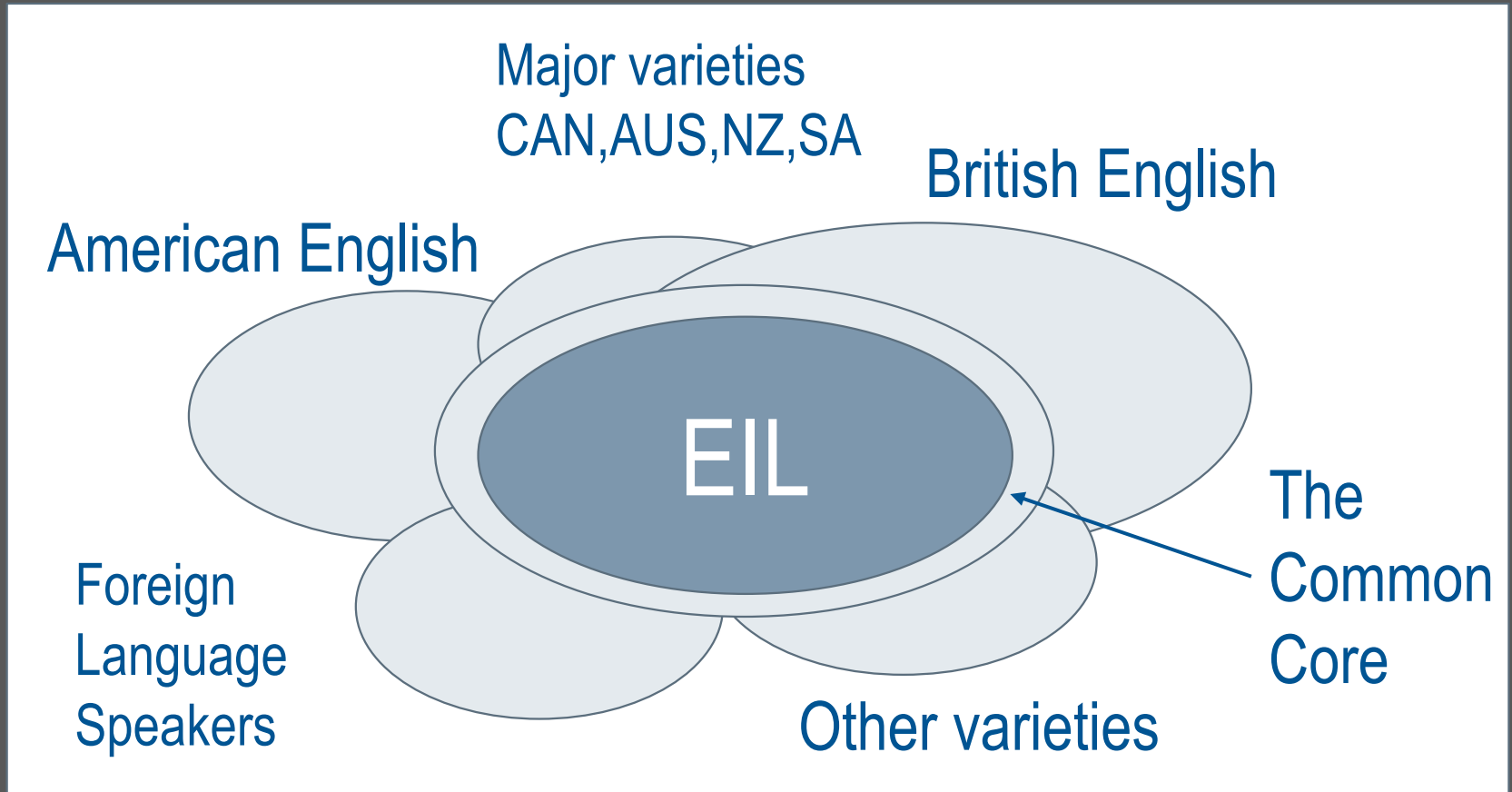1.3 billion

500M

1. Linguistic diversity

World Englishes

(Kachru's 'Three-circle model' 1983 in Kiczkowiak/Lowe 2018)

1. Linguistic diversity

English as an International Language (EIL)

Major varieties
CAN,AUS,NZ,SA

British English

American English

EIL

The Common Core

Foreign Language Speakers

Other varieties

(Modiano 1999 in Bacha/Bibi 2010)

1. Linguistic diversity
Multilingualism

A Global rate: 60%

B Ranking:

Singapore 100%

Sweden   97%

France   60%

  UK   35%

  US   25%

https://www.freepik.com/vectors/people*

New York Times/Qatar Foundation (2019)

designed by freepik.com

1. Linguistic diversity

Multilingualism

Idealized
native speaker

☺ Cultural confidence
Neurological fitness

↕

Monolingual bias

New York Times/Qatar Foundation (2019)

2. Accent and attitudes

'The myth of the native speaker'

 = Accent

David Crystal (2019)

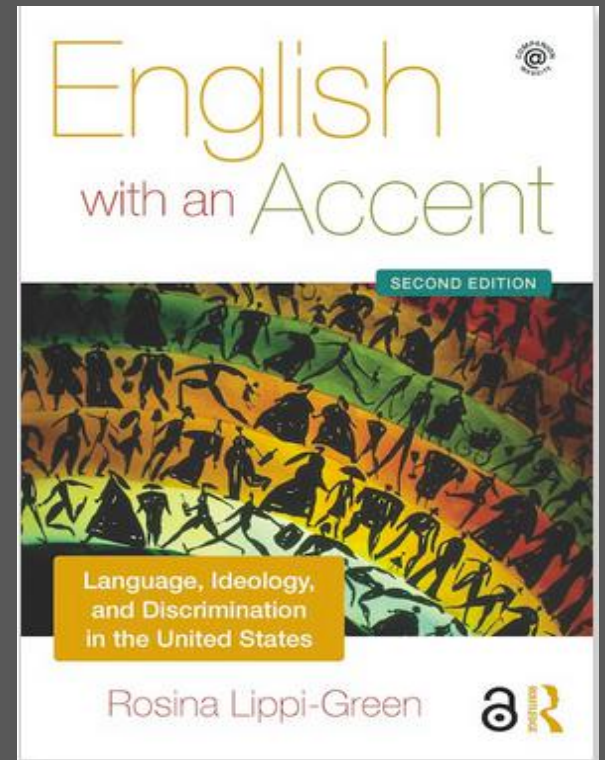Intelligibility   Standard English

2. Accent and attitudes

Myth
= story with general
cultural significance

➡️ Social order

Lippi-Green (2012, 44)

2. Accent and attitudes
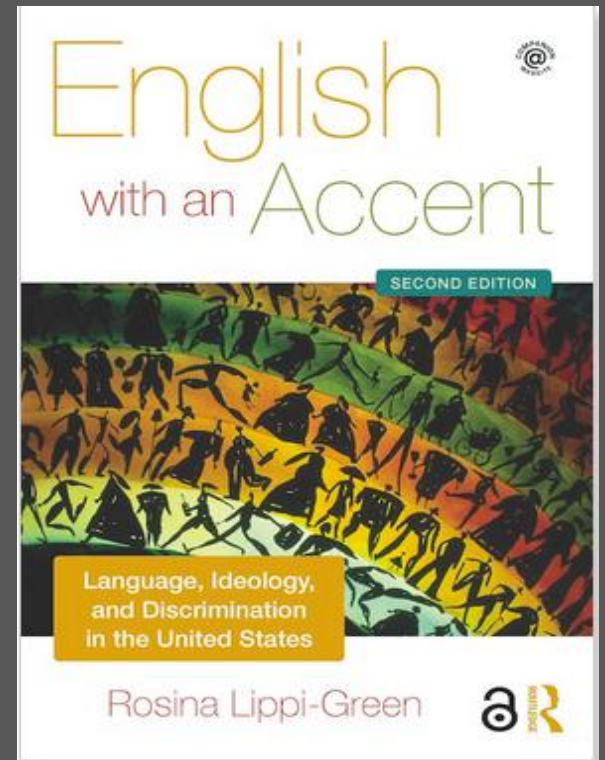
Myth of Standard English

Spoken + written by people
• with no regional accent
• with superior education

=> core of an ideology
=> empowers individuals
    + institutions

Lippi-Green (2012, 60)
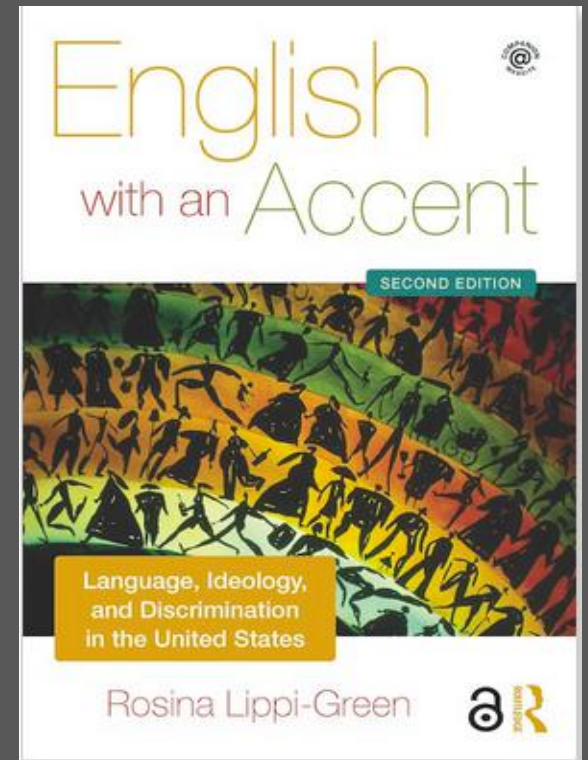
2. Accent and attitudes

⚡ Myth of non-accent

"every native speaker of US English has an L1 accent"

L2 accent:

"breakthrough of native language phonology

Lippi-Green (2012, 46)

2. Accent and attitudes

Accent: phonological differences

Dialect: + morphology, syntax, lexicon

Language: + literary history, geopolitics

Lippi-Green (2012, p. 46)

2. Accent and attitudes

Homeland community

(ethnicity - race – religion – gender – region – economics)

L1 accent   L2 accent

SPEAKER'S

LISTENER'S

Language ideology filters

positive   neutral   negative

accepts   COMMUNICATIVE BURDEN   rejects
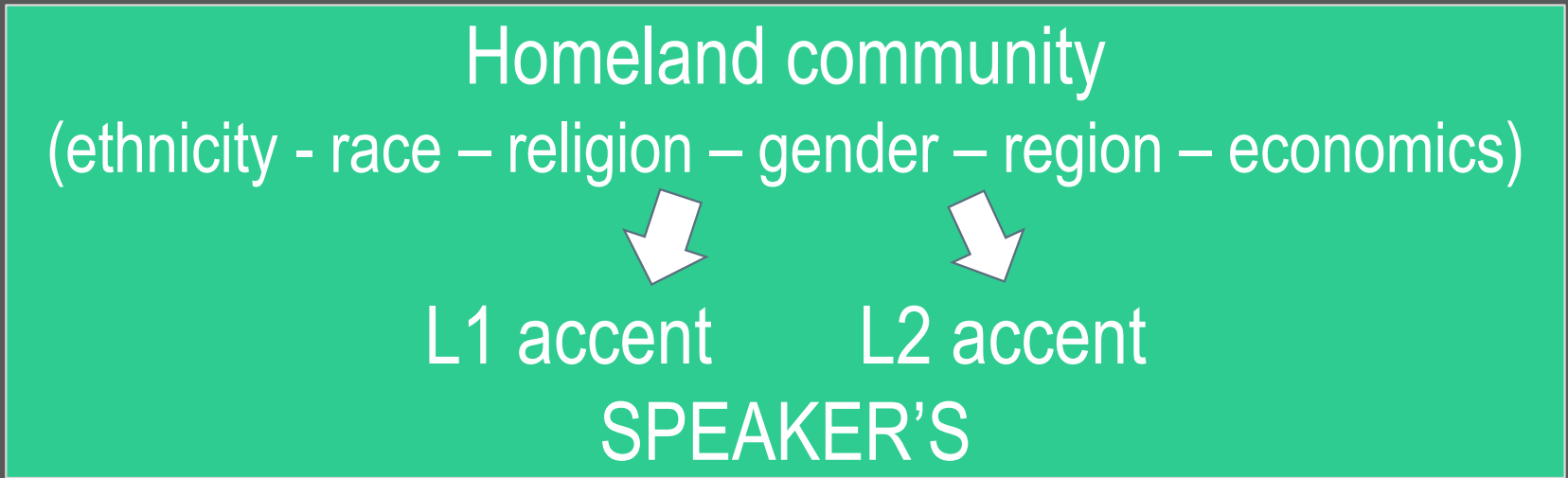
(based on Lippi-Green 2012, 74)

2. Accent and attitudes

Unconscious bias/filter   <= Neuroscience

How many do exist?

200

(Knappitsch 2019)

2. Accent and attitudes

Overlooked unconscious bias/filter

DISCRIMINATION

Add to map of diversity and inclusion

(Lichterfeld 2020; Lippi-Green 2019, 73)

2. Accent and attitudes

"No one can make you inferior without your consent"

Eleanor Roosevelt

*"Intercultural competence is as crucial
to successful communication as underlying
motivation, solidarity or hostility."*

(Lippi-Green 2019, XXI/72)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

The Phonology of English as an International Language

Jennifer Jenkins

Oxford University Press

Figure 1: The causes of communication breakdown in English as a lingua franca (based on Jenkins, 2000: 85–87).
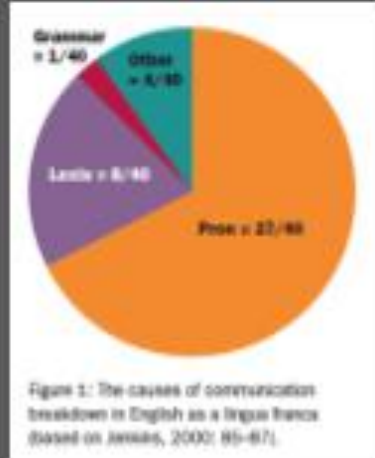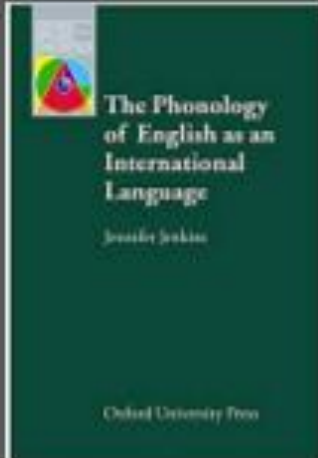
Lingua Franca Core (LFC)

(Jennifer Jenkins 2000)

Communication breakdown:
<= Phonological transfer from L1

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

English as a Lingua Franca

- Any use of English among speakers of different L1(s)
  Communicative medium of choice *(Seidlhofer 2011)*

- Open-source phenomenon – constantly adapted
  (Cogo/House 2018)
  <= intelligibility + accommodation *(Jenkins 2000)*

- Multilingualism (including translanguaging)
  (Jenkins 2015, Cogo/House 2018)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

BELF =>   Business English as a Lingua Franca

(Kankaanranta/Louhiala-Salminen 2018)

Overall goal: Getting the job done
                     + creating rapport

Communities of Practice

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Communities of practice

(Wenger 1998)

Informal learning
=> competent + confident learner/user

BELF = language for communication + identification

(Ehrenreich 2018)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

47

2001

40

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

CEFR
Common European Framework
of Reference for Languages:
Learning, Teaching, Assessment

COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK
OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES:
LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT

COMPANION VOLUME
WITH NEW DESCRIPTORS

1500
300
60

2018

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Phonological Control

- Focus on intelligibility *(CEFR/CV p.47)*
- Moving away from native speaker model (=> English as a Lingua Franca)
- Listener factors

(Piccardo 2016 p.6/12)

COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK
OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES:
LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT

PHONOLOGICAL SCALE REVISION
PROCESS REPORT

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Listener factors

- "decoding of fast and spontaneous speech"
- "familiarity with foreign-accented speech"
- "willingness to communicate" + "attitudes"

(Picardo 2016 p.12)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Intelligibility

"the extent to which a speaker's message is actually understood by a listener"

(Munro/Derwing 1999)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

"Just because an L2 accent feature is noticeable, doesn't mean it detracts from intelligibility."

(Derwing/Munro 2015)
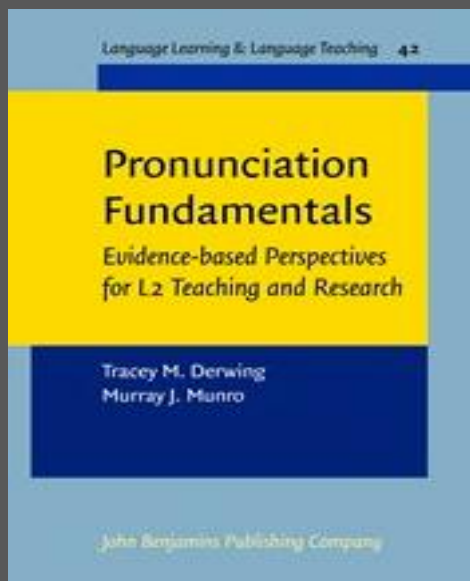
3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Phonological competence   *(CEFR/PR, p. 13)*
          ⇔ Functional proficiency

⇒ No social or professional disadvantages
   No discrimination

COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK
OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES:
LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT

PHONOLOGICAL SCALE REVISION
PROCESS REPORT

Accent + identity   <= attitudes = unconscious bias

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors 2018

Updated 2001 and new descriptor scales:

- Mediation
- Plurilingual/pluricultural competence
- Online interaction
- Phonological control

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE CEFRCV 2018: new vision developed all

21st century social agent

Context

| Reception | | |
| Production | Interaction | Mediation |

| Speaker/Hearer | Participant | Social agent |

| Code: *complexity, accuracy / fluency* | **Negotiation of meaning** | Co-construction of meaning |

Mobilising general, **plurilingual and pluricultural** competences

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

RECEPTION
PRODUCTION
INTERACTION MEDIATION

MEDIATION

(CEFR/CV 2018 p.103/107/122)
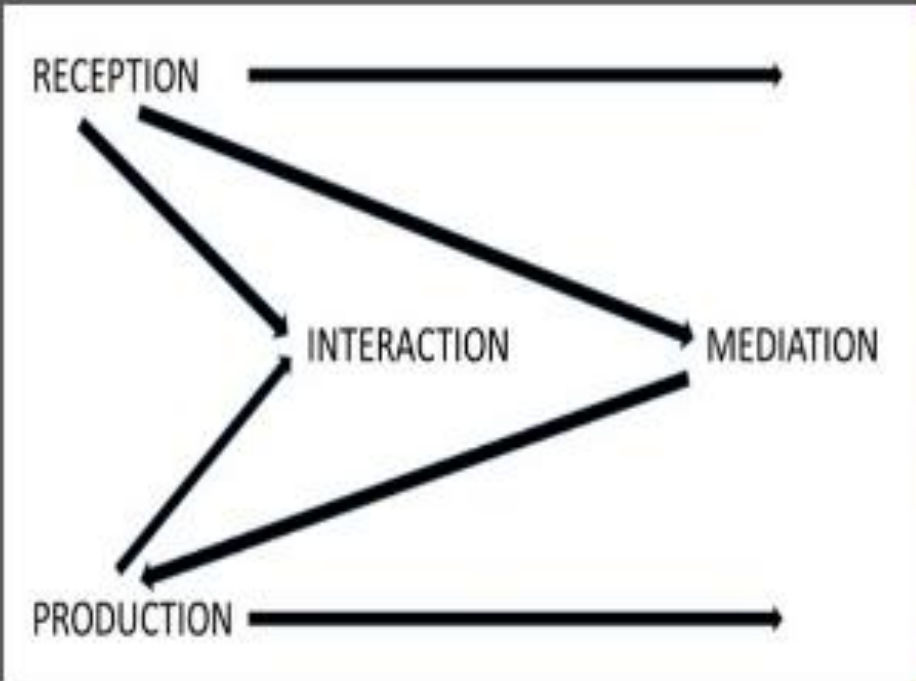
3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Intercultural competence

Metacommunication

'Cultural islands' *(Schein 2009)*

=> Relationship building – trust
(CEFR/CV 2018 p. 107)

(Camerer/Mader 2012)
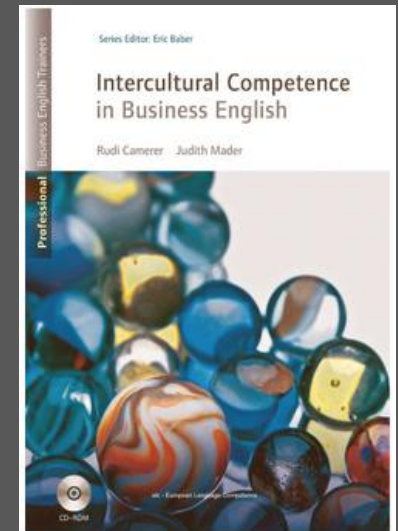
3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

BELF ~~variety~~

Adopting a BELF-oriented approach

➡️ "a big change in mindset"

(Cogo 2018)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

- The multilingual principle
  English and learner's other language(s)

- The negotiation principle
  Effective communication (accommodation + intelligibility)

- The intercultural principle
  Intercultural awareness + competence   (Cogo 2018)

  Putting theory into practice   (Lichterfeld 2019)

3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

CEFR-informed practitioners

Communities
of Practice

Collective
intelligence
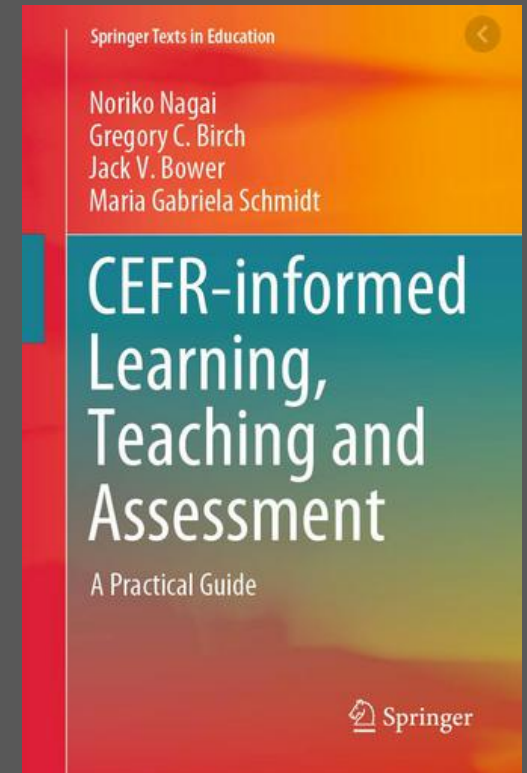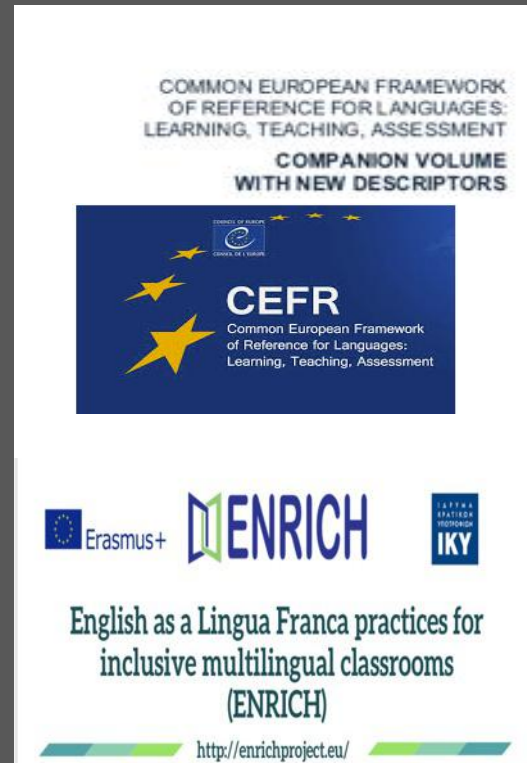
(Nagai et al 2020)

Balancing accent, identity and culture

1. Linguistic diversity
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3. Raising (B)ELF-awareness

Balancing accent, identity and culture

Adopting a
BELF-oriented approach
is like riding a bicycle.
You have to keep moving
to keep the balance.

Thank you very much

communication lights
reflective business communication across cultures

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Questions & answers

prpn SIG iatefl

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