

Citation information. *in esse: English Studies in Albania*. Volume 1, Issue 1, Page 91-112.
ISSN 2078 – 7413.

**English as a *Lingua Franca* and Methodological Tension: Attitudes and Practices in a
Language School in Greece**

Achilleas KOSTOULAS, *The University of Manchester, UK*

achilleas@kostoulas.com

Abstract

This article discusses the influence exerted on English Language Teaching (ELT) by discordant informing paradigms. It is argued that ELT is undergoing a theoretical restructuring, as its established linguistic, pedagogical and political underpinnings are giving way to an emerging critical worldview. These two positions, referred to as the Dominant and Emergent Paradigms, are in constant flux, which generates methodological tension. For instance, on the issue of the target language, methodological tension is manifest as friction between the Standard Language Ideology, i.e. the belief that native speaker norms constitute authoritative criteria of linguistic correctness, and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), a more inclusive position that acknowledges linguistic variation. Using a language school in Greece (the host institute) as an illustrative example, this study explored the existence of methodological tension between the Standard Language Ideology and ELF. Qualitative data elicited from the teachers and learners in the host institute were analysed using grounded theory, and information about the host institute's courseware was subjected to content analysis. A complex picture emerged from the data: Traces of the Standard Language Ideology were evident in the beliefs espoused by the teachers and some learners, as well as in the courseware and in certain highly visible pedagogical practices. By contrast, less visible practices and some anonymously expressed student attitudes seemed closer to the ELF model. These findings underscore the inherent complexity of educational settings, the hegemonic presence of the Dominant Paradigm, as well as the potential for bottom-up change.

Keywords: *English language teaching, teaching English to speakers of other languages, English as a Lingua Franca, English as an international language, Greece*