

English as a Lingua Franca

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is a term used to describe the use of English as a common language for communication between speakers whose first language is not English. Providing a unique and original perspective on this subject, Istvan Kecskes explains the language behavior of ELF speakers, through the lens of Gricean pragmatics. This study successfully brings together the main viewpoints of the Gricean paradigm into ELF research, to discuss and better understand the nature of ELF interactions, as well as explaining how Gricean pragmatics can benefit from investigating and analyzing ELF. Each chapter presents intriguing ideas that put existing knowledge into a new perspective, such as interactional competence, intention, implicatures, the semantics–pragmatics interface, and modality. New terms and viewpoints such as language use mode, deliberate creativity, temporary extension of the system, emergent common ground, and modality continuum are introduced into the ELF debate.

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English as a Lingua Franca

The Pragmatic Perspective

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Acknowledgments

This book has grown out of a classroom experience. In the spring of 2016 I taught a graduate class on English as a Lingua Franca. During some heated debates with my students about the available literature in ELF, I realized that what we were really missing in the discussions was a perspective that reflects the Gricean way of thinking. My students were the first with whom I discussed my views about ELF, and who helped me shape the contour of this book. After that course I started to develop presentations on different aspects of ELF, such as formulaic language use, deliberate creativity, sociocultural background knowledge, and the semantics–pragmatics interface. I made these presentations in many universities all over the world where I received invaluable feedback from researchers and graduate students. I would particularly highlight the support I received at the National Research Tomsk State University, Russia; Sorbonne University, Paris, France; Donders Institute for Brain, Cognition and Behavior, Nijmegen, The Netherlands; Complutense University of Madrid, Spain; University of Messina, Italy; University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia; Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China; University of Belgrade, Serbia, just to mention a few. I really appreciated the feedback that I received from scholars such as Rachel Giora, Alessandro Capone, Michael Haugh, Jesus Romero-Trillo, Tatiana Larina, Markus Bieswanger, Olga Obdalova, Robert Sanders, He Gang, José Sánchez Fajardo, and others. I would also like to thank two of my doctoral students, Hahn Dinh, Limei Zhang and Sepideh Yasrebi for their help with the manuscript and references.

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