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ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA AND INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATION: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND MEANING
NEGOTIATION IN ELF TRANSCULTURAL CONTEXTS

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English as A Lingua Franca and Intercultural Communication:

communication strategies and meaning negotiation in ELF transcultural contexts

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Abstract (Italian)

Nei contesti ELF sia le pratiche linguistiche che quelle culturali non possono essere date per scontate, ma devono essere negoziate congiuntamente dai partecipanti per creare un quadro di riferimento condiviso. In questa tesi suggerisco quindi l'espressione "Comunicazione Transculturale ELF" per evidenziare l'interconnessione tra la ricerca ELF e gli studi sulla comunicazione interculturale; inoltre, propongo la "Competenza Transculturale ELF" come nuovo modello di riferimento per le abilità necessarie a raggiungere il proprio obiettivo comunicativo in modo efficace ed appropriato in contesti transculturali ELF. Secondo questa prospettiva, saper negoziare la comprensione reciproca ed essere in grado di gestire strategicamente l'interazione sono abilità fondamentali. L'obiettivo principale dello studio è quindi quello di indagare come le strategie comunicative siano impiegate nella comunicazione transculturale ELF per la negoziazione e co-costruzione di significato, e come esse siano utilizzate anche nella negoziazione di concetti culturali. Inoltre, questo progetto mira ad esplorare come l'uso delle strategie comunicative possa essere incluso in una pedagogia che adotti una prospettiva ELF.

In primo luogo viene fornita una panoramica della ricerca sull'ELF e sulla comunicazione interculturale, discutendo i concetti di lingua e cultura come sistemi complessi che emergono nell'interazione. Successivamente vengono messe in discussione le tradizionali concettualizzazioni di Competenza Comunicativa e Competenza Comunicativa Interculturale, rimarcando la loro inadeguatezza in riferimento a contesti transculturali ELF. Con queste premesse, la Competenza Transculturale ELF, basata sui concetti di Competenza ELF e di Consapevolezza Interculturale, viene proposta e discussa come un modello più appropriato per la Comunicazione Transculturale ELF. In seguito, viene delineato l'uso delle strategie comunicative in ELF, al fine di illustrare come significato e comprensione siano negoziati e co-costruiti nell'interazione e come le strategie comunicative svolgano un ruolo fondamentale in questi processi. Selezionate dagli studi ELF sull'argomento, le strategie comunicative analizzate nei dati sono: backchannel, anticipazioni lessicali, suggerimenti e correzioni lessicali, risorse

multilingue esplicite, riformulazioni, ripetizioni e spelling. I dati esaminati nello studio si basano su due corpora ELF, il sub-corpus VOICE-Leisure e il corpus ViMELF, e sono stati analizzati attraverso un metodo misto che combina analisi conversazionale e statistica descrittiva. I risultati confermano ciò che è stato osservato nella ricerca ELF e mostrano come le strategie comunicative analizzate siano strumenti proficui per co-costruire attivamente la comprensione reciproca e per negoziare il significato nell'interazione, svolgendo un ruolo fondamentale nella comunicazione transculturale ELF. Inoltre, si è riscontrato come la negoziazione di significato possa essere attuata in modi diversi, visto che le mosse strategiche esaminate mostrano una frequente co-occorrenza e la messa in atto di più funzioni contemporaneamente; la comunicazione strategica si è rivelata perciò un aspetto fondamentale da considerare nell'analisi di interazioni ELF. Viene infine presentata la discussione relativa alle implicazioni pedagogiche, introducendo ed illustrando l'inclusione dell'uso delle strategie comunicative in una pedagogia che adotti una prospettiva ELF attraverso alcune attività pratiche.

Abstract (English)

In ELF contexts both linguistic and cultural practices cannot be taken for granted, but they need to be jointly negotiated by interactants to create a shared frame of reference. Therefore, in this dissertation I suggest the expression 'ELF Transcultural Communication' to highlight the necessary link between ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies and I propose 'ELF Transcultural Competence' as a new model of reference for the skills that are necessary to effectively and appropriately achieve the speaker's communicative goal(s) in ELF transcultural contexts. Following this perspective, the ability to negotiate mutual understanding and to strategically manage the interaction is fundamental. Hence, the study aims at investigating how communication strategies are used in ELF Transcultural Communication in the meaning making process and in the negotiation of cultural concepts and at exploring how their use can be included in an ELF-aware pedagogy.

First, an overview of research on ELF and on Intercultural Communication is provided, discussing the concepts of language and culture as complex systems that emerge in interaction. Successively, traditional conceptualisations of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence are called into question, remarking their unsuitability for ELF transcultural contexts. In turn, the framework of ELF Transcultural Competence, based on the concepts of ELF Competence and Intercultural Awareness, is discussed as a more appropriate model for these contexts. The use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication are then outlined, discussing how meaning and understanding are negotiated and co-constructed in interaction and the relevance of communication strategies in these processes. The communication strategies that are analysed in the data have been selected from ELF literature on the topic: backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, over multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings. The data set of the dissertation is based on two ELF corpora, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus, and has been analysed through a mixed method approach that combines Conversation Analysis and descriptive statistics. The findings

confirm what has been observed in ELF studies on the topic and they show that communication strategies are productive tools to actively co-construct mutual understanding and to negotiate meaning in interaction, playing a fundamental role in ELF Transcultural Communication. In addition, the strategic moves examined show a frequent co-occurrence, with several functions performed at once, showcasing how meaning can be negotiated in different ways, and how strategic communication is a fundamental aspect to consider when investigating ELF interactions. Finally, the discussion of the pedagogical implications is presented. The inclusion of the use of communication strategies aimed at strategically managing interaction in an ELF-aware pedagogy is introduced and illustrated through some practical activities.

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Abbreviations

ACE	Asian Corpus of English
CA	Conversation Analysis
CC	Communicative Competence
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELFA	English as a Lingua Franca in Academic settings
ELT	English Language Teaching
ENL	English as a Native Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
GE	Global Englishes
GELT	Global Englishes for Language Teaching
ICA	Intercultural Awareness
ICC	Intercultural Communicative Competence
LFC	Lingua Franca Core
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TIG	Transient International Group
ViMELF	Corpus of Video-Mediated English as a Lingua Franca
VOICE	Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English
WE	World Englishes
WrELFA	Written ELF in Academic Settings corpus

INTRODUCTION

I. Contextualisation of the study

English nowadays has reached a global spread and it has become extensively used in all kinds of contexts. In addition to its diversification into several World Englishes varieties (e.g. American English, Nigerian English, Indian English, etc.), English is also used as a lingua franca, playing a fundamental role both in intranational and international communication. From the 1990s, research on the use of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has flourished and several aspects of this phenomenon have since then been investigated (see, for example, Jenkins et al., 2011, for a review; Jenkins 2018). In the present dissertation, ELF is defined as the use of English, together with other multilingual resources, as a common means of communication to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background. Accordingly, ELF can be said to be intercultural by definition (Baker, 2015b), since ELF users usually come from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and hence they do not share a specific set of linguistic and cultural practices. This aspect suggests that communicative practices in ELF contexts cannot be taken for granted, but need instead to be jointly negotiated by interactants into a shared frame of reference (e.g. Baker, 2015b; Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Kaur, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2011). ELF comprises not only a complex and hybrid linguistic dimension, but also an equally complex cultural one, and both linguistic and cultural communicative practices should be examined in order to understand how speakers interact in ELF contexts.

It is in light of these considerations that in the present dissertation I suggest the conceptualisation of 'ELF Transcultural Communication', to highlight the necessary link between ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies. By adopting such a combined standpoint it is possible to better understand the processes underlying the use of ELF, both from a linguistic and a cultural perspective. In this view, I also approach language and culture as complex systems, that emerge and are negotiated in situ during the communicative act and thus continuously change in the interaction (Baird et al., 2014; Larsen-Freeman,

2016). Moreover, a translingual and transcultural approach will be adopted, according to which linguistic and cultural practices are not pre-established, following some exonormative authority (being it Standard English or cultural nationalism, to name just two examples), but instead emerge in communication (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019).

By taking this stance, traditional conceptualisations of Communicative Competence (CC) and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) can no longer be considered as suitable models for speakers in ELF transcultural contexts; a new framework will then be suggested, namely, ELF Transcultural Competence. This model proposes a set of skills that are necessary to effectively and appropriately negotiate common ground among ELF speakers, aiming at taking into account both the linguistic and the cultural dimensions of ELF Transcultural Communication. ELF Transcultural Competence links together two existing models, Kohn's (2016b) ELF competence and Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness, and it makes an attempt to include a translingual and transcultural approach.

Adopting this model and existing research as the backdrop of the study, negotiation is acknowledged as paramount in reaching the speakers' communicative goal(s), and it being one of the most important processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication. To be able to strategically manage interaction and to make use of all the resources available to reach common understanding is a fundamental ability in communication, particularly in ELF contexts. Following this perspective, communication strategies acquire great importance as tools to actively shape and negotiate meaning (e.g. Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Kaur, 2009). In the present dissertation, communication strategies are defined as those strategic moves, both linguistic and non-linguistic, that are used to negotiate meaning, co-construct mutual understanding and a shared frame of reference. From this definition, it follows that communication strategies are no longer seen as compensation tools that are needed to cope with communication problems, or serve only to pre-empt or solve miscommunication, but they are especially poignant in the meaning-making process as means to create meaning and negotiate common ground among speakers.

II. Purpose and rationale of the study

Since meaning negotiation processes and the co-construction of mutual understanding have a fundamental role in ELF Transcultural Communication, the focus of the present study is to investigate and gather further insights into the role of communication strategies in these contexts. Several studies have been carried out on the use of communication strategies in ELF, showing that the kinds of strategies that can be used are quite numerous. First, for the aim of the present dissertation, I decided to focus on a determined number of strategic moves, hence, a selection of the most prominent strategies according to existing literature in ELF has been chosen, that is, backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and correction, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings. Secondly, the focus of the study is on informal communication in ELF; since it is still an under-investigated area, this dissertation could provide useful and additional insights on the topic. For this reason, two corpora were identified as suitable in that they are constituted by transcripts of naturally occurring ELF conversations in informal contexts: VOICE[1], the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English – specifically the sub-corpus Leisure, and ViMELF[2], the Corpus of Video-Mediated English as a Lingua Franca Conversations. Finally, given that an important aspect of ELF Transcultural Communication is its cultural dimension, it was important to investigate the use of communication strategies in relation to cultural aspects.

After such considerations, the research questions addressed in this study are the following:

> 1. How are the communication strategies selected among the ones identified in existing literature in ELF used to negotiate meaning in transcultural contexts according to the analysis of corpus data?
> 2. How are cultural concepts negotiated through the selected communication strategies?

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[1] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[2]   https://www.umwelt-campus.de/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/case-project/access-vimelf/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

3. What are the pedagogical implications of the findings from research question (1) and (2) for English Language Teaching (ELT)?

The methodology used to carry out the study is based on a mixed method approach that combines a qualitative and a quantitative approach to corpus data. This method has been selected to investigate the use of communication strategies not only qualitatively by adopting Conversation Analysis (CA) – as many ELF studies have done – but also quantitatively by providing the frequency of use of the strategies analysed and the statistical observations on the qualitative results. As the analysis has demonstrated, this method has proved to be successful in determining the role of the communication strategies examined in ELF Transcultural Communication. On the one hand, the qualitative analysis has shown that communication strategies are used to perform several functions in the meaning negotiation process and in co-constructing mutual understanding; on the other hand, the quantitative analysis has showcased that they are frequently used and that they have an important role in the strategic management of the conversation. In addition, a particular focus was given to the analysis of cultural concepts, that is, those macro and micro elements that are ascribable to the cultural background of a speaker (for example religion, politics, food, education, traditions, events, etc.), and on the use of communication strategies in negotiating common ground in relation to such concepts. Finally, the pedagogical implications of the results have been outlined, reflecting upon the inclusion of ELF Transcultural Communication, ELF Transcultural Competence and the use of communication strategies in the meaning negotiation processes underlying these contexts in ELT practices.

III. Outline of the thesis
In Chapter 1, the theoretical backdrop of the study will be presented. The dissertation is based on a combined perspective that links together ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies. First, ELF research and its core elements will be discussed; secondly, Intercultural Communication studies will be outlined, with a focus on the issues related to the concept of culture. Finally, ELF

Transcultural Communication will be described, illustrating its main characterisations.

In Chapter 2, this joint perspective will be further analysed discussing ELF Transcultural Competence and the importance of meaning negotiation in ELF transcultural contexts. Traditional models of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence will be called into question, suggesting some alternative models, e.g. Widdowson' communicative capability, Kohn's ELF competence, and Baker's Intercultural Awareness. ELF Transcultural Competence will be discussed as a new model adopted as the backdrop of the dissertation. Finally, ELF studies on the use of communication strategies will be outlined.

In Chapter 3, the methodology will be described. First, the data set and the corpora used, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus, will be presented. Then, the analytical approach, which is based on a mixed method approach that adopts Conversation Analysis for the qualitative analysis and descriptive statistics for the quantitative analysis, will be illustrated. Finally, the pilot study carried out to verify the suitability of the methodology chosen will be described.

In Chapter 4, the data analysis will be presented, first reporting the qualitative results, then focusing on the quantitative analysis. The use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts will be described focusing on their different functions, remarking their important role to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding in interaction. Finally, the mixed approach applied to a selection of conversations will be outlined, showing how a combined perspective of qualitative and quantitative analysis can add significant insights on the role of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication.

Finally, in Chapter 5, the discussion of findings will be presented, highlighting how meaning negotiation and the co-construction of mutual understanding are achieved in ELF transcultural contexts through the use of the communication strategies analysed. The pedagogical implications of the study will be also discussed, outlining how the findings of the dissertation could be relevant for an

ELF-aware pedagogy, and providing some examples of actual activities that could be used in classroom practice.

CHAPTER 1 –
ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The present dissertation is based upon two theoretical fields, English as a Lingua Franca research and Intercultural Communication studies, that will be presented in this chapter. First, it will be outlined how English has become a global language that is used intranationally and internationally, illustrating the main research paradigms that have focused on this phenomenon. Successively, ELF will be described in more detail and it will be discussed how this area of research has developed over the last two decades: Jenkins (2015) identifies three main phases to delineate the developments of this field of research, from the first focusing mainly on linguistic features, to studies carried out on linguistic functions, to those on negotiation processes and multilingual resources as part of ELF. Moreover, it will be pointed out how ELF research has challenged some traditionally established notions (e.g. Standard English, the 'native speaker' or speech community) and how in ELF language is conceived of as a complex and fluid system that emerges in interaction and cannot be defined a priori. Since ELF research has shown that ELF communication is intercultural by definition (Baker, 2015b: 43), in addition to the linguistic dimension that conceives language as a complex system, the cultural dimension related to the speakers' diverse cultural backgrounds that underlie ELF use has to be taken into consideration, too, in order to understand how Intercultural Communication studies can enrich and deepen the understanding of ELF communication. Consequently, the development of Intercultural Communication research will be outlined, focusing on the notion of 'culture' and how it has been conceived in different approaches to the study of intercultural communication. It will be emphasised how culture is a complex system that cannot be conceived of as a stable and static entity, but should rather be seen as fluid and emergent. Finally, a combined perspective of ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies will be discussed, finally suggesting the concept of 'ELF Transcultural Communication'. This conceptualisation can provide a comprehensive framework that accounts for the transcultural and

translingual dimensions of ELF communication, where language and culture are conceived as complex and emergent systems. Such a joint perspective can help in shedding light on how language and culture intertwine in ELF and it can provide further insights on the processes underlying ELF use. It is against this backdrop that the present dissertation will discuss, in Chapter 2, the conceptualisation of ELF Transcultural Competence and the use of communication strategies in meaning negotiation and in the co-construction of mutual understanding.

1.1 English as a Global Language

Before discussing the development of ELF research and its main theoretical cornerstones, it is important to outline how English has reached the status of a global language and the factors that have brought to this international dimension in order to better understand its current global use as a lingua franca. While British colonisation has made English a means of communication for settlers, colonisers, and colonised, globalisation has made it the language of technology and international communication (Bhatt, 2001; Crystal, 2003a; Rose & Galloway, 2019). British colonisation first, and then the American economic power and globalisation have contributed to create a linguistic scenario where English can no longer be described as homogeneously connected to a single language variety, since it has become a complex and fluid system. Indeed, reaching a global status has greatly changed how English is used and new paradigms of research have developed to focus on the consequences and manifestations of the spread of this language. On the one hand research in World Englishes (WE) has analysed the varieties of English that have developed through British, or American, settlements and through a process of independence in which the colonised peoples appropriated what had initially been an imposed language to make it their own (Bhatt, 2001; Bolton, 2006: 240-243; Crystal, 2003a); on the other hand, studies in English as an International Language (EIL) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) have examined the use of English as a common means of communication between people who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background, the former developing mainly in the American context, the latter in Europe (Rose & Galloway, 2019: 7-8, Seidlhofer, 2011: 7-10). Furthermore, more recent studies

on Global Englishes have attempted to go beyond such categorisations in order to include the diverse and fluid uses of English in a globalised world (Rose & Galloway, 2019: 4). As I will discuss, what these paradigms have in common is questioning the authority of the 'native speaker' model and the static conceptualisation of English as a single, stable, and homogeneous variety.

In the following sections, it will be addressed how English has spread and has become a global language, and the paradigms of research that have been established to study and analyse, from different perspectives, this global phenomenon.

1.1.1 The spread of English

English has become a global language, that is, it has taken on "a special role" worldwide (Crystal, 2003a: 3). This special role is achieved when countries other than the ones where a variety of English is an official language decide to take up English as a language that responds to particular aims in that community (2003a: 4). Crystal (2003a: 29) points out two main reasons to explain why English is now a global language: first, the geo-historical causes that have determined the spread of English, and second, the socio-cultural factors that have contributed to the influence and importance of this language as a global linguistic resource.

The geo-historical causes

The spread of English started in the 16th century, when pioneering travellers moved from the British Isles to the Americas, the South Pacific, Asia and Africa[3]. Between the 16th and the 18th century, migrants arrived in North America, Australia, and New Zealand as settlers and established their new homes in those territories. British English and the several regional and social dialects that the migrants spoke intermingled with local languages and new varieties developed. American English, Canadian English, Australian English, New Zealand English are categorised, together with British English, as 'English as a Native Language'

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[3] For a detailed account of the origins and spread of English and for further insights on the varieties developed see Crystal (2003a), Kachru et al. (2006), Nelson et al. (2020), Schneider (2011).

(ENL) varieties and the people speaking these varieties from birth are still regarded as 'native speakers' of the English language and are used as a model of reference for language use (Widdowson, 1994: 379).

From the 17th century, the British Empire colonised African and Asian territories, imposing British English as the official language to communicate between the colonisers and the colonised; in these contexts English became a second official language, it existed alongside different local languages and it was taught through education. With the passing of time and especially after these countries gained independence in the 20th century, English became part of the identity of the once colonised peoples: "many of the newly independent multilingual countries, especially in Africa, chose English as their official language to enable speakers of their indigenous communities to continue communicating with each other at a national level" (Crystal, 2003a: 79). The varieties of English that developed in these territories were the result of language contact and have been classified as 'English as a Second Language' (ESL) varieties, but no prestige and acceptance were originally given to them since they diverted from the Standard English[4] 'norm' – i.e the norm of ENL varieties (Bhatt, 2001: 529; Crystal, 2003a). These ESL varieties are known as World Englishes and they are used for intranational purposes, alongside other local official languages, in these territories. As Bhatt (2001: 528) explains,

> the pluralization, Englishes, symbolizes the formal and functional variations, the divergent sociolinguistic contexts, the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and literary creativity, and the various identities English has accrued as a result of its acculturation in new sociolinguistic ecologies.

Research on World Englishes has hence strongly contributed to the acknowledgement of the pluralistic nature of English and its role in representing "diverse sociolinguistic histories, multicultural identities, multiple norms of use and acquisition, and distinct contexts of function" (Bhatt, 2001: 528). This emphasis on the plural linguistic realisations and on the diverse cultural influences

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[4] Standard English as a problematic notion in ELF research will be addressed in §1.2.2.1.1.

that have contributed to shape the English language is fundamental in understanding and recognising that English can no longer be represented and conceived of as a monolithic entity, that reflects a set number of fixed varieties, but rather as a language that has spread all around the world and has transformed into several different linguistic and cultural realities.

The socio-cultural factors

If the expansion of the British colonial power is one of the geo-historical reasons that brought English to be a global language, another important factor was the influence of Britain during the Industrial Revolution: access to the innovations and resulting benefits were guaranteed only through the use of ENL varieties (Crystal, 2003a: 80). After World War I, the United States of America began to take Britain's place as the world leading power and, after World War II, they established their economic supremacy (Crystal, 2003a: 59). As a matter of fact, during the 20th century, the USA developed their economic influence on the world market and speaking English meant to be able to trade with them, one of the strongest economic powers in the world (Crystal, 2003a: Chapter 5). The League of Nations was one of the first international organisations to establish English as one of its official working languages, but several other international organisations followed its example, e.g. international political, sport or scientific organisations, and the role of English as an auxiliary language in international communication was established (Crystal, 2003a: 86-90). Moreover, with globalisation, English strengthened its function as an international common means of communication and its position as a tool to have access to business, education, and entertainment: social media, the press, international research projects, international safety, universities, international organisations use English as the main language of communication (Melitz, 2018). Differently from ENL and ESL varieties, English used in international business, educational, and entertainment contexts represents a lingua franca to communicate between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and who recognise English as a communicative resource to express their identities and cultures (Seidlhofer, 2011: 7, 81). As Grazzi (2013:11) points out, "the spread of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is

an integral part of the process of globalization that has marked the development of economic, scientific, technological and cultural exchanges in the 20th and the 21st century". Globalisation processes have deeply reshaped the world, impacting and affecting the role and use of English, too (Dewey, 2007: 334). As Dewey explains, modern communication technologies, greater interconnectedness and diffusion of information have led to pluralism and diversity, and "interaction increasingly transcends regions and borders" (2007: 337-338). People move more freely between countries, consequently communities are more fluid and diversified, practices merge through and across geographical and virtual spaces, and linguistic and cultural forms intermingle. This continuous and dynamic exchange among people, with their languages, identities and cultures, has defied and transformed the way in which traditional notions of communication, community and 'native speaker' have been traditionally conceptualised, starting from the use and role of English itself, as will be now discussed.

Reconceptualising English

As mentioned above, English has reached a global status and it thus embraces dynamic, variable, and diverse uses, for English speakers can have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and their linguistic and cultural models of reference cannot be defined and set a priori. Since English has developed into several different varieties and it has reached a fundamental role in international communication, this language can no longer be conceptualised as a homogeneous system: it responds to both intranational and international needs and its manifestations are numerous and greatly diversified. Consequently, 'English' can be seen as an umbrella term that comprises the linguistic resources used by speakers drawing from English as a global language: "*English* is not a homogeneous or clearly bounded linguistic entity or object", but it has become a complex and variable language that is realised through manifold and flexible forms (Pitzl, 2018: 8, italics in the original). Accordingly, English is a heterogeneous system that comprises both different varieties used intranationally and linguistic practices that are used in international communication. As Seidlhofer (2011: 16) highlights, "ENL is full of conventions and markers of in-

group membership such as characteristic pronunciations, specialized vocabulary, idiomatic phraseology, and references and allusions to shared experience and the cultural background of particular native-speaker communities" that cannot be generalised to all the speakers in all the contexts in which English is used nowadays. Therefore, the term 'English' can no longer be used to define a specific group of prestigious varieties (i.e. ENL), but it has to be conceived of as a reality that comprises both diverse practices negotiated in international contexts – English as a Lingua Franca – and the diversified varieties that have originated from language contact and have now been appropriated by specific and diverse speech communities[5] – World Englishes.

As pointed out above, this diversified and multifaceted development of the English language has brought to the establishment of new fields of research focusing on this phenomenon. In the following section, an overview of the main paradigms that have focused on English as a global language will be outlined, before focusing on English as a Lingua Franca.

1.1.2 Models of categorisation of English as a global language

As discussed above, English has spread in a very peculiar manner, since no language has ever had the same diffusion and influence it has today (Dewey, 2007: 333-334; Grazzi, 2013; Kaur, 2009; Widdowson, 2018). Four complementary research paradigms have focused on the global spread of English and on the consequences and phenomena related to it: World Englishes (WE), English as an International Language (EIL), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and Global Englishes (GE). These fields of research examine how English is related to colonisation and globalisation, and how its spread has affected and influenced the use of this language in the world; they all aim at analysing English independently from Anglophone settings, norms and references, as a language that has reached a global role and that has developed into plural, diverse and dynamic forms (Baker, 2015b: 11).

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[5] A discussion on the notion of speech community in relation to ELF will be presented in §1.2.2.2.2.

Research on World Englishes analyses new linguistic realities that have developed through the spread of English in the world, challenging the view of ENL varieties as the only 'proper' varieties of English and the 'native speaker' as a benchmark for all communicative and sociolinguistic contexts. As Widdowson (2018: 105) explains, World Englishes studies are "principally concerned with the description of varieties, linguistically distinct versions of intranational English that [have] their own communal identity and integrity". This paradigm refers to a plural form of 'Englishes' and stresses that "English no longer has one single base of authority, prestige and normativity" (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008: 3), since several varieties have developed and have been acknowledged as national/regional languages. Accordingly, in WE research, scholars focus on the pluralisation of English by identifying and categorising varieties through sets of common features at a national (or regional) level (Canagarajah, 2013: 58-61). Even if this perspective comprises a direct link between a variety of English and a geographically situated community, research on WE has had an important role in establishing and legitimising the use of English independently from ENL varieties, thus suggesting that New Englishes are no longer to be compared to ENL uses and norms, for they have developed their own norms and practices to respond to the local needs of the community in which they are used (Baker, 2015b: 10).

Research in the field of English as an International Language (EIL) has focused on the international use of English, adopting a perspective still based on the notion of variety (Baker, 2015b: 10). EIL studies analyse the intranational and international use of different varieties of English in a contact situation; in other words, they examine how speakers of different varieties of English negotiate English on equal terms (Canagarajah, 2013: 61-62). As a matter of fact, speakers of English as an additional language (that is, as a language they can speak in addition to their first and sole language) far outnumber native speakers of ENL varieties; hence, the 'English' to be used should no longer be subjected to ENL norms and practices, but can be contextually negotiated by the participants to the communicative act. Early studies in EIL explored the possibility of the emergence of a 'neutral' international variety of English that could be used as a shared means

of communication worldwide; however, recent research has rejected "such a supranational variety" and has acknowledged the diverse and fluid nature of the practices emerging in EIL contexts (Baker, 2015b: 10; Canagarajah, 2013: 61-62). Early research on English as a Lingua Franca was included in the EIL paradigm, and many researchers used the term EIL to refer to the lingua franca function of English – just to mention one example, one of the first (and seminal) 'ELF' studies by Jenkins (2000) was entitled *The Phonology of English as an International Language* (Baker, 2015b: 10). Even if some scholars suggest that EIL research is the "North American counterpart to English as a lingua franca" (Rose & Galloway, 2019: 8), it is important to mention some fundamental differences between these two paradigms. As Baker (2015b: 10-11) points out, even if early studies on ELF viewed it as a kind of variety, adopting a perspective similar to that undertaken in EIL, recent research has aimed at going beyond categorisations based upon language varieties, focusing on the variable, fluid and dynamic use of ELF in communication. In this view, ELF does not relate to the speakers' different varieties, but comprises fluidly negotiated linguistic forms and practices (Baker, 2015b; Cogo, 2018). ELF studies have also shown that ELF users co-construct and negotiate meaning in interaction, making use of creative and multilingual resources (Baker, 2015b: 5-10; Canagarajah, 2013: 62-68); indeed, differently from WE research, ELF "is concerned with more fluid and dynamic uses of English in which there may be no fixed physical communities with which language can be associated (Baker, 2015b: 10). As will be discussed in §1.2, ELF is to be seen as the "variable use of English in intercultural communication" (Baker, 2015b: 7).

Global Englishes is a more recent paradigm that includes World Englishes, ELF, and English as an International Language research. Rose and Galloway (2019: 3-8) explain that Global Englishes is "an inclusive paradigm looking at the linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural diversity and fluidity of English use and English users in a globalised world". The purpose of this area of research is to analyse the impact of the spread of English and the changes and challenges this global phenomenon has brought to the use and practice of this language; it hence comprises interests related to World Englishes and post-colonial English varieties,

to the use of English as a lingua franca and of English as an International Language. By embracing these research fields, it aims at establishing a more comprehensive and complex paradigm that is able to account for the diversified and variable uses and users of English worldwide (Rose & Galloway, 2019: 6).

In the following section, ELF and ELF research will be presented in more detail, outlining the core elements that distinguish this field of research and the challenges it has raised towards 'established concepts', such as the notion of speech community, the perspective of language as a stable and discrete entity, and the authority of the 'native speaker' model.

1.2 English as a Lingua Franca

In this section, English as a Lingua Franca will be discussed as one of the main research fields underlying the present study. First ELF will be defined, describing its primary features, successively the development of ELF research and its core issues will be outlined in its three main phases (Jenkins, 2015).

1.2.1 What is ELF?

In the present dissertation English as a Lingua Franca is defined as the use of English as a common means of communication between people who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background, and thus negotiate meaning in order to co-construct mutual understanding. The reference to 'English' in the definition, however, does not rule out the influence and use of other languages since, as will be illustrated, multilingual resources are a fundamental element in ELF communication.

Given the diversified and broad nature of this phenomenon, several conceptualisations have been suggested in the attempt to find a comprehensive definition of the essence of ELF. One of the first characterisations was provided by Firth in the mid-1990s, who described ELF as "a contact language between people who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen *foreign language* of communication" (1996: 240, italics in the original). This early perspective clearly points out that a lingua franca corresponds to a contact and a foreign language: it is thus not

spoken as a first language by anyone in the communicative act, hence excluding native speakers of ENL and ESL varieties. Jenkins (2007: 1) follows a similar perspective, which sees ENL speakers excluded from ELF communicative contexts, and ELF defined as "a contact language used among people who do not share a first language, and is commonly understood to mean a second (or subsequent) language to its speakers".

As shown, these early attempts to define ELF were focused on its status as a contact language and on the exclusion of native speakers of ENL and ESL varieties. However, following the developments of further studies and investigations in the field, recent characterisations have opened up to a broader definition. Seidlhofer (2011) indeed includes the dynamic and fluid nature of ELF communication and both native and non-native speakers of English varieties by defining ELF as "*any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option*" (2011:7, italics in the original). This definition delineates ELF communication as a communicative space that is not based on its users' status as 'native' or 'non-native', but that comprises speakers of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds that elect English as their means of communication. Following the new focus of ELF research on the processes underlying ELF use, Seidlhofer highlights the functional use of English as a common means of communication for speakers who do not share any other linguistic resources (Baker, 2015b: 6).

The perspective adopted in ELF is thus different from the one in WE and EIL, since the fluidity and variability that characterise ELF communication are looked at not in contrast or in comparison to other varieties of English, but as intrinsic features of this communicative tool, that goes beyond the concept of variety: "ELF is then best understood as a dynamic, locally realized enactment of a global resource, best conceptualized not as a uniform set of norms or practices, but as highly variable, creative expression of linguistic resources which warrants a distinct analytical framework" (Dewey, 2009: 62). ELF communication is thus "heterogeneous, ad hoc, fluid and flexible", with no definite set of external rules to refer to: ELF speakers negotiate norms and practices in the ongoing interaction

as they deem appropriate and effective for their communicative goal and in that particular context (Kalocsai, 2014: 23). This context-based use of the language shapes ELF as a greatly diversified phenomenon, where different linguistic practices co-exist and combine in order to reach successful communication. Hence, ELF is primarily and fundamentally, a process of appropriation that allows its users to convey and construct communication through the linguistic (and non-linguistic) resources they consider appropriate (Dewey, 2009; Hülmbauer et al., 2008; Hülmbauer, 2009; Jenkins, 2015; Jenkins et al., 2011; Kalocsai, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2009, 2011; Widdowson, 1994, 2003, 2012). Consequently, as will be discussed in §1.2.2.1, conventional rules cannot apply to ELF and exonormative norms based on an external authority (i.e. ENL speakers) can no longer be seen as a feasible reference (Seidlhofer, 2009: 41). This entails that the focus of ELF users is on effective communication and mutual understanding, and not on adherence to Standard English norms or narrow notions of 'correctness', which are no longer applicable to ELF contexts (Jenkins et al., 2011: 284; see also Seidlhofer, 2009, 2011; Widdowson, 2012).

Another important aspect to be highlighted, as will be discussed in §1.4, is that ELF is intrinsically intercultural, since it is used as a common linguistic resource in contexts where speakers do not always share the same linguistic and cultural background, and thus build and co-construct mutual understanding through a process of meaning negotiation (Baker, 2015b: 43). As in any intercultural communication setting, ELF interactions involve speakers who come from and belong to different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, thus norms and practices – that is, rules and behaviours – cannot be taken for granted, but need to be negotiated between the participants in order to reach mutual understanding (Baker, 2015b: 8). As will be discussed in §1.3 and §1.4, since meaning in such contexts is negotiated and understanding co-constructed for successful communication, it is important to emphasise that contemporary trends in ELF research, as well as in Intercultural Communication studies, theorise language and culture as complex and emergent systems: they are fluid and dynamic entities that emerge in interaction through the speaker's linguistic and non-linguistic practices (Baker, 2018a, 2018b; Cogo, 2018). They are continuously negotiated and thus

they cannot be described and inscribed into fixed and homogeneous categories, but need to be analysed as evolving systems that are displayed through the speakers' interactions. In other words, as Baker (2018a: 29) remarks, in ELF contexts linguistic and cultural practices emerge and are negotiated in situ by the speakers involved in the communicative act. Accordingly, linguistic and cultural norms are to be jointly negotiated as well; as Cogo (2018: 3) explains,

> in ELF communication the cultural knowledge usually associated with NS communities is neither relevant nor appropriate to represent the intercultural practices, communication strategies, and sometimes super-diverse contexts of ELF. The intercultural practices constructed in different ELF contexts do not result from a static view of culture representing one nation and one language, but from a more fluid, complex, and heterogeneous approach to the "norms" of intercultural communication.

Accordingly, English as a Lingua Franca is to be conceived of as "a means of intercultural communication not tied to particular countries and ethnicities, a linguistic resource that is not contained in, or constrained by, traditional (and notoriously tendentious) ideas of what constitutes 'a language'" and 'a culture' (Seidlhofer, 2011: 81). As will be discussed in §1.2.2.1.1 and §1.3.2, in ELF research, and also in Intercultural Communication studies, language and culture are no longer univocally linked to a single nation and community (i.e. English to any particular Anglophone country), but they need to be conceived of as dynamic and negotiated systems that result from the manifested linguistic and cultural practices of its speakers. Following this view, ELF is to be considered as a linguistic resource that includes and embraces diversity and fluidity in linguistic forms and cultural practices.

In the following sections, the development of ELF research and its core issues will be discussed, pointing out how the development of ELF studies has brought to a reconceptualization of traditional notions of 'Standard English', 'speech community', and 'language'.

1.2.2 ELF research

ELF research has a rather young history, since the first pivotal studies were carried out in the 1990s, its development has been divided into three main phases by Jenkins (2015). 'ELF 1' indicates the earliest studies, which focused mainly on form and on the revolutionary idea that ELF brought along, that is, "getting a truly global perspective on English, and envisioning its development not only within national and regional boundaries, but in communities of unprecedented mobility and interconnectedness in the world" (Mauranen, 2016: 21). Subsequently, 'ELF 2' indicates the shift of interest in ELF research that came to see ELF not as a possible variety, as it was hypothesised during the first phase, but as a function, starting thus to focus on the processes underlying the use of ELF (Jenkins, 2015: 55). Finally, 'ELF 3' stresses the interest in the "increasingly diverse multilingual nature of ELF communication" (Jenkins, 2015: 58). This phase underscores the permeability, fluidity and complexity of languages in general and it focuses on the influence of multilingualism in ELF communication (Canagarajah, 2013; Cogo, 2018; Jenkins, 2015): the use of different linguistic repertoires is seen in a fluid and dynamic continuum, where they combine and co-exist with the use of English, due to the fluidity and diversity intrinsic to ELF (Baker, 2015b; Jenkins, 2015).

In the following sections, these three phases will be outlined, following a perspective in which re-conceptualisations in one phase do not exclude previous theorisations, but build up on them in an evolving process.

1.2.2.1 ELF 1

After the spread of English as a global language, as discussed in §1.1, it appeared obvious that English as a Native Language was no longer the most frequent use of English in the world (Dewey, 2007: 333). On the one hand, as we have seen above, research on World Englishes varieties developed as an autonomous field of research; on the other hand, English was increasingly used as a shared means of communication, often without the presence of native speakers of any ENL (or ESL) variety in the communicative act. Being ELF contexts the most common scenario for the use of English in the world, researchers started to challenge the

validity of a 'native speaker' model, questioning whether Standard English and 'native speaker' use were to be considered the pinnacle of correctness and appropriateness in all contexts. As Jenkins (2000:1) highlights, "for the first time in the history of the English language, second language speakers outnumber those for whom it is the mother tongue, and interaction in English increasingly involves no first language speakers whatsoever" (see also Jenkins, 2015: 52-54; Jenkins et al., 2011). Following the perspective in which speakers of ENL varieties were no longer to be seen as the point of reference for language use, participants in ELF conversations were now considered as users of the language and not as learners, thus legitimising their linguistic choices and the negotiated practices they enacted in communication. While English *learners* would have the need and requirement to aspire to a 'native speaker model' based on ENL varieties, English *users* are entitled to their own linguistic choices and no longer have to imitate ENL models of language use. As Firth explains, studies on ELF contexts were primarily directed "to conceptualize the participant simply as a *language user* whose real-world interactions are deserving of unprejudiced *description*" (1996: 241, italics in the original). Accordingly, ELF users are not to be seen as 'failed native speakers', or as 'eternal deficient English learners', but as skilled communicators who negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding in order to reach successful communication (Jenkins et al., 2011: 284).

In this first phase, studies focused on linguistic features of ELF spoken communication, following the linguistic descriptive approach adopted in World Englishes research (Jenkins, 2015; Jenkins et al. 2011; Seidlhofer, 2001). As Jenkins et al. (2011: 295) point out, "much of earlier ELF research was undoubtedly concerned primarily with identifying the features that seemed to be characterizing this emerging kind of English use, with the ultimate aim of being able, one distant day, to codify ELF". During the first phase, then, researchers analysed ELF within a 'variety' perspective, trying to define its phonological, lexico-grammatical and pragmatic characteristics (Jenkins, 2015: 54; Jenkins et al., 2011: 284). Some seminal studies characterised this initial phase: Jenkins (2000), who analysed which phonological problems non-native speakers of English varieties could encounter in ELF contexts and what role phonological

accommodation played in fostering mutual understanding, delineating the Lingua Franca Core (LFC); Seidlhofer (2004), who identified a list of lexico-grammar elements that were intended as hypothetical ELF features; House (2002) and Meierkord (2002), who pointed out how lingua franca communication is hybrid and variable, how speakers use flexible linguistic resources, and how data from ELF interactions show solidarity and mutual cooperation between speakers, even when cultural differences could potentially mine communicative success.

These early results needed to be corroborated through the collection of new and richer data, in order to carry out larger studies on ELF spoken communication. Consequently, ELF researchers started to compile larger ELF corpora to better comprehend the nature of ELF; this would also contribute to challenge assumptions about it being 'improper English', and to question the viewpoint according to which only 'native speaker' norms were to be considered appropriate (Jenkins, 2015: 50; Jenkins et al., 2011). From an ELF perspective, it was fundamental to show that variation has legitimacy in a context where the language serves as a common means for international communication (Seidlhofer, 2004). One of the main arguments was that the number of 'non-native speakers' of English was much higher than the number of its 'native speakers', requiring a re-thinking of what was to be considered effective in communication and what perspective should be taken about communicative norms and appropriateness in ELF settings.

In 2001, the projects for the VOICE[6] (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) and the ELFA[7] (English as a Lingua Franca in Academic settings) corpora were designed in order to provide data to further research distinctive characteristics of ELF communication (Jenkins, 2015; Jenkins et al, 2011; Mauranen, 2003, 2006; Mauranen et al., 2010; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004). This investigation of ELF through the use of corpora was aimed at analysing both qualitatively and quantitatively ELF peculiar features, in order to identify and classify aspects that could define ELF as a variety (Mauranen, 2003; Seidlhofer,

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[6] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[7] https://www.helsinki.fi/en/researchgroups/english-as-a-lingua-franca-in-academic-settings/research/elfa-corpus (last accessed 26/10/2021).

2001, 2004). Mauranen et al. (2010: 184) explain that "a large corpus is indeed a rich resource: corpus data are able to reveal linguistic regularities and patterning while also keeping track of variability in the material – and where substantial variability can be expected, as in L2–L2 interactions, discovering regularity is particularly interesting". The VOICE project was started at the University of Vienna by Seidlhofer (2001), while Mauranen was the director of the ELFA project based at the University of Helsinki (Mauranen, 2003). Both corpora aimed at 1 million transcribed words and chose to focus on spoken interactions: since spoken data shows spontaneous and authentic communication, it could also shed light on the dynamics of ELF negotiating processes, online construction of meaning, in addition to ELF peculiar linguistic features and norms (Mauranen, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2001).

ELF 1 was a phase in which ELF research was still in its infancy, and where attention focused first of all on the necessity to establish a field of study in its own right. It is important to highlight the great work that was carried out in this attempt to legitimise an independent field of research focused on the use of English as a lingua franca. As outlined above, even though WE research served as a model in initial studies focused on the description of ELF linguistic features (phonetics, semantics, and lexico-grammar), ELF researchers gradually acknowledged that ELF could neither be categorised as a bounded variety nor classified through a list of fixed or constant, 'global', features (Jenkins, 2015: 53-55). Moreover, the initial stages of research moved within a framework referring comparatively to native varieties and frequently avoiding the inclusion of 'native speakers' as participants in ELF interaction. At the same time, ELF researchers have acknowledged the need to distance their scope of research from comparative studies between ELF and ENL: as Mauranen et al. (2010: 189) highlight,

> it is no longer sufficient to point to the 'educated native speaker' for a model. The successful use of ELF demands new skills from its speakers, native or non-native, compared to those which traditional language education has prepared people for. ELF research is needed for developing innovative applications.

Consequently, the authority of the 'native speaker model' and Standard English norms were questioned in order to investigate English in its new global dimension (Mauranen, 2003; Mauranen et al. 2010; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004; Jenkins, 2015; Widdowson, 1994, 2003), as we will see in the next section.

1.2.2.1.1 Questioning language standards

The global dimension that English has reached has brought ELF scholars to question whether language standards and variability should be reconceptualised with reference to the contexts in which – and the purposes for which – English is actually used. They have strongly suggested the need to abandon a model which does not take into account the global diffusion of the language and thus still measures English according to standards, norms and linguistic authority that are predominantly oriented to ENL varieties and speakers.

As a matter of fact, ELF speakers around the world are counted to amount approximately to 3 billion people (Rose & Galloway, 2019: 3), while ENL varieties count around 400 million speakers and ESL varieties around 6 million speakers (Schneider, 2011: 56-57)[8]. Given that the number of speakers using English is significant and the most widespread use of English is in its lingua franca role, ELF scholars have questioned the correctness and appropriateness of Standard English norms when considering English as a global means of communication in ELF contexts (Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 1994, 2003). If the imposed Standard English model is considered to be the only valid and proper 'English' (in this perspective *one single* English) to be spoken and written all over the world, then "what we are faced with is the claim that a national standard language should be valid not only within a particular country but globally" (Seidlhofer, 2011: 42). Indeed, conceiving Standard English as the only righteous model of reference rises several issues with reference to the global role English

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[8] These figures have to be taken with caution, since they depend on which speakers and which proficiency levels are taken into consideration. Nonetheless, they show the prominence and wide spread of the English language and its significant presence around the world, also pointing out how speakers of English used as an additional language outnumber the 'traditional' ENL native speaker.

has today. First, it classifies English according to correspondence to a single norm, usually British (or American) English, and thus it is set as a fixed and homogeneous system of grammatical features used as reference for all varieties of English (Widdowson, 1994: 380). Second, it is difficult to precisely define what Standard English is and how its norms and practices can be appropriate and correct in all contexts of use, since it comprises a definite and stable set of norms that mirrors "*one* version of English as a native language (ENL)" and refers only to the language of a "relatively small sub-set" of 'native speakers' (Seidlhofer, 2011: 46). In other words, Standard English is a variety that reflects a social construct and that does not pertain to all speakers of any variety of English, but to just a small part of them. Following this argumentation, if Standard English does not even reflect the use of English by *all* its 'native speakers', it is hard to support a view where it should represent the proper form of English for all speakers in the world[9].

As Seidlhofer (2011: 71) explains, another related problem is that the hegemony of Standard English results in a granted authority to 'educated native speakers of English', but it does not set precise requirements to define such 'educated' speakers. Widdowson (1994: 379) adds that to be a 'native speaker of English' means "to be to the language born", which is contradictory: not all 'native speakers' are then educated, since only "a minority of people who have the power to impose it" can establish and maintain a Standard English model of reference. This imposition and ideology does not take into consideration the dynamic

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[9] As Crystal (2003b) explains, the English language has a great variability of forms not only on an international level, but also intranationally: even though Standard English usually refers to British or American English, it has to be noted that each ENL variety has its own regional and social dialects and a standard form is a selected variety among the many present. Even if only American and British English are taken into consideration, there is a great number of dialects both in the United States of America and in the United Kingdom, and the variation of forms that move away from Standard English is very high (Crystal, 2003b: 312-339). Interestingly enough, Crystal (2003b: 298) speaks of regional accommodation, pointing out that this phenomenon of convergence of linguistic practices between speakers is common even between speakers of ENL varieties that have different dialects and pronunciations. This aspect shows the wide range of forms and practices that the English language embraces and encompasses worldwide and in light of this, it is really difficult to promote and support a single and universal use of this language.

processes that a natural language goes through when adopted and adapted by its speakers; additionally, it imposes a kind of authority that results as exonormative in relation to English users around the world: it appears hence fundamental that Standard English and the 'native speaker model' of reference be renewed in favour of a more fluid, dynamic, and diversified conceptualisation of English, one that takes into consideration how this language is used globally today (Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 1994, 2003). This is important not only to free ELF users from the oppressing presence of Standard English norms – that, as discussed, are no longer appropriate – but it is especially significant in order to build and raise awareness on the diversified linguistic (and non-linguistic) resources that ELF speakers have at their disposal to effectively communicate through ELF.

1.2.2.1.2 Ownership and appropriation

As mentioned in the previous section, the ideology linked to Standard English and to the 'native speaker model' suggests that correctness and proper language use are determined according to adherence to Standard English and 'native speaker' norms. Accordingly, it is advocated that such uses are "automatically relevant and valid" not only for the varieties of English in which Standard English has developed and has constituted the (educated and) standard norm, but also in those contexts where English is used as an international means of communication (Seidlhofer, 2018: 92). ELF scholars have questioned this model, arguing that it cannot be used as a reference point in ELF contexts, since it does not reflect the diverse and dynamic contexts in which English is used as a global language (Widdowson, 2003: 42-43); as Widdowson (1994: 385) emphasises, "as soon as you accept that English serves the communicative needs of different communities, it follows logically that it must be diverse". This diversity refers to the adoption and adaptation of English by its speakers, where it is shaped according to the communicative context and to the speakers' communicative needs; hence, norms cannot be pre-defined and pre-established, but are negotiated between the participants and according to the context of use, the communicative objectives at stake and the speakers' backgrounds (Kalocsai, 2014: 23; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 1994, 2003, 2012). Accordingly, ELF users cannot be required to

relate to a fixed idea of correctness imposed by an exonormative authority (i.e. Standard English and 'native speaker' norms), but they judge what is effective and appropriate in interaction by negotiating norms and practices with the other participants in the communicative act. As Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2017: 32) highlight,

> what form a message takes to be communicatively effective cannot be determined by how a particular community of addressers and addressees make use of code resources as appropriate to their own contexts of use. The nature of communication cannot be accounted for by describing how a particular community of users communicate.

This suggests that the meaning-making process may be different according to the speakers involved in the communicative act and their backgrounds. Since in ELF contexts people usually come from different communities and make use of their communicative resources differently, notions of correctness and appropriateness may change from one speaker to the other, from one communicative context to another. This entails that it is not possible to refer to a single model of reference, e.g. Standard English and 'native speaker' norms, since ELF communication is fluid and dynamic, comprising diverse linguistic practices and standards (Baker, 2015b; Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Widdowson, 2012). As Widdowson (2015: 362) points out, "the study of ELF considers variability […] as the variable use of English as *inter*-community communication, as communication *across* communities". Therefore, from an ELF perspective, ELF users can express their identities and cultures through a diversified, complex, flexible, dynamic means of communication, that is adopted, appropriated, and re-shaped to negotiate and co-construct meaning in interaction. As Widdowson (1994: 384) argues, speakers own the language when they "possess it, make it [their] own, bend it to [their] will, assert [themselves] through it rather than simply submit to the dictates of its form". Accordingly, ELF speakers should be encouraged to feel they own their linguistic resources and to use them in order to effectively and appropriately co-construct and achieve mutual understanding. Indeed, "in ELF interaction, the interlocutors cannot depend on shared

linguacultural conventions and so they have to find common ground by developing their own local conventions in flight as it were, as appropriate to their own contexts and purposes" (Widdowson, 2015: 366). According to this view, as will be discussed in Chapter 2, negotiated practices and the co-construction of a 'common ground' are fundamental in ELF communication, since linguistic norms cannot be defined a priori and appropriateness and correctness are to be measured according to the speakers involved, their communicative aim(s) and the context of use.

The importance of negotiation and of the meaning-making process going on in interaction has been highly emphasised in the second phase of ELF research, when ELF scholars went beyond the classification between 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' to point out that ELF communication is peculiar and ELF speakers need to be aware of how to engage in it appropriately and effectively (Seidlhofer, 2012: 397). In the following section, ELF 2 will be outlined, underscoring the significance of negotiation in achieving mutual understanding and the intrinsic diverse and transient nature of ELF interaction. This phase is particularly relevant for the present dissertation because studies on communication strategies, that will be described in more detail in §2.5.3, have considerably increased, laying the foundations for a better understanding of how ELF communication is negotiated in situ.

1.2.2.2 ELF 2

The second phase of ELF research sees a shift from a standpoint where ELF was considered a potential variety to a view where it was seen in its functional use as a linguistic means of communication (Jenkins, 2015: 55-57). As argued above, linguistic practices cannot be established and decided *a priori*, but they respond to the participants' needs in a precise context of use (Dewey, 2009: 60-62). In ELF 2, the attention to negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding becomes a central issue in research: 'ELF 2' studies are hence more concerned with how meaning is co-constructed, how mutual intelligibility is achieved, how misunderstandings and non-understandings are prevented or resolved, and how accommodation strategies and diversified linguistic resources are used in ELF. In

this phase, several studies[10] highlight how the emergent nature of ELF entails the necessity to take into consideration its variability and to go beyond traditional classifications of standard 'norms', of 'variety' and of 'community'; the attention, hence, shifts to the processes underlying ELF communication, such as accommodation and meaning negotiation, and to the diverse and fluid groupings that characterise ELF encounters (Jenkins, 2015: 55).

As Jenkins (2015: 58) emphasises, ELF is considered as a negotiated means of communication through which speakers aim at achieving their communicative goal(s) without focusing primarily on grammatical correctness. In ELF contexts, norms are negotiated, linguistic resources can be variable and, as we have seen, they are not circumscribable to a precise and homogeneous linguistic code, distancing ELF from any classified variety of English (Dewey, 2009: 60-62; Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2009, 2011). The intrinsic fluidity and variability observed in ELF breaks through the notions of 'variety' and 'community' as traditionally defined, resulting in an interest not only in the linguistic realisations of ELF, but also in its communicative and social functions (Baker, 2015b: 92-94; Jenkins, 2015; Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2011: chapter 4).

Consequently, since Standard English (and more generally ENL) norms are inadequate for speakers participating in ELF interactions, and the 'native speaker model' is not appropriate for all the contexts in which ELF is used, the 'community' of reference is questioned as well (Seidlhofer, 2011: 81-88). The traditional notion of 'speech community' – that Hymes (1974: 51) defines as "a community sharing knowledge of rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech. Such sharing comprises knowledge of at least one form of speech, and knowledge also of its patterns of use" – is considered inadequate to account for the diverse and fluid groupings that are formed in ELF contexts, as we will see below. In the following sections, I will discuss two fundamental issues in ELF 2: the importance of negotiation and accommodation in ELF interactions, and the reconceptualization of the concept of 'community' in ELF research.

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[10] See for example Björkman, 2014; Cogo 2009, 2010, 2011; Cogo & Dewey 2012; Dewey, 2009; Hülmbauer 2009, 2013; Kalocsai, 2014; Kaur, 2009a, 2011, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Klimpfinger 2007, 2009; Konakahara, 2012; Mauranen, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2011; Vettorel, 2014.

1.2.2.2.1 Negotiation and accommodation

As was mentioned above, the shift in the second phase of ELF research is clearly directed to understand how ELF practices are applied and constructed during the communicative act, focusing on accommodation and communicative functions of forms rather than on characteristic features, looking at "what the variability of ELF tells us about the communicative and interpersonal functions the observed forms are being used to express" (Seidlhofer, 2009: 49; see also Jenkins, 2015; Jenkins et al., 2011).

Research in the ELF 2 phase has clearly demonstrated that communicative success and effective communication do not depend on conformity to Standard English norms or to pre-established criteria of correctness, but they are influenced by negotiation and accommodation processes in which ELF users co-construct shared understanding and mediate between different linguistic and cultural frames of reference (Seidlhofer, 2018; Mauranen & Ranta, 2009). As Cogo (2012: 99) explains, "research has found that speakers adapt and blend English innovatively and creatively in order to co-construct meaning and ensure understanding"; not only through English, but employing any linguistic resource they have at their disposal. For this reason, studies in ELF 2 have focused on meaning negotiation practices and on the use of communication strategies, in addition to accommodation and other pragmatic moves (e.g. 'code-switching') that are performed in ELF interactions (Cogo, 2012, 2018; Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Cogo & House, 2018). For example, Cogo and Dewey (2012) carried out a paramount study on ELF practices and showed how ELF interactions are complex and dynamic. In addition to a qualitative analysis of innovative lexico-grammatical forms, they also focused on showing "how speakers systematically draw on a range of communicative strategies and underlying language processes that give rise to a considerable degree of linguistic diversity while achieving and maintaining mutual intelligibility" (Cogo & Dewey, 2012: 5).

Hence, in ELF 2, importance is given to the processes underlying ELF communication and to the shift from a focus on form (usually in comparison to ENL norms) towards a deeper understanding of ELF as a variable and functional

use of English and other linguistic resources, that are adapted and shaped to meet the communicative needs of the speakers.

1.2.2.2.2 Going beyond the notion of speech community

A fixed and stable idea of 'speech community' is hardly applicable to ELF communication, because this sociolinguistic notion refers to a community that recognises the use of a certain variety as its official language or as part of its communal identity, while the contexts, settings and purposes in ELF are too broad and too fleeting to be easily and comprehensively included under a single label (Hymes, 1974: 51; Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011: 81-88; Widdowson, 2012, 2015). Orna-Montesinos points out that ELF speakers come into contact "in a *virtual* speech community bound together by its *communicative interest* rather than any conventionally established linguistic, geographical or cultural boundaries" (2018: 34, my emphasis), showing that this label can no longer be applied to ELF contexts. In ELF 2, indeed, the concept of speech community is called into questioned and several attempts to find new categorisations of the idea of 'community' in ELF have started since then.

As mentioned above, in ELF the connection between 'community' and 'language' changes considerably, and it is no longer appropriate to establish a single and fixed relationship between 'one language/language variety' and 'one single community'. ELF contexts are indeed flexible and fluid, hence ELF speakers can no longer be referred to as a single, geographically and linguistically defined 'speech community' (Dewey, 2009: 74-78; Ehrenreich, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2007, 2011). What is 'local' in a certain ELF interaction may not be the same in other contexts; therefore, linguistic and cultural practices cannot be taken for granted, but are situationally determined (Dewey, 2009; Kalocsai, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2007, 2011; Vettorel, 2014). For this reason, ELF researchers have suggested the use of a new framework based on the notion of 'community of practice', that is, "an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations–in short, practices–emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour" (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992: 464; see also Dewey, 2009; Hülmbauer et al.,

2008; Kalocsai, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2007, 2011; Vettorel, 2014). From an ELF perspective, the notion of 'community of practice' can better reflect the communicative use of ELF, since aspects such as meaning negotiation and variability are an intrinsic and fundamental part of communication – a community of practice "is defined simultaneously by its membership and by practice in which that membership engages" (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992: 464; see also Dewey, 2009: 74-78).

The community of practice notion was originally developed by Wenger (1998: 72-85) associating the development of shared communicative practices to the establishment of a community of practice, based on three main factors, i.e. mutual engagement, a joint enterprise and a shared repertoire. In the case of ELF, this means that speakers interact for a joint communicative objective through the use of shared linguistic resources (Dewey, 2009: 74-78; Ehrenreich, 2009; Kalocsai, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2007, 2011; Vettorel, 2014). It is important to underline that one of the core elements of this model is the fact that practices are negotiated in situ and are characteristic of a particular community of practice, they cannot be generalised or taken for granted in other contexts; this framework reflects and respects the very essence of ELF encounters, providing an interesting analytical tool that could account for ELF variability and diversity (Dewey, 2009; Kalocsai, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2007, 2011; Vettorel, 2014).

Even though this model takes into consideration the nature of ELF and can allow for further insights on the processes underlying ELF use and on the ways in which communal and interpersonal dynamics are created through practice, some critical remarks have been made. As Ehrenreich (2009: 134-136) argues, the notion of community of practice does not offer yet a comprehensive model for grouping ELF speakers. First, 'speaking ELF' is too broad and too abstract to serve as a 'joint enterprise', thus it cannot be considered as a working criteria to define a community of practice. Second, one community of practice cannot include all speakers of ELF globally (as would, for example, a speech community with all the speakers of a certain language variety), since it is much smaller in scope, as well as variable; consequently, we would rather have different 'ELF communities of practice' in which linguistic norms and practices could greatly vary from one

another. A comparison between these communities would not be possible, since diverse linguistic uses and varied forms of appropriateness would be negotiated in different contexts, making 'ELF communities of practice' only partially and difficultly comparable. Finally, communities of practice require constant 'mutual engagement', and this would exclude the transient, ad hoc or brief encounters that ELF speakers experience, for example when talking to people in a restaurant, or when meeting a business partner only for a single contract, or subjects that are asked to do a group experiment once in their lives.

These critical aspects have led researchers to suggest the need to go beyond the idea of 'community' and to focus on the variable and flexible essence of ELF groupings (Jenkins, 2015: 61; Kimura & Canagarajah, 2018: 301; Pitzl, 2018). As mentioned, it is important to distance any conceptualisation of ELF from categories in which norms are in some way pre-established or taken as joint practices *a priori* in order to build on a 'community', since ELF communication is founded on meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding in interaction (Baker, 2015b; Jenkins, 2015; Kimura & Canagarajah, 2018; Pitzl, 2018).

In a further attempt to represent the transient nature of ELF encounters, Pitzl (2018) suggests Transient International Groups (TIGs) as an alternative framework to ELF fleeting grouping, defining them as "groups comprised of multilingual ELF users who interact for a particular purpose at a particular location for a certain amount of time" (2018: 21). These groups are transient in the sense that they are temporary – "a group forms, speakers negotiate and interact, and then the group dissolves again" – and it is international because speakers "come from at least two countries" (Pitzl, 2018: 30; see also Pitzl, 2016). This framework aims at addressing the variable duration and degree of contact among ELF speakers by providing a wider, and thus more inclusive, structure. Moreover, this conceptualisation takes into account not only the multilingual nature of ELF, but also its transcultural essence in going beyond and across traditionally conceived cultural boundaries. TIGs can be characterised on a scale that goes from highly diverse to bilateral, that is, from involving speakers of several different regions/countries to only of two (Pitzl, 2018: 31). Pitzl defines

three criteria that express the degree of diversity or bilateralness of each TIG: "(a) the *languages[11] spoken by individual participants, (b) the countries (or regions) speakers come from (or live in) and (c) the location/nationality of any institutions they represent (if relevant to a particular TIG)". The conceptualisation suggested by Pitzl (2018) comprises fluid linguistic and cultural practices, rejecting clear-cut categorisations of language and culture, acknowledging and researching dynamic and diversified uses. Pitzl conceptualises ELF as "transient language contact" (2018: 32), thus the TIG framework could help address how groupings in ELF are formed and managed by the participants involved in a more flexible and inclusive model (Pitzl, 2018: 53).

As we have seen, ELF research has undergone important turns in its development, from analysing ELF as a variety with regular features, to conceptualising it as a diverse and fluid linguistic resource, to questioning the relevance of Standard English and 'native speaker' norms, to emphasising the importance of negotiation and adaptation of linguistic and cultural practices. In the more recent 'ELF 3' phase, the attention shifts towards the permeability of languages and the intrinsic multilingual nature of ELF, addressing the intermingling of linguistic resources in ELF communication. This perspective lays the foundation of the combined framework that will be presented in §1.4, since ELF Transcultural Communication is based on the conceptualisation of language and culture as complex, permeable, and dynamic systems that emerge and evolve in communication. Before analysing how Intercultural Communication studies have developed and how the concept of culture has been theorised, we will look at how ELF research has recently conceptualised language and communication and how these aspects are fundamental in theorising a joint framework comprising ELF and Intercultural Communication research.

1.2.2.3 ELF 3

While in 'ELF 1' and 'ELF 2' phases the interest in the use of different languages by ELF speakers had already surfaced, these resources were frequently viewed as

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[11] Pitzl (2018: 8) explains that she uses the asterisk to show critical distance from a static perspective on languages and to underscore the "non-boundedness" of individual languages.

'code-switches' from one language to the other (Cogo, 2016, 2018; Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2018). In the third phase of ELF research the multilingual dimension of ELF communication comes to be prominent and seen as part of its very essence: the use of English in combination with other languages is placed on a continuum, and Jenkins (2015: 63, 77) suggests that the paradigm should shift from one where English is the reference point in ELF to one where multilingualism is seen as the main framework in ELF practices. For this reason, she calls for a new paradigm for the field, pointing to the need to take into consideration the multilingual manifestations that emerge in ELF: ELF can no longer be conceived as communication in English where multilingual practices can manifest themselves as well, but has rather to be regarded as part of multilingualism in itself (Jenkins, 2015: 63). From this perspective, English is defined as a Multilingua Franca, that is,

> multilingual communication in which English is available as a contact language of choice, but is not necessarily chosen. In other words, English as a Multilingua Franca refers to multilingual communicative settings in which English is known to everyone present, and is therefore *always potentially 'in the mix'*, regardless of whether or not, and how much, it is actually used. (Jenkins, 2015: 73-74, italics in the original)

Following from this definition, Jenkins questions how 'repertoires' and 'multilingual practices' are to be considered in ELF, since this renovated perspective would cast a totally new light on the relationship between ELF and multilingualism, where 'English' is one of the resources at the speakers' disposal, but not the only one. This reconceptualization of multilingualism is related to languages seen as permeable and complex systems, continuously evolving through practice, as will be seen in the next section.

1.2.2.3.1 Multilingualism and the permeability of language

Following from Jenkins' call for re-theorising ELF in its multilingual essence, other researchers have suggested the need to include a more permeable vision on languages in ELF communication, highlighting the idea that languages and

linguistic practices are emergent and fluid in interaction, that is, they emerge in communication in changeable and dynamic forms and practices (Cogo, 2018: 362-363; Hülmbauer, 2016: 195). ELF research stems from the diversification and hybridity that have transformed English; the emergent linguistic and cultural elements that come into play in interaction show the complexity and fluidity of ELF contexts where, and in the ways through which, speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds negotiate meaning. ELF speakers' linguistic resources cannot be confined in fixed categorisations, since they are built on a continuous flux of negotiated practices (Hülmbauer, 2016: 200). According to this perspective, ELF communication creates a space where practices and meanings are negotiated, combined and merged, by continuously constructing, de-constructing and negotiating language norms and cultural practices (Hülmbauer, 2016: 199-201). As Hülmbauer explains, the complex reality resulting from globalisation has produced a high degree of diversity especially when dealing with ELF communication, since it is "a site of language contact" (2016: 197) where using different languages means taking advantage of all the fluid and flexible linguistic resources available. In this respect, Cenoz (2013: 11-13) highlights that the repertoire of a speaker includes all the linguistic resources at his/her disposal, and when speakers are multilingual, this means that their repertoire becomes wider, cutting across languages. As Cogo (2018: 363) states, ELF speakers go beyond static and bounded separations of 'language' and use whatever linguistic resource they deem appropriate, freely and fluidly:

> the notion of repertoire of the individual speakers takes centre stage. This notion is important for ELF research as if it moves away from an emphasis on the L1 of speakers to the whole repertoire of sociolinguistic and cultural resources participants may bring into the exchange, which may include languages that participants have learnt or encountered in their lives, which they may know or use at different proficiency levels, but are available as resources together with their L1 in their repertoire.

Consequently, especially from an ELF standpoint, "thinking in terms of repertoires also involves a shift of perspective away from binary categories such

as mono- and multilingualism towards a continuum of linguistic diversity and an acknowledgement of language knowledge and usage as being inherently flexible" (Hülmbauer, 2016: 195).

In this phase, early definitions of multilingualism referring simply to the use of different languages have been substituted by a more fluid and dynamic view of linguistic resources (Cogo, 2018: 358). ELF scholars recently suggest referring to paradigms such as 'translanguaging', that emphasises the permeability, fluidity and complexity of languages used both by individuals and communities (see Cogo, 2018; García, 2014; García & Wei, 2014), or 'translingual practices', to refer to "the ability to merge different language resources in situated interactions for new meaning construction" (Canagarajah, 2013: 2). As Kimura and Canagarajah (2018: 295) underscore,

> moving beyond the notion of multilingualism as a collection of discrete language systems, the translingual orientation offers a more integrated and nuanced way of understanding how people communicate. Without assuming the need for shared norms for communicative success, the translingual orientation attends to negotiation practices and diverse semiotic resources.

This is also reflected in the nature of ELF communication, based on the fluid use of multiple resources that cannot be confined within stable categories, but that follow the negotiated and co-constructed flow of interaction (Kimura & Canagarajah, 2018: 297). This is closely connected to the shift towards a more translingual approach in the ELF 3 phase, where not only sharedness of linguistic means and resources is foregrounded as fundamental, but where linguistic diversity and fluidity are seen as essential core elements of ELF communication (Baker, 2015b; Jenkins, 2015; Kimura & Canagarajah, 2018: 297-301). Hence, Different languages are no longer seen as separate and fixed systems that are used as additional resources in ELF communication; on the contrary, languages are conceived of as permeable entities that influence each other and that are dynamically and fluidly used in communication (Cogo, 2018). Translanguaging in particular focuses on the multilingual repertoire of the speaker instead of the single different languages linked to different geographical locations (countries,

regions, cities, and so on), adopting a more holistic view on the linguistic resources an individual has at his/her disposal. As Cogo (2018: 357) underscores, though, multilingualism in ELF does not exclude neither a view of languages related to different places, nor a perspective of language as flexible and fluid practice: in addition to the analysis of the use of different languages as separate entities, it also embraces the view according to which languages intermingle as part of the speaker's repertoire and affect and shape the speaker's linguistic choices in communication.

This perspective is the one adopted in the present study: ELF communication incorporates both a perspective in which different languages are seen as separate linguistic resources *and* a standpoint in which languages mutually influence each other as part of the speakers' repertoires.[12] Consequently, it is important to discuss how the concept of language has been reconceptualised to embrace the permeability of language. In particular, the adoption of Complexity Theory as the backdrop of the new theorising of language as a complex system will be discussed, pointing out how language emerges in communication, always evolving and changing through its use.

1.2.2.3.2 Language as a complex system

As pointed out in the previous sections, Standard English norms and the 'native speaker' model cannot be taken as a reference point in ELF communication. Indeed, in ELF, norms are negotiated during interactions and depend on the participants involved, who establish through and in interaction what is appropriate and what is effective according to their communicative needs. Moreover, the negotiation of shared linguistic resources takes place between speakers of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, hence, referring to the external authority of an abstract 'native speaker' is not relevant in ELF contexts (Jenkins, 2015; Widdowson, 2012). As illustrated above, in addition to this shift away from adherence to exonormative language standards, ELF research has moved towards

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[12] In §2.5.3.2, the use of multilingual resources will be discussed in more detail, pointing out the co-existence of underlying and diverse linguistic influences together with a more explicit use of different languages seen as separate systems.

a multilingual stance, where English intertwines with other languages and resources (Baird et al., 2014; Jenkins, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Widdowson, 2012). In this respect, in order to account for the complexity and dynamism of ELF communication, it has been suggested that language has to be conceptualised as an emergent entity that is flexible and continuously in flux (Baird, 2012; Baird et al., 2014; Baker, 2011, 2015b; Jenkins, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2016, 2018; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Widdowson, 2012, 2015). Accordingly, conceptualisations of language in ELF have to take into account the diversified, complex and emergent ways in which speakers use ELF, trying to "embody the arbitrary, varied, and indefinite ways in which people endow communicative acts with various situational meanings" (Baird et al., 2014: 175; Jenkins, 2015).

In light of these considerations, Complexity Theory is suggested as a metatheory for language in the sense that it can provide an overall open system in which different theories can be encoded to account for the concrete and diverse manifestations of language use (Baird et al., 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2016, 2018). As Larsen-Freeman (2018: 53) explains,

> CT [Complexity Theory] is a metatheory of and for our times. Its influence has extended beyond its point of origin. It offers a system-based, non-reductionist way of thinking. It seeks patterns in the flux of performance, while maintaining stability through reciprocal causality. It insists on the importance of interconnectedness and of perpetual dynamism within a context. It recognizes the nonlinearity of change. It offers a metalanguage that encodes these notions and connects a variety of phenomena. Indeed, because of its defining characteristics – continuing variation, its situatedness, and its novelty, ELF is one of these phenomena. The study of ELF has contributed to our rethinking the nature of language and thus encouraging a view of language, consonant with CT, that of language as a complex adaptive system.[13]

According to this standpoint, Complexity Theory offers an emergent perspective on communication and conceives language as a complex adaptive system, open

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[13] See also Seidlhofer (2011), Mauranen (2012), Hülmbauer (2013), Baird et al. (2014).

and variable, context-based and emerging through practice (Larsen-Freeman, 2016, 2018).

A central aspect of this conceptualisation is emergence, that is, "the spontaneous creation of new patterns that arise in a system when components of the system interact" (Larsen-Freeman, 2016: 18). Emergence relates to the fact that meaning is given to a system not only accounting for the sum of its components, but also depending on the interaction of the parts with each other (Baird et al., 2014: 179-181; Larsen-Freeman, 2018: 52). Therefore, language as a complex system cannot be understood only by breaking it down in processes and forms, participants and contexts, because the overarching meaning results from the interaction among these elements and the product consists of the patterns that develop from the interaction of the parts (Baird et al., 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2018).

Emergence is a continuous process in which linguistic practices constantly change and are adapted through interaction; it is directly related to the relevance of context, that influences and is influenced by the interaction and by the linguistic practices that emerge through a continuous process of adaptation in interaction (Larsen-Freeman, 2016: 18-20). As Larsen-Freeman (2016: 19) explains, "the adaptation to a context includes the process of co-adaptation in which each individual in an interaction adapts to, not necessarily converging with, the language of another, with each response constructing a feedback loop between participants". As ELF research has shown, too, context is fundamental to understand how language manifests itself, since meanings depend on the context of use and mutual understanding cannot occur without the comprehension of the different levels in which communication operates and takes place (Baird et al., 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006; Widdowson, 1998, 2015). Another core element for understanding language as a complex system is its being open and variable. It is open as it is a continuous "flow of new information, energy, or material (depending on the type of system), constantly in process, and consequently, never fixed" (Larsen-Freeman, 2016: 19). This entails that language changes through practice and it cannot hence be categorised as a bounded and stable entity. In addition, language is variable and dynamic because it is

constructed in context through a continuous and fluid interplay between language users and context (Larsen-Freeman, 2016: 19-20, 2018).

ELF communication reflects this conceptualisation of language as a complex, open, emergent and variable system, where forms and functions intertwine and continue to evolve and change, never fossilising in prescriptive norms (Baird et al., 2014; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Larsen-Freeman, 2016, 2018). Consequently, ELF research conceives norms as negotiated and changeable practices that surface in interaction, depending on the context and on the participants involved and not relying on an external authority (Widdowson, 2012, 2015). Since ELF is fluid and dynamic, continuously negotiated and co-constructed in interaction, a Complexity Theory perspective allows for a more complex and comprehensive account of the diversity and fluidity of norms and practices in ELF communication (Baird et al., 2014; Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011).

ELF 1	ELF 2	ELF 3
Standard English called into question	Importance of negotiation and accommodation processes	Multilingual practices and language as a permeable system
Ownership and appropriation of the English language	New categorisations of the concept of 'community'	Language as a complex system that emerges in interaction

Table 1: Summary of the three phases of ELF.

As summarised in Table 1, ELF research can be divided into three main phases, following Jenkins' (2015) suggestion. During early studies on this phenomenon, ELF research focused on challenging the traditional concepts of 'Standard English' and 'native speaker': it called into question what was taken for granted as being appropriate and correct with reference to Standard English and consequently applied in every context where English was spoken or learnt; similarly, the 'native speaker' model was no longer deemed suitable as a reference point, since it was an abstract and ideal conceptualization. In turn, ELF promoted

a more relative and negotiated theorising of appropriateness and correctness in ELF interactions, suggesting they depend on the communicative context and the participants involved, not on an exonomative authority. In ELF 2, ELF scholars were more concerned on the processes underlying ELF use and concentrated on analysing how meaning and practices are negotiated and established in situ. Moreover, the traditional notion of 'speech community' was deem unsuitable to be applied to ELF interactions, thus new attempts to define the concept of 'community' in ELF started to be made (e.g. community of practice and, more recently, Transient International Group). Finally, in ELF 3, researchers focused on the permeability of languages and on the multilingual practices frequently observed in ELF, suggesting that multilingualism is a fundamentally intrinsic aspect of ELF. Similarly, the concept of 'language' is also re-examined adopting a Complexity Theory perspective, thus remarking its complex and emergent nature as an adaptive system.

As outlined in the previous sections, ELF embraces dynamic and variable uses of English by speakers who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and who communicate in contexts where the linguistic and cultural frames of reference cannot be defined and set a priori, but need to be negotiated in situ (Seidlhofer, 2011: 81; see also Chapter 2). In addition to the linguistic dimension of ELF, ELF scholars have always taken into account the cultural and intercultural aspects that are part of ELF communication, conceptualising them as negotiated practices that go beyond national and geographical cultures (Baker, 2015b, 2018a, 2018b; Jenkins, 2015). For this reason, and given that ELF contexts are intercultural by definition, Intercultural Communication studies can offer a conceptual framework that can enrich and deepen the understanding of ELF intercultural encounters, as will be discussed in the following sections.

1.3 Intercultural Communication research

As was discussed in the previous sections, ELF is the use of English as a means of communication between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and choose English as a common resource for communication. ELF does not relate to any particular variety of English or to any

Anglophone culture, instead, it is used to express different identities and cultures in intercultural contexts. Therefore, since ELF settings comprise by definition speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural norms and practices, ELF is intercultural in itself (Baker, 2015b: 43). For this reason, it is important to look at ELF within the framework of Intercultural Communication research as well, to better understand the processes that underlie the intercultural dynamics of ELF communication. In the following sections the development of Intercultural Communication studies will be first outlined, discussing the complex and multifaceted nature of the concept of culture and how it has been conceptualised in this field of research. Finally, different theorisations of culture will be illustrated in relation to the paradigms that have been developed in Intercultural Communication studies.

1.3.1 The development of Intercultural Communication studies

Starting from the 1930s, Intercultural Communication studies have developed as a complex and highly diversified field, with different approaches to the theorisation and analysis of culture. According to Piller (2011: 19), the focus on what is cultural and on cultural differences started "as part of processes of colonialism", when the discovery of different territories and peoples called for the addressing of the 'other' in different aspects of human activities, especially cultural practices. As Hua (2016a: 3) explains,

> Intercultural Communication as a field of enquiry is concerned with how people from different "cultural" backgrounds interact with each other and negotiate "cultural" or linguistic differences perceived or made relevant through interactions, as well as the impact such interactions have on group relations and on individuals' identities, attitudes and behaviors.

Intercultural Communication studies focus not only on the concept of culture, but also on its relation to communication and on the process of meaning creation, by analysing how culture emerges in interaction through the speakers' practices (Chen, 2017: 4). Although several scholars have tried to suggest a comprehensive definition of culture, when analysed in communication, it has been acknowledged

that this concept is too broad and too complex to be categorised into fixed and stable features (Baker, 2015b). Nonetheless, it is important to outline how the meaning of the word 'culture' has changed through time to understand its conceptualisation in recent Intercultural Communication research. Before doing so, though, it is important to remark some limitations that have been applied to the discussion of culture and Intercultural Communication studies in the present dissertation.

As pointed out, and will be better discussed in the following sections, culture as a concept is too broad to be completely embraced in any explanation. It is so entrenched in how people live, think and communicate that according to the theoretical approach one follows it can, and does, regard any aspect of our life. Moreover, any academic debate on the issue of what culture is and what intercultural communication relates to is bound to be partial, since 'culture' cannot be fully grasped in any theoretical framework and thus reference to this concept in research will always be partial. As a matter of fact, several perspectives have been adopted to account for the diverse realisations culture can have and numerous approaches have been developed to try and organise culture into one or more categories. In the present study, where one of the research aims is to combine ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies, culture will be presented as a heterogeneous entity that changes and evolves in interaction, and its analysis will be limited to the linguistic and cultural practices that emerge from communication. For this reason, the studies and theoretical approaches presented in the following sections will be focused on the understanding of the concept of culture as a wide, heterogeneous, evolving and intrinsically intertwined with communication system, and a predominantly linguistic-related perspective will be adopted in presenting the developments of Intercultural Communication research.

Culture: an evolving concept

As Delanoy (2020: 17) remarks, "any attempt to capture the dynamics of the notions of culture in circulation – both in everyday discourse and in scholarly debates – can only be selective and subject to limitations". As a matter of fact, the definition of the concept of 'culture' has varied throughout the history of

Intercultural Communication research, depending on theoretical advancements in the field, on the interdisciplinary nature that cultural studies have acquired more recently, and on the social and historical changes that societies all around the world have gone through. Moreover, the term has developed an everyday use that can move away from what it refers to in academic discourse, one that dictionaries may enclose in their entries as 'the way of life, the customs, and the beliefs of a particular social group'. Consequently, numerous scholars have agreed on the difficulty and complexity of defining what culture is and what it means to study intercultural communication (Delanoy, 2020; Ten Thije, 2020; Piller, 2011, just to mention a few). In order to understand how Intercultural Communication studies have developed and how they can inform ELF research to work within a combined perspective, it is fundamental to discuss how 'culture' has been conceptualised and how Intercultural Communication studies have evolved.

The original Latin denotation of culture, *colere*, was 'human intervention in agriculture', and from the 16th century, "this meaning was metaphorically extended to human growth, specifically aesthetic, spiritual and intellectual development" (Piller, 2011: 20). This meant that culture was seen as the open-ended development of humanity towards perfection and was conceived as a universal collective system (Delanoy, 2020). Conversely, from the late 18th century, culture came to be conceived of as a pluralistic entity, pointing to different practices that became directly connected to different nations and thus to different peoples, associating macro-structures of behaviours and beliefs to a whole (geographic) community; culture came to be seen as "the specific and variable cultures of different nations and periods, but also the specific and variable cultures of social economic groups within a nation" (Williams, 1983: 89 quoted in Piller, 2011: 20; see also Baker, 2015b; Kramsch, 1998; Risager, 2007, 2012). Early anthropology suggested that 'culture' and 'nation' were two intrinsically connected entities, and this view shaped the assumption that a community was to be defined as a homogeneous group of people who lived inside the geographical boundaries of its nation state (Delanoy, 2020). As a matter of fact, the idea of a homogenous nation/community was linked to the idea of homogenous practices that corresponded to a homogenous culture in that

particular area (Martin et al., 2012: 18-21; Piller, 2011). Following from this perspective, culture was defined as a "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871: 1 quoted in Piller, 2011: 21). This conceptualisation of culture has had two main theoretical implications. First, it has led to a direct connection between a community, a nation, and a culture, identifying these systems as inextricably bounded and mutually definable. Secondly, the connection to moral, political, and social beliefs created a scale where cultures were evaluated as superior or inferior according to their cultural practices (i.e. beliefs, behaviours, values); this evaluation was usually based on the prejudices and judgements of the (European) colonial powers, who unilaterally proclaimed themselves as 'superior cultures' and therefore felt justified to exert economic control over 'the inferior cultures' (Baker, 2015b; Delanoy, 2020; Piller, 2011: 21-24).

After World War II, the connotation of superiority and inferiority given to peoples according to their cultures was questioned. Numerous factors helped in taking power over the ex-colonial empires: the independence of the ex-colonies, the rising of the Soviet Union as competitor to the USA and the growing economic success of several other countries undermined the cultural, political and economic supremacy of the former colonial empires and cultural differences were no longer judged as practices of superior or inferior cultures, but just as different way-of-life systems (Piller, 2011: 33; Baker, 2015b). From a perspective were cultures were compared and judged according to external (and Western-biased) criteria, cultural relativity came forward, and research focused on how different peoples, and nations, developed their cultures (Baker, 2015b; Piller, 2011). Consequently, research on intercultural communication began to grow, focusing on the relationship, and correspondence, between a people, a nation and a culture, at the same time following a relativist perspective in which cultures were no longer judged according to an evaluative scale but studied separately in their own context (Piller, 2011: 39-40; Risager, 2007, 2012; Sharifian & Jamarani, 2013). This perspective was influenced by the advancing of the notion of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity, according to which different languages encode

cultural and cognitive categories in different ways and this difference determines how people perceive the world around them (Martin et al., 2012: 18; Piller, 2011: 39-40). This hypothesis was developed into a strong version, stating that "culture through language determines thought", and a weak version, saying that language influences how a person thinks (Piller, 2011: 40). The conception according to which the language an individual speaks affects how the mind conceptualises reality has been fundamental in studies on language and culture, and literature on intercultural communication has often assumed an intrinsic relationship between one (national) culture, one nation and one (national) language (Piller, 2011: 47). Intercultural Communication studies on linguistic relativity examined how conceptualisations of culture, language and nation were closely related and how culture, a product of language, was an ideological construct (Baker, 2015b: 58-61; Piller, 2011; Sharifian & Jamarani, 2013). Applying the theoretical conception that equated culture and language to a nation, cultures were studied and compared in order to understand their common or different traits, and to provide insights related to how to deal with people coming from a certain country (Martin et al., 2012; Piller, 2011; Rogers et al., 2002; Sharifian & Jamarani, 2013).

The beginning of Intercultural Communication studies

The expression 'intercultural communication' was first used by E. T. Hall (1959), where he explained not only the importance of language, but also that of non-verbal communication and how they can both differ in cultures (Martin et al., 2012; Piller, 2011; Rogers et al., 2002). As Rogers et al. (2002: 5-7) explain, Hall is considered to be the founding father of Intercultural Communication studies and several were the influences that contributed in developing his conceptualisation of intercultural communication: cultural anthropology for the theories on cultural relativism and on the connection between culture and communication, linguistics through the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity, ethology for its classification of time as formal, informal and technical, and Freud's notion of the unconscious for the acknowledgement of the importance to be aware – and make people aware – of the 'hidden' level in communication, both as to verbal and non-verbal language. Hall (1959: 52) defines culture as "a

mold in which we are all cast, and it controls our daily lives in many unsuspected ways". In his conceptualisation, culture is communication: to analyse culture means to investigate not only verbal language, but also, and above all, nonverbal language. Indeed, people's conscious and unconscious actions and behaviours convey the way in which culture rules over and shapes people's life (Hall & Hall, 1990). The comparison of different practices and behaviours can lead to the definition of a particular culture, through the identification of similarities between people belonging to the same community and differences with people belonging to other groups. Hall emphasises though the "micro-cultural details" that vary over a more general conceptualisation of culture: as Piller (2011: 31) explains, "the basic idea is that people from different cultures – and cultures are usually equated with nations in this paradigm […] – differ in their use of space, their conceptions of time, their ways of using paralinguistic phenomena such as intonation and pitch, and in the ways they move their bodies". As a consequence, Hall's studies focus on characterising (national) cultures according to their conceptualisation of time, space and communicative context.

Another important scholar that has contributed to early studies on intercultural communication is Hofstede (1981, 1997, 2011). He defines culture as "the collective programming of the human mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from those of another. Culture, in this sense, is a system of collectively held values" (Hofstede, 1981: 24). Following this view, culture is a construct that people learn during their life and that determines their behaviours, beliefs, and values. It is the response to external factors that is carried on for generations and that governs each society (Hofstede, 1981). In his early studies, Hofstede analysed over a hundred thousand questionnaires given to workers in multinational organisations, being one of the first researchers to use extensive statistical data to investigate culture (Samovar, Porter & Stefani, 2011). While Hall focused more on behaviours, Hofstede was more interested in values and beliefs (Abrams, 2020). The original model based on this analysis suggested four dimensions in defining cultures: individualism-collectivism, power distance, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1981, 1997). Each dimension represents "an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other

cultures" (Hofstede, 1997: 14). This view lays the foundations of cross-cultural research (that will be discussed in §1.3.2), since culture is based on a national paradigm that identifies some generalised behaviours and beliefs with the culture of a whole homogenous community (Tuleja & Schachner, 2020).

Recent developments

As the outline of the evolving meaning of 'culture' and the early studies on the topic have shown, intercultural communication can be interpreted under several and greatly diversified categorisations, as a holistic process or as a more contingent realisation of practices and behaviours, as beliefs or as actions, and so on. This variety of approaches has also led to seek and use contributions from several other research fields, such as cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, language education, applied linguistics, and many others. Intercultural Communication studies have thus developed through numerous and diverse influences and have become an intrinsically interdisciplinary field of research. It is precisely this rich and diverse nature that has provided the tools and theories to analyse the complexities and dynamics resulting from the intertwining of culture and language (Hua, 2016a: 4). Starting from the 1980s, several approaches have come to be established in order to examine different interpretations of the tight relationship between culture, language and communication (Baker, 2015b: 47-61; Chen, 2017; Martin et al., 2012).

At the beginning of the 21st century, Ting-Toomey (1999: 10) defined culture as "a complex frame of reference that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols, and meanings that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community". This definition points to how complex it is to describe and delimit the notion of culture, since even people belonging to the same community have different cultures and thus share similar patterns to varying degrees. When considering intercultural communication, the scenario is even more complex, since the practices that emerge can be highly diverse given that participants do not belong to the same communities and thus are likely not to share the same frames of reference. This suggests that culture cannot be defined a priori as a set of fixed practices in communication, and cultural norms, that is,

"the collective expectations of what constitute proper or improper behavior in a given situation" (Ting-Toomey, 1999:11), have to be negotiated in situ to reach a shared and co-constructed notion of 'appropriateness' for the participants involved in a specific context of the ongoing interaction.

More recently, Spencer-Oatey (2008: 3) underlines the difficulty to define the concept of 'culture' and suggests to conceive it as

> a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour.

This definition points out some fundamental aspects in the notion of culture, particularly important especially in connection to ELF, as will be discussed in §1.4.1. First, culture is connected to social groups and different social groups entail different cultures (Spencer-Oatey, 2008: 3). A person can be a member of several groups at the same time, e.g. regional groups, national groups, music groups, generational groups, and so on; hence, culture can be at the same time shared and not shared depending on the groups taken into consideration. As Abrams (2020: 10) explains, "culture as a cohesive force helps individuals connect with each other, but at the same time, these individuals have the freedom and flexibility to adhere to shared culture practices in some ways and diverge from them in others". As a matter of fact, culture is shared between individuals, but it may never be the same in two different people belonging to the same group (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009: 15). A second important aspect is that "culture is manifested through co-occurring regularities within the social group" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008: 4). These regularities can regard different aspects: they can be common behaviours, beliefs, or linguistic and non-linguistic practices shared between members. Thirdly, Spencer-Oatey (2008) explains that cultural regularities are present among the members of a particular group to different degrees: some people can display some regularities and others may not, and a comprehensive and complete set of all the group's cultural regularities cannot be achieved. Finally, another significant aspect of Spencer-Oatey's definition is the

fact that culture influences people's beliefs, values, behaviours and linguistic practices, and also their interpretation of other people's cultures, but it does not determine them (2008: 5-6). Even though culture can influence the person's interpretation of the world and how he or she acts, thinks or speaks, it is also true that people grow, change and continue to live new experiences and this continuous evolution makes culture a dynamic and fluid system.

As discussed above and as will be seen in the following sections, recent conceptualisations of culture in Intercultural Communication studies are no longer based only on national cultures and geographical boundaries, but promote a perspective that regard culture as emergent through the speaker's behavioural and linguistic practices (Durant & Shepherd, 2009: 151-154; see also Baker, 2015b; Chen, 2017; Larsen-Freeman, 2016). As already remarked, it should be noted that several paradigms co-exist and some still view culture as a set of shared features within a community, while others prefer a more fluid and dynamic conceptualisation of culture and cultural practices. The following section will focus more closely on the relationship between culture and language and on how Intercultural Communication research has conceptualised culture in communication.

1.3.2 Paradigms in Intercultural Communication studies

As mentioned above, starting from the 1980s, Intercultural Communication studies developed towards a more paradigmatic structure, defining and establishing different approaches to the concept of 'culture'. The dominant approach in early research was the functionalist (or post-positivist) paradigm, where categories and methodologies were influenced by the natural sciences. In this paradigm, culture was treated as a fix entity that corresponds to a nation, and the analysis of intercultural communication was based on the interaction between people coming from different countries (Baldwin, 2017: 25-27; Hua, 2016a: 6-7; Martin et al., 2012: 21). Research under this paradigm compares cultures in order to analyse points of convergence and divergence between them, and usually defines cultural identities and values a priori and over-generalises cultural values and practices to a whole community or nation (Chen, 2015: 6-7). It is important to

note that comparing cultures reflects a cross-cultural approach, since both see cultures as separate entities, characterised by several distinguishable and pre-established features that are independent from interaction and are usually identified with national homogeneous groupings (Baker, 2015b: 21-24).

Starting from the 1990s, the interpretative or constructivist approach developed: "scholars who work from the interpretative paradigm are concerned with understanding the world as enacted through meaningful social activity, as well as describing the subjective, creative communication of individual, usually using qualitative research methods" (Martin et al., 2012: 23). In this approach, culture is seen as a social construction and as an emergent practice in communication that cannot be defined a priori, but that is shown through actions, communication and relationships, and needs to be uncovered and interpreted from inside the context of analysis. Accordingly, cultural norms can be captured through observation and they both affect and are affected by communication. Culture is thus interpretable only in its entirety as the result of observed and contextualised practices emerging in communication (Hua, 2016a: 8). It is important to note that this discursive realisation results in the fact that misunderstandings and communicative problems in intercultural communication are not attributed a priori to cultural differences or to cultural factors, but are analysed and interpreted within their communicative context and depend on the participants' meaning-making processes (Hua, 2016a). This context-dependent, emergent and constructed nature of culture is suitable to the analysis of ELF communication, where cultural practices cannot be defined outside the context where they occur and where meaning-negotiation is a fundamental process underlying communication. Differently from a cross-cultural approach, the interpretative paradigm sees cultures in interaction and is thus addressed as '*inter*cultural communication', emphasising the prefix inter- because "it puts the idea of cultural differences and similarities as changeable and negotiable at the centre of intercultural communication", hence seeing cultures as heterogeneous and dynamic entities that emerge from communication (Baker, 2015b: 21).

In the 1990s, the critical paradigm arose as criticism to some shortcomings of both the positivist and the interpretative paradigms, especially in their absence of

critical analysis towards for example stereotyping, politics or power relations (Martin et al., 2012: 27-29). This paradigm focuses on the relationship between macro contextual forces (historical, political, social, and economic), power and culture, analysing how economy, politics, history, power, race, gender and other forces influence culture and communication and how they affect individual(s') identities and practices (Hua, 2016a: 11-12). From this perspective, culture is seen as a power struggle between powers and ideologies and the aim of the critical approach is to question political, economic, social constructions connected to culture and communication. Moreover, the analysis of macro contexts and situated meanings can provide further insights for the interpretation of the fundamental relationship between culture, communication and power and for the strong opposition to social injustice and inequality (Martin et al., 2012: 27-29; Piller, 2011; Hua, 2016a). As Baker (2015b: 27) explains, in the critical paradigm scholars recognise that it is necessary for Intercultural Communication studies to shift away from a cross-cultural paradigm, and to move beyond an interpretative approach, towards a more comprehensive and critical view of intercultural communication in order to change the status quo created by those in power.

A relatively recent paradigm is the realist (or realism) approach. It arose from criticism towards the constructivist paradigm in its explanatory limitations of the relationship between agency and structure: "the realism paradigm acknowledges both agency of individuals and constraints of social and historical conditions. It accepts that individuals' behaviour is constrained by the parameters of broad societal norms and inherited structures of belief, power, opportunity and so on" (Hua, 2016a: 14; see also Reed, 2005). This perspective hence suggests that Intercultural Communication studies should include both the macro-level and the micro-level of communication, focusing on how society, economy, politics and power relations affect communication as much as individual practices and beliefs. Culture is thus conceived as one component of human activities that influences, and is influenced by, social structures and which cannot be defined through discrete features or patterns; moreover, the main aim of this paradigm is to explain how all these forces interact and interplay in reality and, thus, in communication (Hua, 2016a: 14-16; Reed, 2005).

The paradigms described above can also be categorised according to three main approaches to the analysis of intercultural communication: cross-cultural, intercultural, and transcultural. In the following section this distinction will be discussed, outlining how culture and intercultural communication are conceived in each approach.

1.3.3 From cross-cultural to transcultural communication

As was mentioned in the previous sections, several perspectives can be adopted in Intercultural Communication studies, and depending on which paradigm is chosen, culture is viewed differently. The different paradigms that were described above can also be categorised according to their approach to the analysis of cultures and cultural practices. A cross-cultural perspective characterises most often early studies in intercultural communication and it conceives culture as a fixed and homogeneous system that is shared in a (national) community, while an intercultural approach promotes an analysis of culture in interaction, as constructed and negotiated between the participants in the communicative act; finally, a transcultural approach embraces a conceptualisation of culture as a fluid and emergent system that continuously evolves and it analyses cultural practices across cultures as situated and negotiated.

As Baker (2020b: 2) points out, a cross-cultural approach analyses culture as being fixed and stable, characterised by precise and distinguishable features that are shared by the speakers of a same community, usually on a national basis. Cultural practices are described independently from interaction and from the context where they take place; thus, cultures are defined a priori, by connecting precise and homogeneous features to a certain (national) community, and linking certain cultural practices to a homogeneous group of people. From a cross-cultural approach, cultures are identified and classified according to the country they belong to, that is, people coming from the same country are equally belonging to the same homogeneous culture. For example, the Italian culture is 'attached' to all people being born and living in Italy, without acknowledging the presence of other cultures (even regional cultures would be different from national ones) or that people living in Italy could nonetheless come from different countries or

experience other cultures at home. After characterising the Italian culture according to generalised and pre-defined features, these cultural practices would be compared to those of another culture, namely another country. As Baker (2020a, 2020b) exemplifies in another way, a cross-cultural study would compare Japanese and British greetings identifying similarities and differences between two homogeneous and stable national communities. However, this perspective is restricted because what is analysed is not intercultural communication between two different cultural groups, but intranational communication happening in two different countries (see also Scollon & Scollon, 2001). As outlined above, though, we should be aware that a cross-cultural approach conceives cultures as fixed and static entities; this perspective does not reflect the holistic nature of culture in Intercultural Communication studies (as well as in ELF), that is instead seen as negotiated and constructed in interaction and is thus flexible and continuously in progress (Baker, 2015b, 2020a, 2020b; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019).

In contrast to a cross-cultural viewpoint, an intercultural approach considers cultures as negotiated and constructed in interaction; they are hence analysed in the communicative context in which they are realised (Scollon & Scollon, 2001). As Baker (2020b) explains, an intercultural study would examine how a Japanese person and a British person interact with each other and it would not compare their practices outside that particular interaction. Accordingly, cultures cannot be pre-defined, but are rather dynamic and heterogeneous, constructed in interaction. Moreover, cultures vary between members of the same community, which does not automatically correspond to the national level, but instead is characterised by shared practices constructed and negotiated in communication (Scollon & Scollon, 2001: 545). Following this perspective, members of the same national community can have different and hybrid cultures (e.g. regional, ethnic, gender, generation, occupation, etc.), and their cultural practices can greatly diverge (Baker, 2018a, 2018b).

In turn, recent research in Intercultural Communication has focused on the fluidity and complexity of cultures and on their realisation in communication as 'transcultural'; this approach suggests that cultures cannot be taken for granted and cannot be classified as separate entities, for they transcend cultural boundaries

and fixed categorisations (Baker, 2018a, 2018b; Guilherme & Dietz, 2015). As Baker (2018b) points out (see Table 2), transcultural communication stems from an intercultural approach in the sense that cultures are seen as negotiated and context-bounded entities, but it differs from it for communication does not occur in-between cultures, but across them. As Baker (2020b: 3) explains,

> participants in transcultural communication are seen moving through and across cultural and linguistic boundaries and in the process transcending those boundaries. Therefore, cultural practices and representations can be constructed in situ and, unlike in intercultural communication, participants are not viewed as being 'in-between' any named cultures.

This entails that cultures cannot be classified as being national, regional, or following other static and stable classifications, but are blurred and heterogeneous systems that are negotiated in situ and that transcend boundaries and 'in-betweenness'. As Baker (2018a: 26) suggests, transcultural communication offers a better metaphor to represent communication "across and through rather than between" cultures (see also Baker 2015b). The prefix 'trans' underscores this changed perspective on culture as being defined on a fluid and dynamic continuum, continuously evolving in interaction. As Baker and Sangiamchit (2019: 472) explain,

> transcultural communication, in keeping with trans- perspectives, is characterised here as communication where interactants move through and across, rather than in-between, cultural and linguistic boundaries, thus, 'named' languages and cultures can no longer be taken for granted and in the process borders become blurred, transgressed and transcended.

In other words, the linguistic and cultural resources of an individual cannot be decided outside the interactional context, since it is during the communicative act that they are realised and negotiated. In this perspective, the focus of research hence shifts from a perspective that sees intercultural communication as 'in-between' cultures to a standpoint where cultures are intertwined and mixed,

trespassing borders and pre-established boundaries (Baker, 2015b: 24-25; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019).

As will be discussed in the following sections, this is the perspective that is adopted in the present dissertation, since ELF communication occurs in contexts where cultures and cultural practices are fluid and dynamic, negotiated in situ and thus always evolving in interaction. ELF interactions show that linguistic repertoires and cultural practices are continuously evolving in interaction and that speakers make use of any available resource to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding (Baker, 2015b). In these contexts there is no boundary between language(s) and culture(s), they are placed on a continuum, they are hybrid and emerge through practice in interaction (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019). For these reasons, a joint framework between ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies is suggested to account for the complex and intertwined dimensions of language and culture in ELF Transcultural Communication.

Cross-cultural	Intercultural	Transcultural
The study of the communicative practices of distinct cultural groups independent from interaction (e.g. Chinese communicative practices)	The study of the communicative practices of distinct cultural or other groups in interaction with each other. (e.g. Italians communicating with English)	The study of communicative practices where cultural and linguistic differences are relevant to participants or researchers but not necessarily linked to any particular group
Cultures are seen as discrete, separable entities	Cultures are not bounded entities with fixed national borders, but dynamic with blurred boundaries. Cultures can be adapted and hybrid	Cultural and linguistic boundaries can be transcended and transgressed

Cultures are viewed as relatively homogeneous	Cultures are heterogeneous, containing a great deal of variety among its members	Cultures are heterogeneous and cultural characterisations are contestable
Cultures are viewed at a national level	National cultures are one of many discourse communities which can be drawn upon in communication	National cultures are one of many scales, ranging from the local to the global, and participants move through and across scales rather than in-between
A priori assumption about cultural groupings with participants located within cultures	No a priori assumptions about the discourse communities, cultural or otherwise, that will be drawn on in interaction with participants located in-between adaptable and hybrid cultures	Cultural practices and representations can be constructed in situ and emergent, participants are not in-between any named cultures

Table 2: Baker's (2018b: 22) synthesis of the cross-cultural, intercultural, and transcultural approaches.

1.4 ELF Transcultural Communication

As was pointed out in the previous sections, ELF communication is intercultural by definition, since it involves speakers of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds who interact with each other: Seidlhofer (2011: 81) argues that "in ELF situations, speakers of any kind of English […] need to adjust to the requirements of intercultural communication", while Cogo and Dewey (2012: 23) underline how research in ELF "is intercultural in nature (or maybe better still, transcultural), in that it concerns communication that takes place among speakers from various linguacultural backgrounds". Following such viewpoint, the perspective adopted in the present dissertation links ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies in order to provide a framework in which culture and language mutually influence each other and are critically analysed in

relation to communication. The conceptualisation used to address this standpoint is ELF Transcultural Communication, which underscores the transcultural and translingual approach embraced in relation to language and culture in interaction. Accordingly, as seen in §1.2.2.3.2, a complexity theory approach to language, and to ELF in our case, can provide an adequate critical perspective on language as a complex system and on linguistic practices as emergent and situated in the communicative act (Baird et al., 2014: 181-184; Larsen-Freeman, 2018). This view is also adopted in conceptualising culture as a complex system, in that it is seen not as fixed and pre-determined, but as emerging through negotiated and interactive practices (Baker, 2009, 2015b: 67-71; Larsen-Freeman, 2016). Language and culture are thus regarded as interrelated and emergent systems and their relationship is to be critically examined in context with no pre-established linguistic and cultural norms, questioning and rethinking the traditional relation of 'one language – one culture – one nation' (Baker, 2009, 2015b; Larsen-Freeman, 2016, 2018; Piller, 2011).

1.4.1 Cultures in ELF communication

As discussed in the previous sections, the intercultural dimension is a core element in ELF communication, since speakers do not usually share the same cultural frames of reference and thus negotiate cultural practices in situ with the other participants in the communicative act (Cogo, 2018). Accordingly, the 'cultures' of the speakers involved are not categorised a priori and are not characterised through a fix and stable set of features; in ELF communication culture emerges through practice in interaction and thus it is conceived as a fluid and dynamic system that is negotiated during the communicative act (Baker, 2009).

As discussed in §1.3.2, in Intercultural Communication studies culture is seen as a dynamic and complex system, difficult to define because it regards every aspect of human life, where a comprehensive definition is impossible to obtain (Delanoy, 2020; Piller, 2011; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Moreover, it differs from person to person, because people belong to different social groups and are thus part of different cultural groups, that shape a peculiar and individual cultural system

(Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Similarly, "cultures in ELF should be conceived as liminal, emergent resources that are in a constant state of fluidity and flux between local and global references, creating new practices and forms in each instance of intercultural communication" (Baker, 2009: 568). ELF research has strongly stressed that ELF speakers do not need to refer to any Anglophone culture when interacting with each other, and that the speakers' cultures cannot reduced to any national culture or to pre-established categorisations (Baker, 2015a: 12). ELF users co-construct their frame of reference in situ and in relation to what is relevant and appropriate in that precise communicative context, hence cultural practices and norms are negotiated in communication as much as linguistic forms and practices (Baker, 2009, 2015b). From this perspective, culture, language and communication are strongly related and intertwined in ELF communication, and linguistic and cultural practices are hybrid and fluid, continuously adapting to the communicative needs of the speakers involved (Baker, 2009: 574). The fluid and emergent characterisation of culture in ELF communication promotes a conceptualisation that sees culture as multiple and dynamic, always negotiated and constantly evolving in interaction (Baker, 2015a). In this respect, the notion of culture can no longer be conceived as a representation of nationality, nor as connected to a single language, but it should be "characterised as shared 'systems', in the sense of an emergent complex adaptive system (Larsen-Freeman, 2018) of discourses, practices and ideologies among groups of people" (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019: 472). When conceived as a complex system, culture is to be seen as open and in flux, without pre-established boundaries (Baker, 2015b, 2018a, 2018b; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019). It also changes with time, it is never fixed, and comprises several layers as well as personal and social dimensions; culture is both a fragmented and a shared practice, and cannot be explained through the description of these aspects as singular parts: all dimensions and their mutual relationships need to be taken into account in order to provide a comprehensive image of what culture is (Baker, 2015b: 67-71). Accordingly, cultural practices are situated: they emerge in interaction and thus cannot be defined out of the context(s) in which they take place. Consequently, a comprehensive description of a person's cultural practices

cannot be achieved, since it is part of an emergent and changing system that connects several dimensions and cannot be reduced to any single one of them (Baker, 2015b, 2018a, 2018b; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Delanoy, 2020; Guilherme & Dietz, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2012, 2018).

Following this perspective, it is important to underscore that culture is inherently related to language. As seen in §1.2.2.3.2, language is also to be conceptualised as a complex and dynamic system, that emerges through practice and that highly depends on contextual factors. Being emergent and fluid, language cannot be defined as a stable and permanent category, since it continues to evolve in interaction through the speakers' negotiated and co-constructed practices (Baird et al., 2014: 177-179). Language and culture are two interwoven complex systems that emerge in interaction and they cannot be defined through a simplistic one-to-one relationship: "from a CAS [complex adaptive system] perspective, 'language' and 'culture' are not viewed as entities independent of one another but rather as constantly interacting systems that form networks of overlapping, mutual influence and whose overall functioning is best captured by modelling them as complex adaptive systems" (Frank, 2015: 494; see also Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019). Accordingly, language and culture are conceived of as two interrelated complex systems that are continuously negotiated in interaction and cannot be described or categorised a priori; they emerge through the speakers' linguistic and cultural practices and thus are closely bound to the context in which these practices are performed.

This strong relation between language and culture in ELF communication suggests the importance to understand both the linguistic and the cultural dimensions of ELF. Consequently, as Baker (2015b) points out, ELF should be placed in an Intercultural Communication framework and analysed as intercultural communication. Following this perspective, ELF Transcultural Communication is suggested as the theoretical framework in which this dissertation is placed.

1.4.2 ELF Transcultural Communication: a joint framework

As we have seen in the previous sections, culture and language are to be conceptualised as two complex and fluid systems that are strongly interconnected

with each other and that emerge in interaction. ELF communication is intrinsically intercultural given that it involves speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds and choose English as a common means of communication. We have discussed how English can no longer be conceived of as a single homogeneous variety, and neither can it be connected only to exonormative norms following Standard English criteria and the 'native speaker model'. In addition, the cultural dimension of ELF comprises the different cultural practices of the participants involved, and cannot be referred to any Anglophone culture as the one providing the practices or the norms that guide and inform communication, nor to national cultures that are established a priori. Accordingly, ELF includes linguistic resources that may comprise different varieties of English and different linguistic repertoires, that are fluidly and dynamically used in the communicative act. As intercultural communication, ELF interactions comprise a multifaceted and multidimensional relationship among several and diverse linguistic and cultural practices, that emerge and are negotiated in interaction.

These aspects suggest that the fields of research related to ELF and Intercultural Communication have several points of convergence; as Baker and Sangiamchit (2019: 476) emphasise, "ELF research has dealt with themes of direct relevance to intercultural and transcultural communication research including negotiation, adaptation and hybridity in language and communication; language ideologies and power relationships; and identity, community and culture". Both fields focus on interaction and on "exploring how participants with differing lingua-cultural backgrounds negotiate meaning in intercultural encounters" (Hua, 2016b: 173). They acknowledge the significant role of meaning negotiation and the collaborative process of constructing mutual understanding, emphasising the effective use of the transcultural and translingual resources available to speakers. Even though negotiation is a fundamental aspect for research in both areas, it is important to note that the perspectives on this process are slightly different: Intercultural Communication studies often take misunderstandings and non-understandings that occur due to cultural differences as a starting point, while ELF research focuses on the collaborative nature of the co-construction of mutual understanding and on shared practices (Baker, 2015b: 34-39; Hua, 2016b: 171-

172). Nevertheless, although from different stances, both fields are interested in uncovering how successful communication is achieved and how linguistic and cultural practices are negotiated in interaction. In addition, both fields recognise the fundamental significance of negotiation not only of meaning and practices, but also of identities and cultures, conceiving them as complex systems that emerge in communication and cannot be established as fixed entities (Baker, 2015b: 39-43). Furthermore, another point of convergence is the call for critical insights on traditional conceptualisations of notions such as language and culture, community and norms, that have to be analytically reformulated in a more complex and fluid perspective, one that accounts for the dynamic and diverse nature of intercultural (and lingua franca) communication (Baker, 2015b: 39-43; Hua, 2016b: 172-176). Consequently, ELF research is intrinsically linked to Intercultural Communication studies and by considering them as a joint framework, it is possible to provide a structured and comprehensive theoretical background where all the dynamics of intercultural encounters and the processes characteristic of ELF contexts can be conceptualised and interrelated in an organic system. As mentioned, in order to emphasise this interrelated approach, I will use the expression 'ELF Transcultural Communication', entailing that ELF contexts are inherently translingual and transcultural. Nonetheless, as Baker and Sangiamchit (2019: 473) state, "it is important to stress that adopting a transcultural approach does not entail a rejection of intercultural communication research or even the role of national conceptions of language and culture associated with cross-cultural communication". Reflecting this perspective, ELF Transcultural Communication refers to language and culture as complex systems that emerge in interaction, and, nevertheless, it does not exclude or discard other conceptualisations of language and culture made relevant by the speakers involved: national, regional or community identities as much as national languages and cultures are also important elements in understanding how linguistic and cultural practices are co-constructed and negotiated in interaction. Hence, this conceptualisation aims at providing a comprehensive and (as much as possible) inclusive view on all the forces and categories that inform the speaker's practices in interaction.

1.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have presented the theoretical backdrop of the present dissertation, that is, research in ELF and in Intercultural Communication. It has been discussed how English has become a global language, focusing on the paradigms that have analysed this phenomenon and especially on English as a Lingua Franca. ELF is defined as a means of communication between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds and thus negotiate meaning in situ using the linguistic and cultural resources available to them. Some core issues have been discussed in relation to ELF, focusing on how this field of research has re-conceptualised them. The ideology connected to Standard English and the 'native speaker' reference has been challenged, proving how it is not appropriate and adequate to ELF contexts, and the problematicity of theorising language and culture as bounded entities has been remarked, since they are complex adaptive systems that emerge through practice in interaction. Accordingly, ELF speakers no longer need to refer to exonormative norms and practices, that is, to Standard English norms and 'native speaker' use, but they effectively negotiate appropriate practices in relation to the precise context in which communication take place. From this perspective, the speakers' linguistic and cultural resources emerge in interaction and cannot be defined a priori, for they are fluidly and dynamically constructed and negotiated during the communicative act.

Since ELF communication is intercultural in nature, it is suggested that it should be analysed from a joint perspective between ELF and Intercultural Communication. An overview of the concept of culture has been given, underscoring how this notion has changed through time. The development of research in Intercultural Communication has been outlined, describing how recent studies focus on a transcultural perspective where culture is no longer seen as a homogeneous system connected to a national community, but rather as a dynamic and negotiated set of behaviours, beliefs, and linguistic practices. Similar to recent trends in Intercultural Communication research, it has been discussed how in ELF both language and culture are to be approached as fluid and complex systems that cannot be described as stable entities, but rather need a critical analysis that sees

them as emergent and continuously evolving. Consequently, the conceptualisation ELF Transcultural Communication is suggested in order to provide a comprehensive framework that accounts for both the translingual and transcultural dimensions of ELF.

In Chapter 2, this joint perspective will be further analysed discussing ELF Transcultural Competence and the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts. The focus will shift on the importance of negotiation in ELF Transcultural Communication, also in connection to the concept of 'competence' and the issues it involves. Traditionally it has been linked to Communicative Competence (Hymes, 1972) and to the idea that a competent speaker needs to know how to use a language appropriately in different communicative contexts following a 'native speaker model' of use. In turn, in Intercultural Communication studies Intercultural Communitive Competence (Byram, 1997) has been suggested to provide a model in which both the linguistic and the cultural dimensions are included; however they are still conceived as bounded and fixed entities that are often pre-established at a national level. This standpoint will be challenged when theorising a notion of competence that refers to ELF as a global language and to transcultural practices. A new kind of competence, ELF Transcultural Competence, will be suggested in order to provide a possible model that can account for the dynamic, fluid, emergent and transcultural nature of ELF Transcultural Communication.

CHAPTER 2 –
ELF TRANSCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES IN ELF RESEARCH

As seen in Chapter 1, ELF is used as a common means of communication between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background, being hence intercultural by definition. ELF forms and practices are variable and dynamic, depending on the participants involved and on the context in which communication takes place (Baker, 2015b, 2018a, 2018b). In line with this view, the present dissertation suggests the conceptualisation of ELF Transcultural Communication to address both the translingual and transcultural nature of ELF and the fluidity and variability that characterise it. In ELF Transcultural Communication, language and culture are two intertwined complex adaptive systems that emerge in interaction and cannot be restricted to stable and fixed entities (Baird et al, 2014; Baker, 2015b, 2020a, 2020b; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Larsen-Freeman, 2016, 2018). Consequently, linguistic and cultural practices, as well as a common frame of reference, need to be negotiated and co-constructed in situ: they emerge through and in interaction, and are continuously adapted and influenced according to the communicative goals, the participants involved and the context of the communicative act. In ELF Transcultural Communication it is thus fundamental to be able to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding, since they cannot be based on exonormative norms (i.e. Standard English norms or 'native speaker' uses), but are established in situ through a continuous process of negotiation (Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011).

From this perspective, communication strategies are fundamental tools: they embody different practices that can serve to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding in ELF transcultural contexts, where meanings and understanding cannot be taken for granted. Traditionally, as will be discussed in §2.5.1, communication strategies have been regarded as compensation tools for speakers who were thought to be not competent enough in speaking a language

(Dörnyei & Scott, 1997); within this perspective, being competent meant to acquire a Communicative Competence that was 'native-like', that is, that adheres both in linguistic practices and cultural references to the norms and uses of the 'native speakers' (Canale & Swain, 1980; Chomsky, 1965; Hymes, 1972). In ELF, however, 'competence' cannot be measured against the 'native speaker', nor against linguistic and cultural practices based on an Anglophone dimension; instead, it needs to take into consideration the highly variable and fluid linguistic and cultural contexts of ELF communication, the complexity and emergence of linguistic and cultural practices, and how appropriateness and effectiveness depend on the context of the communicative act (Baker, 2012, 2015b, 2020a, 2020b; Leung, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003, 2012, 2015). As will be discussed in this chapter, the conceptualisation of 'competence' in ELF communication needs to go beyond the notion of Communicative Competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972) suggested in Linguistics studies, and that of Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram, 1997) advocated in Intercultural Communication research, since both theorisations refer to an ideal 'native speaker' and conceive (Intercultural) Communicative Competence as a static frame that delineates a speaker's ability to speak and act in communication (Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003). As a matter of fact, in the present dissertation the term 'competencies for communication' will be preferred as a general expression to refer to the kind of skills and abilities that are necessary to appropriately and effectively reach successful communication. This terminological choice aims at remarking the theoretical distancing of ELF Transcultural Communication from traditional models of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence: as will be discussed in the following sections, these frameworks are no longer appropriate to account for the fluid and dynamic linguistic and cultural dimensions of ELF communication, thus it is essential to move away from such theorisations to adopt a more fitting notion of competencies for communication. In order to account for the translingual and transcultural nature of ELF and for the fundamental importance of negotiation in ELF contexts, in the present dissertation a new conceptualisation is also suggested, namely 'ELF Transcultural Competence'.

This model stems from Kohn's (2016b) ELF Competence and Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness and takes into consideration the fluidity and variability of ELF linguistic and cultural practices, together with the central role of negotiation in ELF interactions.

According to this standpoint, communication strategies are no longer conceived as compensation tools, but they are seen as playing an active role in negotiating meaning and in co-constructing mutual understanding. In this chapter, first the importance of negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding will be discussed, delineating a preliminary definition of competent speaker in ELF contexts. Successively, models of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence from literature will be outlined, highlighting their limits and the reconceptualization of such models as promoted in ELF research. The new framework suggested here, that of ELF Transcultural Competence, will be described at length in order to offer a clear overview of what is needed in ELF Transcultural Communication. Finally, research literature on communication strategies will be illustrated to understand how they have been studied from a Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) perspective, and how they have come to be considered as tools actively used in ELF research.

2.1 Negotiation and understanding in ELF transcultural contexts

As discussed in Chapter 1, ELF Transcultural Communication refers to those contexts where English, together with other multilingual resources, is used as a common means of communication to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background. In these interactions it is important to construct a shared frame of reference since the linguistic and cultural meanings conveyed in communication are not unilaterally and inseparably linked to a precise linguistic and cultural framework, but need to be negotiated and jointly established by the participants (Baker, 2015b: 95). As Cogo and Dewey (2012: 44-46) argue, "shared knowledge and common ground cannot be assumed in ELF because drawing on information such as the community membership of the speakers is not necessarily a reliable way to achieve understanding when communities tend to be so diverse and fluid".

As illustrated in §1.4, the link between language, culture, and nation is strongly questionable in ELF Transcultural Communication, and thus preconceived and stable notions of linguistic and cultural affiliation are to be rejected in favour of emergent practices and fluid identities, that are to be seen as evolving even during a given ongoing interaction (Baker, 2015b, 2020b). This is also why the notion of a native speaker of any variety of English is not applicable in ELF contexts and cannot serve as a referential model for linguistic forms and cultural practices, since the repertoires that merge in ELF Transcultural Communication are greatly diversified and dynamic and thus do not refer to a single stable system (Baker, 2015b; Leung, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003, 2012, 2015). Consequently, ELF speakers need to develop the ability to strategically manage communication in order to negotiate meaning and co-construct shared understanding in contexts where these cannot be taken for granted, and this ability is closely linked to the use of communication strategies as tools to create and negotiate shared common ground.

As already mentioned, what is fundamental in ELF Transcultural Communication is the active and joint negotiation of linguistic and cultural practices and frames of reference that goes on in interaction, since speakers do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and common ground cannot be taken for granted. As highlighted by Cogo and Dewey (2012: 137), "meaning does not reside in the linguistic forms themselves, but rather in the mutual negotiation involved in their selection and manipulation". Their study shows that ELF speakers proactively engage in meaning negotiation and in the co-construction of shared understanding through the use of all the resources (linguistic and non-linguistic) available to them. This is directly related to the active use of communication strategies in interaction as tools to build and negotiate mutual understanding and thus reach successful communication: as Vettorel (2019: 181) highlights, "in ELF, CSs [communication strategies] can […] be seen as part of the resources ELF speakers strategically use to fulfil their communication needs in interaction". The use of communication strategies thus becomes paramount in ELF Transcultural Communication since meaning is formed through active negotiation.

Following this view, meaning negotiation is not considered from a 'problem-solving' perspective, that is, negotiation is not performed only as a process to prevent or to solve a communicative problem, as it was in traditional approaches to the study of negotiation and communication strategies in Linguistics and SLA research (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; see §2.5). Instead, it is conceived of as an active and joint process that creates communication and mutual understanding, as part of the meaning-making process itself. This standpoint does not exclude the fact that negotiation tools are also used to prevent and solve communicative problems, but it underscores the creative force of this process: through negotiation ELF speakers co-construct a shared linguistic and cultural frame of reference in a context in which it cannot be taken for granted nor decided a priori. As Hua (2015: 64) argues,

> in interactions involving speakers of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, Negotiation[14] is not limited to the understanding of meaning, linguistic or otherwise. […] It is the most important means of engagement in intercultural and lingua franca communication in which participants work collaboratively towards making sense of ongoing interactions and making contributions. Negotiation is the very mechanism that enables participants in intercultural and lingua franca communication to employ, mobilise, or manipulate diverse resources to achieve their goals of interaction.

Hence, meaning negotiation is seen as a comprehensive holistic process of communication construction and management, and communication strategies are the tools through which this process is enacted in interaction. As Hua (2015) highlights, this process is jointly managed, since it is the result of a continuous cooperation between all the participants involved in the interaction.

ELF Transcultural Communication is thus founded on a negotiated, emergent and fluid framework of reference that is continuously developed through negotiation, accommodation and mediation processes. According to this viewpoint, as Cogo

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[14] Hua (2015: 64) distinguishes between 'negotiation' and 'Negotiation', defining the former as "an activity type such as in business negotiation", while the latter refers to the process of meaning negotiation as analysed in the present dissertation.

and Dewey (2012: 45) explain, "understanding is […] seen as a process by which participants engage in building common ground or joint knowledge, rather than taking these for granted". Therefore, also in agreement with what Hua states above, understanding is to be considered a cooperative process in which all participants play an active role: "when we interact with others in different situations, achieving shared understanding is a joint, dynamic, and interactive process that participants continuously engage in and work toward" (Cogo & Pitzl, 2016: 339).

It is no longer the case that the listener is the only one responsible for understanding what the speaker means, but both are accountable for co-constructing and reaching shared understanding (Cogo & Dewey, 2012: 45). Similarly, Kaur (2009: 40) underscores that "understanding is perceived as an interactional achievement, the result of collaboration and negotiation between speaker and recipient in interaction", but "neither the sole responsibility of the recipient nor that of the speaker" since it is "a joint endeavour". From this view, in ELF understanding is jointly achieved by all the participants to the interaction and it is continuously co-constructed and negotiated in the ongoing communicative act.

In addition to being cooperatively achieved, understanding is a process that is to be considered as scaled: understanding and non-understanding are situated at the two ends of a continuum and they can always be defined according to a degree of comprehension (Kaur, 2009: Chapter 3). Communication is thus characterised by degrees of understanding that swing between full comprehension, non-understanding and misunderstanding; communication and miscommunication are both part of the communicative process and the successful outcome of the interaction can be measured only emically or, in other words, according to the participants' points of view in that particular communicative context (Kaur, 2009: 20; Pitzl, 2010: 18-21; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006: 153). Consequently, linguistic and cultural differences or similarities cannot be marked as problematic or not a priori, since only ongoing interaction can show if, and to which degree, such aspects influence and affect communication (Baker, 2015b; Hua, 2015; Kaur, 2016b).

According to this standpoint, negotiation of linguistic and cultural norms and practices is performed in situ and thus can be associated only to that particular communicative context. Moreover, as mentioned in the first chapter, successful communication means to achieve the participants' communicative goals effectively and appropriately, that is, by means of linguistic and cultural practices that allow the speakers to reach their communicative purpose(s) successfully through the adoption of linguistic and cultural norms negotiated in the act, and thus considered suitable by the participants involved. Appropriateness and effectiveness are thus to be measured according to the context in which the interaction takes place and the participants involved, and their definitions cannot be extended a priori to other communicative acts and contexts or different interlocutors. As a result, ELF Transcultural Communication can be characterised only referring to a precise communicative act, to specific speakers and to a particular communicative context, where context refers "very generally to the extra-linguistic circumstances in which language is produced as a text, and to which the text is related" or, in other words, to "those extra-linguistic features that are recognized by the language user as relevant in that they key into text to achieve communication" (Widdowson, 2020: 8-9). The communicative context of an interaction can determine, or at least greatly influence, how the communicative act unfolds and how the speakers make use of their linguistic and non-linguistic resources (e.g. Kramsch, 1993); elements related to context can include the place(s) where a communicative act takes place (e.g. a pub in Sweden) or the power relations existing between the participants involved (e.g. supervisor-supervised), as well as all those aspects that are not necessarily expressed through language, but nevertheless affect how the interaction unfolds and how participants negotiate and co-construct mutual understanding.

In the present dissertation, I suggest that in ELF Transcultural Communication what a speaker needs to develop and put into practice is ELF Transcultural Competence, that accounts for the dynamic and fluid nature of ELF, the transcultural dimension of these contexts, as well as the importance to be able to strategically manage the interaction and to negotiate meaning. Indeed, as discussed above, meaning negotiation and co-construction of shared

understanding are fundamental processes in ELF Transcultural Communication and thus it is essential for a speaker to be familiar with tools that can support effective management of interactions through negotiation in order to be able to effectively and appropriately reach successful communication. Negotiation is enacted through the use of communication strategies, that are tools participants perform to establish a shared frame of reference and achieve mutual understanding. Moreover, as will be further discussed in the following sections, ELF Transcultural Competence includes production and comprehension skills connected to the diversified and numerous manifestations of the English language, also comprising a flexible conceptualisation of language and culture as discussed in Chapter 1. One of the main focuses of this framework is the importance to raise awareness of diversity and variability and of the relevance of negotiation processes to reach mutual understanding in ELF interactions.

These aspects are highly challenging when considered against traditional models of Communicative Competence (as theorised by Hymes, 1972, or Canale and Swain, 1980), which are based on the 'native speaker' and regard this ideal construct as their reference point. According to this view, communication strategies are seen as compensation tools used to make up for a lack of linguistic knowledge and adherence to a stable and fixed 'native speaker' model, which determines what is correct and appropriate both from a linguistic and a cultural point of view in all contexts (e.g. Canale & Swain, 1980; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Widdowson, 2003). Similarly, even when the intercultural dimension is taken into consideration in Intercultural Communication studies – for instance Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997) model, the dynamic and fluid approach to language and culture that is inherent in ELF Transcultural Communication is not considered, and neither are communication strategies seen as pro-active resources, still following a compensation-oriented perspective.

In ELF research this perspective has been challenged and re-theorised following more dynamic models and approaches to language and language use, and communication strategies have been acknowledged as having a fundamental role in meaning-negotiation and in the co-construction of shared understanding (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Kohn, 2011, 2016b; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017; Vettorel,

2019; Widdowson, 2003). In the following sections, the notions of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence will be dealt with more in detail, discussing their limitations and inadequacies for ELF transcultural contexts. Then, the conceptualisation of ELF Transcultural Competence will be illustrated, and the importance of communication strategies in ELF communication discussed, illustrating first how they have been conceptualised from a SLA perspective and then from an ELF standpoint.

2.2 Reconceptualising Communicative Competence (CC)

Traditional approaches in Linguistics and SLA studies have conceptualised Communicative Competence referring to the monolingual 'native speaker' model. As will be discussed, models of Communicative Competence, such as those suggested by Hymes (1972) or Canale and Swain (1980), are no longer appropriate and adequate in ELF contexts, where there is not a single and stable frame of reference, but instead linguistic and cultural practices have to be continuously negotiated in situ. After an overview of the main theorisations of Communicative Competence, I will present some alternative examples from an ELF perspective, namely Widdowson's communicative capability and Kohn's ELF Competence.

2.2.1 Chomsky and the ideal 'native speaker'

The first discussions about the concept of 'competence' can be said to have started in the 1960s, when Chomsky (1965: 3) established a distinction between what he calls 'linguistic competence' and 'linguistic performance', relating them to

> an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

Chomsky's 'ideal speaker-listener' is the model of reference for language knowledge, that is, for grammatical correctness. According to the scholar, linguistic research should indeed focus only on linguistic competence, that is, "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language", and not on linguistic performance, "the actual use of language in concrete situations" (Chomsky, 1965: 4). As Lillis (2006: 240) explains,

> for Chomsky, the focus of linguistics as a discipline should be on understanding and describing the general and abstract principles that make the human capacity for language possible. In contrast, 'performance' or actual utterances – that is, what people actually say and hear with all the errors, false starts, unfinished sentences – could add little to an understanding of the principles underlying language use and was therefore not deemed to be a relevant focus of linguistic study.

Chomsky's perspective excludes performance, and thus language use, from the scope of Linguistics and negatively connotes it for it is generally scattered of errors and deviations due to the real-life context in which language is performed. Following this conceptualisation, linguistic competence is defined as the intrinsic knowledge of an ideal speaker-listener of a language, without taking into consideration the external and internal factors (such as memory loss, fatigue, etc.) that can affect the speaker in producing linguistic forms in interaction, nor the diversified actual realisations that can be performed in real communicative contexts.

As Widdowson (2003) argues, Chomsky's theorisation is in contrast with how communication in general takes place, since it does not take into account the importance of the context in which the interaction occurs nor the real-life aspects that influence and affect speaking. Similarly, when confronted with ELF Transcultural Communication, the limitations of Chomsky's model are numerous: in addition to the exclusion of context and of real-life aspects that affect the communicative act, the model of reference is an ideal native speaker of a language, belonging to a homogeneous speech community. As seen in Chapter 1, ELF Transcultural Communication cannot be referred to a single, stable and fixed

system, since the repertoires and the linguistic and cultural backgrounds involved in ELF transcultural contexts are manifold and greatly diversified.

Moreover, Chomsky relates linguistic competence to the intrinsic and innate knowledge of the language that an ideal speaker-hearer has and to the "implicit ability to understand indefinitely many sentences" and the rules governing them (Chomsky, 1965: 15). As mentioned above, this standpoint refers to language as a system that is clearly and stably characterised by the description of the rules and relations existing between linguistic forms and their meanings, conceiving language knowledge as intrinsic to the speaker, even when the speaker is unaware of such rules (Chomsky, 1965: 8). From this viewpoint, negotiation does not need to occur, because meaning is established a priori, as part of the knowledge of the language that a speaker-hearer intrinsically possesses and in relation to the grammatical features and rules of a language.

Chomsky's definition of linguistic competence has received harsh criticism over the years, especially for its ideal and context-less definition (Hymes, 1972: 272). As will be discussed in the following section, Hymes (1972) suggested a different conceptualisation of 'competence' and 'performance', one that accounts for the sociocultural factors that influence and constitute communication in real life, and for the diversified manifestations and practices of language use (Cadzen, 1996: 2).

2.2.2 Hymes and the importance of context

In the late 1960s, Hymes first used the term Communicative Competence to contrast Chomsy's idea that linguistic competence corresponded only to the grammatical knowledge of the rules governing a language, thus excluding the actual performance of speakers (Hymes, 1972; Lillis, 2006: 420). Hymes argued that Chomsky's conceptualisation creates an ideological bias in theorising competence, since it "posits ideal objects in abstraction from sociocultural features that might enter into their description" and links performance to imperfection (1972: 271-272). The exclusion of the sociocultural context in which language is performed reduces the knowledge of a language to its grammatical dimension, only focusing on what is grammatically correct; however, as Hymes (1972) argues, there are other aspects that influence communication and thus it is

fundamental to be aware of not only what is grammatical, but also of what is appropriate to say to whom in any given situation (see also Lillis, 2006). Accordingly, as Lillis (2006: 420) explains, "Hymes problematized the dichotomy advanced by Chomsky between 'competence' and 'performance' and the related claim about what the study of linguistics proper should be". As mentioned before, Chomsky focused on understanding the abstract and general principle of a language, that is, how linguistic forms are structured independently from their communicative context, while for Hymes communication is closely related to the context in which it occurs, that is, the sociocultural elements that affect an interaction are essential to understand how a language is used (Chomsky, 1965; Hymes, 1972; Lillis, 2006). Moreover, Chomsky's ideal speaker-listener communicating in a homogeneous speech community does not reflect reality: Hymes highlights how speech communities are variable and heterogeneous and how there are different degrees of linguistic competence and linguistic performance between speakers of a same community (Hymes, 1972; Lillis, 2006). As Cazden (1996: 2) clarifies,

> where Chomsky assumed, by definition, that competence is the knowledge shared by all fluent native speakers, Hymes drew on ethnographic research to show variation in the underlying knowledge of individual speaker. And where Chomsky assumed, again by definition, that the only knowledge that counted in linguistic theory was knowledge of formal structure, Hymes argued that such theory also had to account for knowledge about patterns of use.

As already discussed, Hymes indeed remarked that the grammatical criterion supported by Chomsky referred only to the resource pool that a speaker potentially has at his/her disposal, but it does not necessarily indicate the actual use that is performed in interaction (Cazden, 1996: 4). Additionally, Chomsky related linguistic competence to intuition, and thus innate knowledge, of an ideal 'native speaker', assuming that all 'native speakers' possess the same linguistic competence; however, Hymes points out that there are different degrees of linguistic competence between speakers, even within the same speech community,

and that it is the actual use of the language, namely performance, that determines their actual Communicative Competence.

In opposition to Chomsky's model, therefore, Hymes' Communicative Competence links linguistic competence and linguistic performance back together: as he explains, "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" and, for this reason, utterances cannot be judged only as grammatically correct (as in Chomsky's linguistic competence), but they also need to be appropriate to the communicative context in which they are performed (1972: 278). Hymes states that competence is "the most general term for the capabilities of a person" and that it "is dependent upon both (tacit) *knowledge* and (ability for) *use*" (1972: 282, italics in the original). The knowledge and the ability of use Hymes refers to are related not only to the grammatical correctness of linguistic forms, but also to what is feasible and available to the speaker (in terms of memory, perception, material environment, etc.), what is acceptable and appropriate in the ongoing interaction, and what is probable to occur in communication (Hymes, 1972: 281). For example, the degree of formality of linguistic forms does not depend on their grammaticality; instead a more formal sentence is chosen over an informal one when the communicative context in which it is used requires it: a student would hardly say 'can you meet me tomorrow at 5 pm?' to his/her supervisor, while he/she would probably use the more appropriate choice 'would it be possible to meet tomorrow at 5 pm?'. In this case, even if both sentences are grammatically correct, it is the power relation between the interlocutors, and thus appropriateness according to the sociocultural factors of the interaction, that determines the word choice. As Saville-Troike (2003: 18) explains, then,

> communicative competence extends to both knowledge and expectation of who
> may or may not speak in certain settings, when to speak and when to remain
> silent, to whom one may speak, how one may talk to persons of different
> statuses and roles, what nonverbal behaviors are appropriate in various contexts,
> what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation, how to ask for and give
> information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation,
> how to give commands, how to enforce discipline, and the like – in short,

everything involving the use of language and other communicative modalities in particular social settings.

Saville-Troike (2003: 18-22) also argues that, according to Hymes's conceptualisation of Communicative Competence, a speaker needs both linguistic and cultural knowledge. The sociocultural features addressed by Hymes refer to the cultural meanings that are conveyed through in the linguistic forms performed in interaction, and to the fact that it is fundamental to understand how to express them according to the social conventions of the speech community in which the communicative act is going on. Appropriateness relates thus both to linguistic forms and cultural meanings expressed through language (Lillis, 2006: 423; Saville-Troike, 2003).

As mentioned in Chapter 1 and in the previous section, appropriateness is also a fundamental aspect in ELF Transcultural Communication and it significantly varies according to the communicative context and the participants involved in interaction. However, the way appropriateness is defined in Hymes' conceptualisation and in ELF research greatly differs. When referring to Communicative Competence, in Hymes (1972: 282) "a normal member of a community" is used as referential point to evaluate what is possible, feasible, appropriate and probabilistically performed, hence within a precise linguistic and cultural model – that of a speech community (see Baker, 2015b: 135-136). However, in ELF Transcultural Communication appropriateness is defined according to the linguistic and cultural practices negotiated in situ during a specific interaction; they are hence very likely to vary from interaction to interaction. Moreover, as already mentioned, in ELF there is no 'normal member of a community' and the 'native speaker' model can no longer be used as a reference point, since effective and appropriate practices and norms are built and negotiated according to the participants involved in a precise communicative context, not according to exonormative conventions of a definite speech community (Baker, 2015b; Widdowson, 2003).

Another problematic aspect in Hymes' conceptualisation is the absence of an account for meaning negotiation and communication strategies, similarly to what

was pointed out for Chomsky's model. One reason for this absence could be in the fact that 'native speakers' are seen as belonging to a same speech community, presuming that social conventions and norms are already established and thus do not need further negotiation; it should also be noted that intercultural (and transcultural) communication was not Hymes' primary interest in outlining the model, since he was more concerned with monolingual contexts or cross-cultural interactions (Saville-Troike, 2003).

Nonetheless, it is important to highlight the great influence of Hymes' model on subsequent conceptualisations of Communicative Competence, not only in First Language Acquisition, but also on Second Language Acquisition. One renowned example is the framework suggested by Canale and Swain in 1980, where Hymes' notion of Communicative Competence was extended to second language use and the importance of the strategic dimension of language use was introduced.

2.2.3 Canale and Swain's model and the role of Strategic Competence

In 1980, Canale and Swain outlined a model of Communicative Competence to be implemented in second and foreign language education that conceptually derived from Hymes' framework. In their conceptualisation, Communicative Competence comprised three components. The first one is Grammatical Competence, which refers to the "knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology"; it focuses on the formal and grammatical aspect of language, recalling Chomsky's linguistic competence and Hymes' criterion about what is formally possible. The second component is Sociolinguistic Competence, that comprises "sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse" to interpret meaning: the former refers to the rules that are necessary in order to judge what is appropriate in a certain communicative context, while the latter concerns coherence and cohesion of groups of utterances. Sociolinguistic Competence is fundamental in interpreting the communicative context from several perspectives: the social context, the register required, the style, the participants' role, how form connects to function and how the utterances performed are textually coherent and cohesive. Finally, the last component is Strategic Competence, "made up of verbal and non-verbal communication

strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980: 29-30). Importantly, Strategic Competence directly refers to the use of communication strategies in interactions, but as it clearly appears from the definition, their use is limited to the prevention or the resolution of communicative problems.

In 1983, this model was modified by Canale, with Grammatical Competence still referring to the mastery of the grammar of the language, and the other two components differently structured. Sociolinguistic Competence was divided into Sociolinguistic Competence and Discourse Competence. The former relates to the appropriateness of utterances produced in different contexts and the factors that affect communication (e.g. social status, participants involved, communicative purpose, etc.); appropriateness refers to both appropriate meaning and form, thus to how forms and functions are interconnected and judged as proper in the communicative context. Discourse Competence refers to the combination of forms and meanings in the achievement of a unified (spoken or written) text; this is achieved through cohesion, the structural link between utterances, and coherence, the relationship between meanings in a text. Another important change proposed by Canale in 1983 concerns the definition of Strategic Competence, where verbal and non-verbal communication strategies are used not only to compensate for communicative breakdowns or for insufficient 'competence', but also to enhance communicative effectiveness. However, the perspective adopted is still one where communication strategies are seen as used to solve problems in communication and not as tools in co-constructing and negotiating meaning. Canale (1983: 11) offers indeed instances that showcase this problem-oriented perspective:

> for example, when one does not remember a given grammatical forms, one compensatory strategy that can be used is paraphrase […]. Of course such strategies need not be limited to resolving grammatical problems: actual communication will also require learners to handle problems of a sociolinguistic nature (e.g. how to address strangers when unsure of their social status) and of discourse nature (e.g. how to achieve coherence in a text when unsure of cohesion devices).

The explanation offered by Canale clearly refers to the speaker's 'unsure' choices in relation to a pre-established model in which social conventions and linguistic practices are already fixed and to how communication strategies can offer a solution in such cases. The strategic dimension of language use is thus related to the problems a speaker can encounter in interaction and to how he/she can solve them. Moreover, even if Canale (1983: 4) argues that "communication is understood […] as the exchange and negotiation of information between at least two individuals" and that "such information is never permanently worked out nor fixed but is constantly changing", the "continuous evaluation and negotiation of meaning" he refers to is not included as part of Communicative Competence. According to his view, indeed, negotiation processes pertain to what occurs in communication, and being able to negotiate meaning is not seen as a skill that is part of his model, since it only relates to actual communication, that is, the realisation of the speaker's knowledge and skills (i.e. the speaker's Communicative Competence) under potentially limiting factors such as memory loss, fatigue, nervousness, etc. (Canale, 1983: 5).

Hence, even if highly influential, especially in language education, the model devised by Canale and Swain (1980), and then revised by Canale (1983), rises several issues. First, even if different labels are used (actual communication vs Communicative Competence), the distinction made by Chomsky between linguistic competence and linguistic performance is still present, separating (abstract) language knowledge (i.e. grammatical rules) from its actual use in context. Even though Canale (1983: 3-5) argues that communication involves "unpredictability", "creativity", and "limiting psychological and other conditions", Communicative Competence is still perceived as an abstract model for perfect knowledge of a stable and fixed language, in which actual use is somehow secondary compared to language knowledge. Secondly, as mentioned above, there is a precise model of reference for language knowledge and use, the 'native speaker'. Chomsky (1965) and Hymes (1972) focused on First Language Acquisition and thus their subject of interest was the 'native speaker' and how he/she would learn his/her first language. In Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale

(1983), this model is directly and uncritically transferred to Second Language Acquisition, where the learner has to chase the (abstract) knowledge of an (abstract) 'native speaker' (Baker, 2015b: 137-138). In addition, in Canale and Swain (1980), the knowledge and skills of this 'native speaker' are not precisely defined, but they are taken for granted and considered perfect, that is, the 'native speaker' knows everything perfectly about his/her own first language and about language use. As Leung (2005: 129) highlights,

> the appeal to native-speakerness as a source of language expertise and authority is grounded in an observation that people tend to generally know their first/native language better than any other language/s they may speak in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar patterns and rules of use. There is also an implicitly posited link between one's first/native language and one's tacit knowledge of what is grammatically allowable, whether or not it is actually said.

However, as Leung (2005: 130) further explains, there is a problem in assuming that the status of 'native speaker' guarantees complete knowledge of the language and of its use. As a matter of fact, there is a different degree of Communicative Competence even between native speakers of a same language and thus it is problematic to assume that a second language learner should acquire and achieve perfect knowledge when it is not the case even for the model of reference, namely, the 'native speaker'. Moreover, as Leung (2005: 130) summarises, given that there are native speakers of different English varieties, there is not a single and universal model of reference. Hence, Communicative Competence and the abstraction of the 'native speaker' cannot be used as reference point for English, and, especially for this language, it is necessary to conceive a model of competencies for communication that is more complex and dynamic, one that takes into account the diverse and fluid nature of communication and of the English language today. As will be further discussed in the next section, the frameworks proposed by Chomsky (1965), Hymes (1972) and Canale and Swain (1980) are not adequate to serve as a model of reference in ELF communication, where more flexible and adaptable competencies for communication are needed,

in order to consider the heterogeneous and continuously changing manifestations that can be observed in ELF interactions.

2.2.4 Communicative Competence and ELF communication

Communicative Competence as conceptualised in the different theoretical approaches seen above, from Chomsky (1965) to Hymes (1972), to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), relates to a 'native speaker' who embodies the perfect knowledge and use of the target language, either in First Language Acquisition or second and foreign language pedagogy. As illustrated in Chapter 1, the concept of the 'native speaker' is problematic in itself, and even more so in ELF communication, because it does not represent a real user, but an abstraction: there is no perfect knowledge of a language, because even in first language contexts, where it is assumed that a 'native speaker' knows and uses the language 'perfectly', competence can actually vary according to domain and context of use, and thus it is always incomplete and partial (Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011: 89; Widdowson, 2003, 2012). Furthermore, as Widdowson (1994, 2003, 2012) emphasises, this 'native speaker' used as a model of reference usually indicates an educated speaker of a certain named language who does not possess precise requirements of 'competence' except being born in a place where the language is spoken and hence speaking it as his/her first language. This characterisation cannot indeed provide a viable model for ELF users, since ELF contexts require competencies for communication that take into account the complex and dynamic nature of communication, and the need to negotiate meanings and to adapt to variation in linguistic forms, cultural practices, and behaviours (Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003, 2012, 2015).

Another issue linked to the conceptualisations of Communicative Competence discussed above concerns what is defined as 'target language' in SLA and ELT, where a chosen fixed variety, namely Standard English, is in the greatest majority of cases considered as the only representative of all the different realisations of English, and the only correct and appropriate one to be taught and learned in all contexts. As seen in Chapter 1, this misconception limits English to a restricted resource, whereas it has become an international language with several and

diversified forms and uses, ELF ones included. In ELF interactions in particular, the communicative contexts are manifold and diverse and it may not always be appropriate to use Standard English forms: correctness and appropriateness need to be defined (and negotiated) according to the participants involved, their communicative goal(s), and the situation in which communication takes place, not according to the linguistic code deemed righteous (Widdowson, 2003, 2012). In ELF, English does not represent only 'one' single variety, but it refers to a plurality of realisations and to different linguistic forms and practices (Baker, 2015b; Leung, 2005). In addition to the pluralistic nature of the English language itself, ELF communication also entails the presence, and often the use, of several differently named languages and diverse linguistic resources (Baker, 2015b).

Serving as an international language, English as a Lingua Franca embraces the diverse linguistic and cultural resources of its speakers and represents a communicative means that takes into account the complex, dynamic, and translingual nature of a global language (Baker, 2015b). As Leung (2005: 139) stresses, therefore, there is the need for a reconceptualization of Communicative Competence that takes into consideration the multifaceted, dynamic, multi-/trans-lingual and context-bound nature of communication in ELF. Accordingly, there cannot be a 'native speaker' model, a single target language, or a homogeneous reference speech community: as Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2017: 23) emphasise, "the extended networks of interaction that globalization has brought about have naturally resulted in the communicative use of language that transcends the borders of different languages conventionally associated with separate lingua-cultural communities" and thus the traditionally conceived model of Communicative Competence suggested by Hymes (1972) and largely adopted in Second Language Acquisition needs to be challenged and reformulated. Consequently, the concept of competencies for communication linked to ELF needs to be flexible and adaptive, taking into consideration the multi-/trans-lingual resources and the diverse and changeable practices performed in ELF contexts.

In the following section, one of the most influential alternatives to Communicative Competence suggested in ELF research will be discussed: that of

'communicative capability'. As will be illustrated, Widdowson (2003) argues that ELF speakers make use of their communicative capability to negotiate and co-construct meaning in interaction, using the meaning potential of English and drawing from all the linguistic resources available to them.

2.2.4.1 Widdowson's concept of 'communicative capability'

ELF scholars have greatly criticised the concept of Communicative Competence and have deemed it inadequate for ELF contexts, since frameworks based on Communicative Competence assume that a competent speaker needs an abstract and complete knowledge of a language, and that this language is a stable system spoken by a precise and fixed speech community (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017: 24-25). As Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2017: 26) argue, "the traditional notion of speech community and the concept of competence that depends upon it clearly cannot account for the kind of translingual/transglossic/translanguaging practices that are enacted in global communication, and which are so clearly exemplified in ELF". Consequently, they have attempted to provide a valid alternative for ELF, taking into consideration how communication is negotiated in situ and how linguistic practices are diversified and fluid. They suggest that ELF is "to be conceived of […] as the expedient exploitation of linguistic resources as a means of communication" (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017: 26-27) and that ELF speakers make use of their communicative capability to successfully communicate in ELF.

This capability is defined as the combination of "the ability to exploit the virtual language, and the readiness to adjust to the conventions of actual encoding as and when required" (Widdowson, 2003: 173). This conceptualisation suggests that linguistic practices greatly depend on and vary according to the context in which they are performed. The concept of virtual language refers to "the potential inherent in the language for innovation *beyond* what has become established as well-formed or 'correct' encoding" (Widdowson, 2003: 173, italics in the original); consequently, communicative capability does not depend on a precise English variety or on Standard English forms, since it goes past convention and draws from the potential forms that English can assume in reference to the rules

that govern its use (Widdowson, 2015: 362). As Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2017: 31) explain,

> the use of expressions that do not replicate conventional encodings, like *anxiousness*, or *informations*, or *unsecure*, are entirely in accord with encoding rules. Where they occur, in ELF usage for example, they are evidence of direct access to these rules, bypassing the conventions of the standard language, which have no necessary relevance for effective communication.

According to their view, English represents a resource that has inherent meaning potential, that can be realised in different and manifold forms in order to deal with diverse and numerous communicative needs. For example, the process of word-formation 'adjective + suffix –ness' to form a noun (e.g. happiness, cheerfulness, abruptness, and so on) can be extended to other adjectives and words, such as 'anxiousness': even if the new forms are not encoded in Standard English, they would be meaningful since they follow well-attested word-formation rules in the virtual language (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017). Another case is the extended use of 'informations' in the plural form, even if in Standard English this would not be considered as correct, it follows the general rule of plural-formation and thus it is fully comprehensible. The concept of the virtual language emphasises, then, the fact that what is appropriate and correct cannot be defined according to what a particular community in particular contexts considers 'right', but it has to be determined according to the participants, the setting, the purpose of the interaction. As Vettorel (2019: 184) points out,

> [communicative] capability is enacted by ELF speakers in the skilful exploitation of all the resources in their repertoires, plurilingual ones included, and in how communication is strategically realized locally and contextually through a cooperative co-construction of meaning, rather than through conformity to 'standard norms'.

Widdowson's conceptualisation provides a model that accounts for the linguistic variability that is intrinsic to ELF communication, and it is flexible and adaptable

to the various communicative needs of the participants involved. Moreover, it also accounts for the multi-/translingual nature intrinsic to ELF: as Hülmbauer (2013) remarks, ELF is not only a set of linguistic forms limited to a single language, but it virtually includes all the linguistic resources available to the speaker; the virtual language thus offers both the stability of an encoded language and the flexibility of a lingua franca in which linguistic resources interplay to reach successful communication.

However, Baker (2015b: 143-144) argues that the notions of 'communicative capability' and the 'virtual language' limit language to its grammatical and formal dimension, while intercultural communication involves several other aspects. As discussed above, it is important to note that ELF communication goes beyond the linguistic dimension, since it encompasses also a transcultural element. In the following section, another model will be discussed, Kohn's ELF competence. This framework takes into account both ELF diverse practices and linguistic knowledge, as well as the abilities that are necessary to ELF speakers to communicate successfully, namely (cultural) awareness, creativity and the use of communication strategies to co-construct and negotiate mutual understanding.

2.2.4.2 Kohn's conceptualisation of ELF Competence

The conceptualisation of communicative capability (Widdowson, 2003; Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017) focuses more on the linguistic dimension of ELF use and does not include specific references to the cultural dynamics intrinsic to ELF. In turn, Kohn (2016b, 2018) proposes what he defines as 'ELF competence' as a model that takes into consideration the diverse linguistic practices, as well as the cultural dimension and the negotiation processes underlying ELF use.

The framework suggested by Kohn is based on the idea that people own the languages they speak and this ownership "is established through such a process of individual construction", through a process of sedimentation and continuous transformation of the speaker's knowledge and competence in using English as acquired through experience and thus through communication (Kohn, 2015: 55). The scholar coins the expression 'MY English' to remark that each speaker develops a personal version of English that they make their own and that is based

on the individual's construction and negotiation of English in his/her personal experience (Kohn, 2011: 79). The MY English notion is not conceived of only with reference to language (i.e. grammatical and lexical knowledge), but it also comprises the acquisition of "linguistic means of expression" that are used "to fulfil [one's] language and communication related requirements of performance, e.g. comprehensibility, compliance with adopted target norms, and fluency" (Kohn, 2015: 56). Moreover, the MY English conceptualisation is closely related to the speaker's performance requirements, that is, to his/her perception of successful communication and thus to his/her sense of satisfaction for the linguistic performance (Kohn, 2015).

A fundamental aspect of this theorisation is that MY English envisages the co-existence of ELF and Standard English. Thought primarily with a pedagogical intent, Kohn's idea builds on the learner's necessity to comply to standard norms (and thus to Standard English) in formal educational contexts, but offers a 'way out' by suggesting that each person can construct his/her own version of the language by adding to his/her language knowledge and by modifying his/her linguistic means according to the requirements of each communicative event. This conceptualisation gives the speaker the possibility to choose what language standards and norms to conform to, whether Standard English, a particular English variety or ELF negotiated practices. The speaker has thus an active role in taking decisions on which variety to refer to and which requirements to follow according to his/her communicative purpose(s) and to the context, without feeling in contradiction in having to choose between Standard English and, for example, ELF-related communicative practices. Following from this standpoint, whether a language/variety is a first language, a second language, a foreign language, or an additional language is no longer a necessary distinction for Kohn, since the product will always be a personal and unique construction derived from the communicative experience of the speaker, and the practices performed will relate to a precise context and to particular communicative requirements selected by the speaker. As Kohn (2018: 4-5) explains in a more recent article, "creating MY English is about developing one's knowledge and skills of linguistic-communicative-communal means of expression (repertoires) and of how these

means can be used and adapted in actual communication". In addition, the MY English construct can be said to overcome the 'native speaker' as a model of reference, since it is formed and constructed on the several and diverse realisations of English a speaker comes into contact with, but it is not limited to those; hence, the standard variety linked to a particular speech community of an ideal 'native speaker' is just one component and a part of what the comprehensive, diverse and evolving MY English construct is.

Kohn's conceptualisation of ELF competence is based on the development of MY English and of one's awareness of cultural variability in ELF communication. According to Kohn (2016b), ELF competence comprises five dimensions to be taken into consideration: awareness, comprehension, production, communicative interaction, and non-native speaker creativity. It is important to emphasise that in Kohn's conception each dimension is closely connected to the speaker's attitudes, communicative requirements, and to the motivation and desire to reach a successful communicative outcome; as Kohn (2016b: 26) explains:

> on each of these dimensions, speakers' attitudes and requirements, their linguistic-communicative knowledge as well as their strategic knowledge processing and interaction skills are involved, challenged and adapted in special ways. Overall orientation and monitoring is provided by the speakers' desire and intention to communicate under lingua franca conditions successfully and to their own satisfaction. ELF competence on all five dimensions plays a crucial role in connection with "third space" negotiation in intercultural encounters between speakers from different linguacultural backgrounds.[15]

The first dimension concerns awareness: Kohn (2016b: 26) argues that "speakers first all need to develop awareness of linguistic-communicative lingua franca manifestations of English and the conditions and requirements of successful and satisfactory ELF communication". This includes the need to theoretically evaluate (and re-evaluate) the concepts of correctness and appropriateness, and being

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[15] The notion of 'third place' or 'third culture' refers to the conceptualisation suggested by Kramsch and it is understood as "a place of contact or encounter between speakers from two different cultures" (Kramsch, 2009: 244).

aware of the differences there exist in English language use, either as different varieties of English or as a lingua franca. The dimension of comprehension skills relates to the importance of understanding different realisations of English, as to different phonetic productions, sentence structure, linguistic uses that have been shown to be part of actual ELF communication. Thirdly, production skills involve the ability to challenge oneself in actual communication, paying attention to cooperation and negotiation of meaning, especially in intercultural communication. As Kohn (2016b: 27) points out, "comprehension and production processes converge in strategic communicative interaction", that is, the dimension that addresses the use of different strategic moves to accomplish one's own communicative goals, including the use of accommodation strategies and meaning negotiation. Finally, in Kohn's model the dimension of non-native speaker creativity refers to the creative appropriation of the language by speakers, with the promotion of a "creative use of one's linguistic-communicative resources" (2016b: 28, see also Widdowson's virtual language, 2003). Kohn argues that creativity is the speaker's natural capability to continuously adapt, learn and develop linguistic forms and practices and in this way, the speaker's "ownership, self-confidence and satisfaction" are built alongside his/her appropriation of the language (2016b: 28).

Importantly, the five dimensions are closely related: awareness refers to the world knowledge a speaker has, and this knowledge is linked to and conveyed through the linguistic forms acquired and developed in the comprehension and production dimensions; the speaker conveys and constructs communicative meaning using these linguistic practices thanks to the ability to negotiate and manage communication that is developed in the dimension of strategic communicative interaction; finally, non-native speaker creativity offers the possibility to take ownership of the language by freely adopting and adapting it, that is, by using the linguistic means of expression in the speaker's repertoire without a compulsory conformation to standard norms.

ELF competence aims at including the diversity and fluidity of ELF communication through a comprehensive and malleable framework that can be adapted to the complex and varied contexts of use ELF speakers find themselves

in. Moreover, it is intended as a pedagogical model to be implemented in English Language Teaching contexts. Kohn's ELF Competence and the MY English construct can hence offer a comprehensive framework of reference for ELF communication and ELF-oriented pedagogy, taking in consideration the different communicative requirements ELF speakers have and the importance to be able to negotiate meaning and manage communication.

However, one limitation in Kohn's early perspective is that it still includes a differentiation between 'native' and 'non-native' speakers, at least in the terminology initially used. Even though the MY English construct allows a free and independent use of English, where speakers can choose and build which version of the language they want to speak, labelling one dimension as 'non-native speaker creativity' seems to limit such freedom and ownership. Creativity is fundamental in building the speaker's self-confidence in the use of the language and his/her ownership in choosing how to express him/herself. As a matter of fact, Kohn (2015: 62) reformulates the importance of creativity independently from the distinction of 'native' and 'non-native' speaker, focusing on the learners' development of their ELF competence by "encouraging and helping them to explore and trust their own creativity".

Another limitation of this model is the fact that the notion of ELF Competence does not fully take into account the cultural dimension intrinsic to ELF, since it does not explicitly address the implications of the influence of culture on language and vice versa (see §1.4). As much linguistic variability is fundamental in ELF, cultural diversity and intercultural awareness are also essential to understand the cultural dimension inherent in ELF. It is hence important for a model of competencies for communication in ELF to include a wider consideration of culture and its relation to language use. In order to understand how this relationship and the cultural dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication can be taken into account in conceptualising a model of competencies for communication, frameworks of Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence will be outlined in the following section.

2.3 Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

As discussed in the previous section, the conceptualisations of Communicative Competence as conceived of by Hymes (1972) and Canale and Swain (1980) cannot provide an adequate model of reference for ELF speakers, who are required more flexible and dynamic competencies for communication to successfully reach mutual understanding in ELF contexts. ELF research has shown that the 'native speaker' cannot be used as a reference for language knowledge and language use, since what is to be considered as correct and appropriate in an interaction depends on the context and on the participants involved, who negotiate in situ a common frame of reference. Furthermore, a model for competencies for communication in ELF Transcultural Communication should not be based on grammatical rules of a particular English variety; as illustrated above, Kohn's (2016b) ELF competence model shows how the diverse and fluid manifestations of English in ELF communication should be taken into account, also focusing on the abilities a speaker needs to be successful in ELF interactions. Even if Kohn's framework can help us understand the kind of competencies for communication that are needed in ELF, it is still not enough to account for the (trans-)cultural dimension that is intrinsic to ELF.

As seen in Chapter 1, I suggest ELF Transcultural Communication as the conceptual backdrop of the present dissertation, with a focus both on the linguistic and on the cultural dimensions in ELF transcultural communicative contexts. Since the models described above focus more on the linguistic dimension, it is important to integrate the discussion with frameworks that include culture as part of their conceptualisations on communication, such as Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence. After outlining how Intercultural Communication research has theorised the notion of 'competence' in intercultural communication, the reasons why these models are not appropriate for ELF Transcultural Communication will be discussed. In the following sections, then, conceptualisations related to Intercultural Competence, Intercultural Communicative Competence, and Baker's (2015b) alternative model, Intercultural Awareness (ICA), will be discussed.

2.3.1 Intercultural Competence

It is important to note that in Intercultural Communication studies, the theoretical research tradition connected to the notion of 'competence' is fragmented and takes into consideration aspects that are different from the ones included in the frameworks related to Communicative Competence (Baker, 2015b: 145-148). Differently from what was discussed in the previous section, the way in which 'competence' is seen in Intercultural Communication studies highly depends on how 'culture' and communication are defined in theoretical terms; in addition, it may also include aspects related to the speaker's personality, his/her cultural knowledge, perceptions and emotions, relation-building factors, satisfaction, as well as the features that are characteristic of the context in which this competence has to be performed (Arasaratnam, 2016; Baker, 2015b; Chen, 2017; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009; Spizberg & Changnon, 2009).

Consequently, even if competence in Intercultural Communication studies is generally defined as the ability to function appropriately and effectively across cultures (Chen, 2017: 350-351), several are the labels and definitions employed to identify this concept, such as intercultural competence, transcultural communication, intercultural communication competence, intercultural communicative competence, cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural sensitivity, or intercultural interaction competence, to name just few examples of the several expressions used (Chen, 2017; Sinicrope et al., 2007; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). Sinicrope et al. (2007: 1) define Intercultural Competence as the "ability to step beyond one's own culture and function with other individuals from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds"; Fantini and Tirmizi (2006: 12, italics in the original) defines it as "a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself"[16].

This great diversification of definitions and nomenclatures that have been used in relevant literature presents however some core elements that are almost always

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[16] Many other definitions have been offered in recent studies that review the development of Intercultural Competence, some examples are Arasaratnam (2016), Sinicrope et al. (2007) and Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009).

included in theorisations of Intercultural Competence, even if through different approaches. In particular, Chen (2017)[17] provides a description of the main characteristics that are required when conceptualising Intercultural Competence, and depending on how they are conceived, the model of reference for Intercultural Competence changes. He identifies the following four nodal issues: trait vs. state, effectiveness vs. appropriateness, knowledge vs. performance, and universal vs. local.

When considering the first core element, trait vs. state, traditional conceptions of Intercultural Competence have linked it to the personality of the speaker, and it is sometimes considered an intrinsic ability (Chen, 2017: 351-352). However, as Chen points out, this standpoint is a misconception, since it does not take into account the fact that Intercultural Competence can be acquired and it goes through a process of transformation during a person's life. As Chen (2017: 351) explains, "competence should neither be considered as a stable characteristic or trait of a person, like conscience that is consistent across different situations and contexts, nor as a state or transient experience like emotion that changes moment to moment". As a matter of fact, Intercultural Competence is both a mutable trait that is acquired throughout one's life and a progressing state that continuously changes and evolves. Chen stresses the idea of Intercultural Competence as a process, because it depends on the life experience and knowledge acquired by a person, which develops in different contexts and in relation to diverse cultural backgrounds. Indeed, several studies have examined personal traits and states in intercultural communication: for instance, to name just a few, Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005) analyse adaptability, creativity and behavioural flexibility; Van de Vijver and Leung (2009) suggest the importance of cultural empathy, flexibility, and emotional intelligence; Arasaratnam (2016) has pointed out the significance of tolerance for ambiguity, capacity for complexity, personal spiritual wellbeing.

The second core element in Chen refers to effectiveness vs. appropriateness. In intercultural communication, effectiveness is defined as the ability to reach the communicative goal of the interaction, and it has often been used interchangeably

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[17] Chen (2017) will be the main reference point for the discussion that follows unless stated otherwise.

to refer to Intercultural Competence: as Chen (2017: 352) clarifies, "being effective in intercultural communication refers to the ability to control and manipulate the interaction to attain one's goal" (see also Arasaratnam, 2016: 4). However, this perspective could be seen as biased, since it reflects a typical Western orientation to communication where control and manipulation are favoured over a more holistic and harmonious management of the communicative act (Chen, 2017: 352). For this reason, when considering different cultural backgrounds and communicative practices, effectiveness has to be closely connected to the way in which it is achieved. In this regard, it is fundamental to understand what is appropriate in a specific context, for that particular objective, and act accordingly, with reference to the speakers that are participating to the communicative act and their backgrounds (Arasaratnam, 2016; Chen, 2017; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). Chen (2017: 352-353) emphasises that when connecting effectiveness and appropriateness, communication is no longer only individually based, but also other-oriented, hence reflecting an interconnected process in which several cultural perspectives are taken into account and respected. Indeed, some scholars also suggest that Intercultural Competence should include aspects related to ethics, specifically, "the ability to show mutual respect, sincerity, tolerance, and responsibility to different cultural values and norms in interaction" (Chen, 2017: 352-353). Accordingly, these ethical principles can foster solidarity and mutual confidence in communication, encouraging accommodation and negotiation processes to achieve one's communicative purpose. As Spizberg and Changnon (2009: 7) stress, "intercultural competence is the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientations to the world". Effectiveness and appropriateness are then intrinsically related to one's own understanding of communication and culture, since they can be reached successfully only if the speakers are aware that there are different worldviews and related practices, which will have an influence on interaction.

This point directly relates to the third issue, knowledge vs. performance. As mentioned when discussing Communicative Competence, many models refer to

the distinction made by Chomsky (1965) between linguistic knowledge and performance; Intercultural Communication studies generally see these two sides of 'competence', connected to cultural practices and as linked in communication: "most intercultural communication scholars tend to agree in recent decades that being competent denotes the understanding of both interactants' cultural conventions and the adroit performance of skills" (Chen, 2017: 353). Chen also suggests that the sole understanding of cultural knowledge and the ability to behave accordingly are not sufficient to account for Intercultural Competence; as a matter of fact, the aspects he describes should be seen as intertwined in a comprehensive model of Intercultural Competence. According to Chen, this involves conceptualisations of language competence and the use of communication skills and negotiation practices in interaction, in addition to intercultural skills in general (e.g. knowledge of other cultures, behavioural cultural intelligence, social flexibility, cultural tuning amongst others) (see also Leung et al., 2014: 491).

Finally, Intercultural Competence has to take into account the complexity of today's society, and specifically the universal vs. local aspect. If early models of Intercultural Competence were centred on the idea that culture was a fixed entity that represented a whole nation (see Chapter 1), more recent views acknowledge that cultures are fluid systems that interact and mingle. It has also been recognised that the theorisation of Intercultural Competence depends on the cultural backgrounds of the scholars who develop a model, and this aspect has a strong influence on how culture and communication are perceived in different views (Arasaratnam, 2016; Chen, 2017; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). The potential bias of one's cultural background has to be considered and challenged, moving towards an idea of 'competence' that goes beyond culturally-based worldviews (Chen, 2017: 354-355). Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that there are some universal principles that are common to humanity, in parallel to other culture-specific principles that influence the speaker in interaction. As Chen (2017: 355) points out, "the reality is that all cultures share a certain degree of differences and similarities, thus cultural values should be treated as a continuum".

The interrelation of the points described above showcases that the complexity of Intercultural Competence and the approach chosen to analyse it depend on how different factors are foregrounded in definitions of Intercultural Competence. For example, in this respect Chen (2017) describes four main categories in models that have been proposed – the general model of Intercultural Competence, Intercultural Competence in intercultural adaptation contexts, in educational/training contexts, and in global contexts. Differently, Spizberg and Changnon (2009) identify six types of models – compositional, co-orientational, developmental, adaptational, and causal. In turn, Van de Vijver and Leung (2009) address different classifications of Intercultural Competence according to the relations between its components, dividing them in input-output models, hierarchical models, and mediation or moderation frameworks.

Models of Intercultural Competence are indeed manifold and greatly diversified, showing the intricacies and complexities that have to be taken into account when considering Intercultural Competence (see Arasaratnam, 2016; Baker, 2015b; Chen, 2017; Deardorff, 2009; Sinicrope et al., 2007; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009; Spizberg & Changnon, 2009 for overviews). It should be mentioned that in general Intercultural Competence research has often overlooked how language is used in intercultural communication contexts. For the present dissertation, however, it is particularly relevant to look at how Intercultural Competence has been developed in connection to language use, since ELF Transcultural Communication comprises (and focuses on) both a linguistic and a cultural dimension, as discussed in Chapter 1. In the following section, Byram's (1997) Intercultural Communicative Competence, one of the most influential models that links together the linguistic and cultural dimensions of language use, will be discussed since it provides an important standpoint on how language and culture can be closely linked in intercultural communication.

2.3.2 Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence

Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997) was the first model that linked Intercultural Competence and Communicative Competence with an

explicit pedagogical purpose, connecting language use and teaching to an intercultural dimension. As Baker (2015b: 149) explains,

> intercultural communicative competence has been proposed as an extension of communicative competence but one that recognises the intercultural nature of second language use and eschews the native speaker bias of earlier models of communicative competence. Communicative competence can be criticised for focusing too narrowly on linguistic competence and intercultural competence for concentrating on wider communicative strategies while ignoring the linguistic dimension. Intercultural communicative competence combines the two approaches.

Byram's model is important in understanding how ELF and Intercultural Communication research can be linked, not least since it offers one of the first and more comprehensive examples of the link between language and intercultural communication. Byram (1997: 8) criticises previous models of Communicative Competence especially because they ignore the speakers' social and cultural identity, considering only the linguistic aspects of communication, as well as foreign language education. As Byram himself states, his work is based on the communicative ability framework by van Ek (1986), which included the social and personal development of the learner. Van Ek (1986) distinguishes between six competences: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, socio-cultural, and social. Accordingly, a learner should be able to use and interpret language appropriately, depending also on the sociolinguistic and sociocultural context of the interaction, in addition to being able to skilfully face, manage and resolve communicative problems and sociocultural issues rising in communication.

Even though Byram recognises the positive contributions of this framework – namely the analysis of a foreign language in use and its functions in society – he also criticises the choice to refer to the 'native speaker' as a model of 'competence'. First of all, Byram states that the 'native speaker' is implicitly regarded as the reference point for language ability and consequently, the learner is permanently considered an incomplete speaker, since the competence of a 'native speaker' is unattainable by any 'non-native speaker' by definition. Byram

(1997: 11) emphasises that this kind of model creates "an impossible target and consequently inevitable failure". In his opinion, the way in which an (educated) 'native speaker' learns a first language and the way in which a student learns a foreign language follow different processes that cannot be compared and thus cannot refer to the same kind of Communicative Competence.[18] In addition, even if this was the case, this kind of 'competence' would be inappropriate in intercultural contexts, since what is suggested is that the learner should become (or mimick) a 'native speaker' and thus create for him/herself a new sociocultural identity (Byram, 1997: 11). Consequently, Byram (1997: 21) suggests a new reference model, the intercultural speaker, who knows how to communicate with people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Byram argues that foreign language learners should not perceive themselves as inadequate speakers, but they should nurture their role as social actors in a context that is different from communication between 'native speakers'. According to Byram, the intercultural speaker merges two (or more) worlds, languages and cultures; moreover, when interacting, he/she inevitably takes into account the difference inherent in intercultural contexts and the human relationships involved in such interactions. Consequently, cultural knowledge, motivation, problem-solving skills, adaptability, flexibility and attitude are fundamental to reach successful intercultural communication (Byram, 1997: 33). Consequently, "the intercultural speaker needs intercultural communicative competence, i.e. both intercultural competence and linguistic/communicative competence, in any task of mediation where two distinct linguacultures are present, and this is something different from and not comparable with the competence of a native speaker" (Byram, 2012: 89). The model devised by Byram (1997) therefore merges Intercultural Competence and Communicative Competence, shifting from the 'native speaker' as point of reference to a 'competence' that looks up to the intercultural speaker. Intercultural Communicative Competence thus comprises four competences: linguistic,

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[18] A similar stance is taken, for example, by Cook (2002, 2008), who suggests the notion of multicompetence to refer to the speaker's knowledge of two or more languages. A L2 user thinks in a different way from monolinguals and learns the additional languages he/she knows following a different process from the native speakers of such languages.

sociolinguistic, discourse, and intercultural. Byram (1997: 48) redefines van Ek's linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competences where the reference model is the intercultural speaker and not the native speaker of the foreign language:

• linguistic competence: the ability to apply knowledge of the rules of a standard version of the language to produce and interpret spoken and written language;
• sociolinguistic competence: the ability to give to the language produced by an interlocutor whether native speaker or not meanings which are taken for granted by the interlocutor or which are negotiated and made explicit with the interlocutor;
• discourse competence: the ability to use, discover and negotiate strategies for the production and interpretation of monologue or dialogue texts which follow the conventions of the culture of an interlocutor or are negotiated as intercultural texts for particular purposes.

Moreover, Byram defines intercultural competence as comprised of attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Attitudes are essential in laying the foundations for an open-minded, positive, and constructive interaction that goes beyond prejudices, disbeliefs, and judgements (1997: 32). Knowledge provides the content through which successful communication can be achieved, and is divided into knowledge of social groups, cultures (one's own and of others), and of the processes underlying interaction (1997: 35). Finally, the skills an intercultural speaker should aim at are of three kinds, skills of interpreting and relating, of discovering and interacting, and critical cultural awareness, that is, the ability to critically analyse the concept and implications of culture in communication (1997: 37-38). Byram (1997: 50-54) defines them as follow:

Attitudes: Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own […];
Knowledge: of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction […];
Skills of interpreting and relating: Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own […];

Skills of discovery and interaction: Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction […];

Critical cultural awareness/political education: An ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

This conceptualisation of ICC offers several positive aspects of development, especially when compared with earlier models. As Baker (2015b: 151) notes, Intercultural Communicative Competence links together linguistic competence and Intercultural Competence, rejecting the 'native speaker' as reference for language use and cultural knowledge. It also provides a detailed account of how these competences interweave and are intertwined in communication. In addition, Byram underscores that negotiation, interpretation, mutual knowledge, and mediation are significant aspects for successful communication. Similarly, in Byram's model culture is not seen as monolithic, but as a multifaceted system. Finally, one aspect that has been recognised as innovative and central in the influence Byram's model has had is its pedagogical dimension: ICC has been conceptualised and described in order to function as a 'teaching guide', to provide objectives and descriptions that can be used by teachers in the foreign language class.

However, it is also necessary to understand the limits of the ICC model and the reasons why it is difficult to apply its principles to ELF Transcultural Communication. Baker (2015b: 151-152) points out that the pedagogical application of Byram's conceptualisation is a strength, but at the same time a limitation, since the model is not supported with extensive empirical evidence that demonstrates the effective and actual implementation of its different components. Another aspect that has been criticised by ELF researchers is the strong dependence of the definition of culture on national and geographical boundaries. Baker (2015b) argues that even if Byram acknowledges the presence of different cultures and the fact that the intercultural speaker has to be aware, and preferably knowledgeable, of them, he still refers to cultures based on the nation-state. In this view, a national culture is linked to a certain specific language, that is intrinsically

connected to the one culture–one nation perspective. As discussed in Chapter 1, the idea that to one nation corresponds one culture and one language has become highly problematic, since in globalised times the geographical boundaries of a nation do not limit the flow of 'language' and 'culture', that, as already mentioned, are two highly complex and emergent systems that intertwine and continuously evolve.

If, on the one hand, it would be difficult to teach or learn cultural knowledge based on ever-changing systems, on the other hand, it is necessary to explicitly make speakers (and learners) aware of the dynamic and fluid nature of language and culture in our times. Baker (2015b: 153) further explains that this concept of 'one culture-one nation' creates a line that separates cultures and speakers; however, "people do not have to be in-between cultures, they can be part of many different groups simultaneously without being between anything". Byram's perspective does not reflect this fluid, emergent and dynamic nature of culture, that is multifaceted, complex and emerging for each individual.

One further problematic aspect is that Byram states that diverse cultural practices and beliefs can lead to communicative breakdowns and misunderstandings; however, several studies argue that cultural differences are not always the basis of unsuccessful communication (Baker, 2011; 2015b; Jenkins et al., 2011; Piller, 2011). Byram conceives intercultural communication as occurring between different and separated cultures and he takes for granted that difference entails non-understanding. However, as mentioned in Chapter 1 and as Baker (2015b: 153) remarks, on the one hand people can be part of several cultures at once, thus presenting diversified and fluid cultural identities; on the other hand, cultural differences cannot be considered a priori as a cause of misunderstanding, and only a detailed analysis of the communicative act and of the context of the interaction can reveal why and how miscommunication occurs. Pre-established assumptions that different cultures will commonly and certainly cause communicative problems is therefore unjustified.

Finally, Baker (2015b: 154) criticises how Byram seems to conceptualise ELF. Byram (1997: 112-115) suggests that even if taught as a lingua franca, English should still focus on British and American cultures, since they are "so dominant

even where learners will have no need or opportunity to interact with native speakers, that a critical study of them and their relationship to learners' own is likely to be more beneficial than to ignore their presence" (1997: 115). However, such a view, emphasising the predominant influence of British and American varieties and cultures, neglects the role English has as a global language and lingua franca of communication, and its diversified functions and contexts of use, that go far beyond British or American environments. As Baker (2015b: 154) argues, "while Byram may be correct that ideologically these varieties are dominant, this does not do justice to the complex range of uses to which English is put in global settings or make any attempt to offer alternatives which challenge the status quo"; in addition, Baker continues, "where ELF communication is discussed Byram seems to adopt a deficit position in which such communication is viewed as impoverished and simplified" (2015b: 154).

For all these reasons, Intercultural Communicative Competence cannot be seen as an appropriate model in ELF transcultural contexts, first of all since it does not take into consideration the fluid nature of language and culture. For these contexts, Baker (2015b) suggests a more dynamic model that includes the conceptualisation of language and culture as complex and emergent systems, as will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.3 Baker's conceptualisation of Intercultural Awareness (ICA)

As seen in the previous section, Byram's (1997) model cannot provide an adequate reference point in ELF Transcultural Communication, particularly because it looks at cultures as stable and static entities that do not mingle but instead are separated and often viewed at a national level. Baker's conceptualisation (2015b), on the other hand, can offer a more fluid and dynamic perspective on culture, taking into consideration the complex and emergent cultural dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication.

It should be mentioned that Baker's idea of Intercultural Awareness (ICA) stems from the notion of Intercultural Communicative Competence developed by Byram (1997). The idea both the ICA and the ICC models are based upon is that the kind of competencies for communication needed by a speaker in intercultural contexts

can no longer refer only to Communicative Competence but needs to include both the linguistic and the cultural dimensions, as they intertwine in actual intercultural communication. Baker (2012, 2015b) suggests "an alternative or development of ICC" (2015b: 13), also expanding Byram's idea of culture as geographically fixed and bounded, and Byram's notion of critical cultural awareness. As discussed in Chapter 1, Baker's view is set within a transcultural perspective, which considers culture as a negotiated and emergent system, moving away from a nation-based perspective. From this standpoint, Baker argues that Byram's critical cultural awareness is no longer sufficient to understand and represent transcultural communication, because "[critical cultural awareness] has commonly been conceived in relation to intercultural communication between defined cultural groupings, typically at the national level" (2012: 65). Therefore, Byram's view needs to be re-thought considering the dynamics of intercultural communication, especially in ELF contexts, where the variety of cultures and identities involved in the communicative act is diversified. Baker (2012, 2015b) suggests thus a framework that takes into account the implications that intercultural dynamics have in communication and the relevance that identities and cultures play in the communicative act.

Underlining that intercultural communication is a dynamic and emergent process that cannot be defined a priori, particularly in ELF communicative contexts, Baker (2015b: 163) thus proposes the extension of Byram's (1997) concept of critical cultural awareness into what he calls Intercultural Awareness:

> Intercultural awareness is a conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices and frames of reference can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and context specific manner in communication.

Baker (2015b: 163) argues that 'awareness' is conceptualised as the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to effectively and appropriately reach one's communicative goal, or the knowledge of the way in which culture influences communication, and the skills necessary to communicate, based on this knowledge, in a flexible and appropriate manner. This notion is a fundamental

aspect in intercultural communication through ELF, because it reflects the dynamic and fluid nature of ELF communication: language, culture and communication are considered as flexible and heterogeneous systems that intertwine in interaction. Moreover, appropriateness no longer derives from exonormative rules, but it is instead based on the particular and specific situation in which the communicative act takes place.

According to Baker, Intercultural Awareness is characterised by three levels. The first is 'basic cultural awareness' and refers to the speaker's development of a conscious understanding of how one's linguaculture can influence behaviours, beliefs, values and communication itself. It comprises an awareness of the following:

1 _ culture as a set of shared behaviours, beliefs, and values;

2 _ the role culture and context play in any interpretation of meaning;

3 _ our own culturally induced behaviour, values, and beliefs and the ability to articulate this;

4 _ others' culturally induced behaviour, values, and beliefs and the ability to compare this with our own culturally induced behaviour, values, and beliefs. (2012: 66; 2015b: 164)

The second level, 'advanced cultural awareness', refers to the development of an awareness of the existence of other heterogeneous linguacultures and of possible areas of misunderstanding. It comprises an awareness of (Baker, 2012: 66; 2015b: 164):

5 _ the relative nature of cultural norms;

6 _ cultural understanding as provisional and open to revision;

7 _ multiple voices or perspectives within any cultural grouping;

8 _ individuals as members of many social groupings including cultural ones;

9 _ common ground between specific cultures as well as an awareness of possibilities for mismatch and miscommunication between specific cultures. (2012: 66; 2015b: 164)

The third level is the so called 'Intercultural Awareness' and it refers to the understanding of crucial concepts in intercultural communication, that is, the liminal nature of the relationship between language, culture and communication, and the fundamental role of negotiation and mediation. It comprises an awareness of :

10 _ culturally based frames of reference, forms, and communicative practices as being related both to specific cultures and also as emergent and hybrid in intercultural communication;

11 _ initial interaction in intercultural communication as possibly based on cultural stereotypes or generalizations but an ability to move beyond these through;

12 _ a capacity to negotiate and mediate between different emergent socioculturally grounded communication modes and frames of reference based on the above understanding of culture in intercultural communication.

(2012: 66; 2015b: 164)

Intercultural Awareness as outlined by Baker (2012, 2015b) offers a comprehensive model to include a complex and emergent approach to language and culture, allowing a shift towards a translingual and transcultural perspective. Baker emphasises that language, culture, and identity are systems that continue to change and evolve through and in communication, and it is necessary to understand and be aware of how linguistic and cultural practices affect communication and vice versa. However, it should be noted that it is not made clear whether Baker's aim is to replace ICC as a whole, thus substituting linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and intercultural competence with ICA, or whether his purpose is to only develop Byram's conceptualisation of cultural awareness in relation to intercultural competence by taking into account the complex nature of culture and its relation to identity in communication. Nonetheless, the attention to the linguistic dimension is limited either way, in the first case because it would have the same aforementioned limitations of Byram's conceptualisation, and in the second case because it does not provide attention to

those comprehension and production skills that are necessary in communication, that is, to the linguistic dimension of ELF communication.

Even if the (trans-)cultural dimension is taken into great consideration and its influence on communication is analysed in-depth in Baker's proposal, it is important to note that a model of competencies for communication for ELF needs to comprise both a linguistic *and* a cultural perspective. For this reason, what I suggest in the present dissertation is to create a link between Kohn's ELF Competence and Baker's Intercultural Awareness models: while the first gives extensive attention to the linguistic and communicative requirements needed in ELF communication, the second offers important insights on the cultural dynamics that affect and intertwine in communication. In the following section, the concept of ELF Transcultural Competence, that aims at combining both dimensions, will be described in detail, suggesting a new model that takes into account both the linguistic and the cultural dimensions in ELF Transcultural Communication.

2.4 ELF Transcultural Competence

As discussed above, traditional conceptualisations of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence have some limitations for ELF communication. First, the role of the 'native speaker' is seen as paramount or very influential, and generally provides the model of reference for 'perfect' language knowledge and use (Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003, 2015). Secondly, the different components of these models of 'competence' are often not integrated in a comprehensive framework, but kept separate, or the way in which they are related is not clearly outlined (Widdowson, 2003). In addition, in Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence, the target language is usually conceived of in its standard form and as a static and homogeneous system. Similarly, the cultural dimension is usually considered as a generalised and static characterisation of a people/beliefs/behaviours at a national level. Finally, the inclusion of diverse manifestations of a named language, or of differently named languages, is negatively perceived, excluding a multilingual perspective on the speaker's repertoires.

The elements that have to be considered in conceptualising a model of competencies for communication for ELF Transcultural Communication are manifold, going beyond traditional notions of Communicative Competence, Intercultural Communicative Competence, 'language' and 'culture'. In the present dissertation, I suggest ELF Transcultural Competence as the model of reference and as an alternative framework to account for both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of ELF Transcultural Communication. In my conceptualisation, I propose to link together two models, ELF competence as formulated by Kohn (2016b) and Intercultural Awareness as proposed by Baker (2015b), in order to take into account the complex and emergent nature of language and culture in ELF Transcultural Communication and to provide a comprehensive framework of the abilities that are necessary to reach successful communication in ELF contexts. Singularly taken, the two models provide a critical challenge to, correspondingly, Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence as traditionally conceived. By linking these two conceptualisations, the model of competencies for communication suggested would make it possible to take into account the diverse and flexible linguistic forms of ELF, without excluding the multi-/trans-lingual practices enacted by ELF speakers. Moreover, it would include the cultural dynamics of ELF Transcultural Communication, the fluid and emergent nature of culture and its relation to language in communication. Finally, it would comprise the ability to co-construct mutual understanding and the use of communication strategies as fundamental tools in ELF Transcultural Communication, considering the complex and emergent linguistic and cultural practices as they are cooperatively negotiated in situ.

In defining ELF Transcultural Competence I adopt a translingual and transcultural perspective that critically develops Kohn and Baker's conceptualisations of language and culture. ELF Transcultural Competence would thus retain the dimensions of Kohn's framework and link them to the intercultural understanding dimension in Baker's model, within a Complexity Theory approach and the translingual and transcultural perspective that have been discussed in Chapter 1. The terminology used thus stems both from Kohn and Baker's models, but it tries to be more inclusive of a translingual and transcultural approach. ELF

Transcultural Competence comprises four dimensions: Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, Comprehension and Production Skills, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, and Creativity. As will be described in detail below, the first dimension relates to the multi-/translingual and transcultural dynamics of ELF communication, the second refers to the linguistic practices that are part of ELF, the third aims at accounting for the negotiation processes underlying ELF, and the fourth takes into consideration the importance of creativity as a means towards language ownership.

The dimensions of ELF Transcultural Competence are conceived of as intertwined, interrelated, and constantly and dynamically evolving, together with the speaker's experience in ELF Transcultural Communication. Awareness of the interrelation between culture and language is closely related to how language is used: in ELF transcultural contexts speakers need to be aware that linguistic and cultural forms emerge in communication and can greatly vary from speaker to speaker, and from context to context. Moreover, skills in comprehension and production (that can include both English and other languages) are closely related to the speaker's awareness of the wide range of linguistic and cultural manifestations that can emerge in ELF Transcultural Communication. In addition, it is important for the speaker to be able to strategically use the linguistic resources available in his/her repertoire, together with communication strategies, to negotiate meaning and co-build mutual understanding. Finally, creativity is the force that frees the speaker from exonormative conventions to adapt the linguistic resources available in order to communicate the desired meaning, going beyond conformity to a standard norm and creatively making use of his/her resources.

In addition to these dimensions – as both Kohn and Baker respectively underline in their models – attitudes, motivation, and identity should also be considered, despite they are not part of ELF Transcultural Competence; as discussed in §2.3.1, the emotions and the speaker's attitude and disposition towards the communicative act and the participants involved greatly influence how communication unfolds and how the speaker interacts with the other interlocutors. However, since aspects related to the speakers' emotional background and

identity are not included in the model of ELF Transcultural Competence, they will not be discussed here.

2.4.1 Translingual and Transcultural Awareness

The first dimension, that of Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, is related to Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness, within a Complexity Theory approach and a translingual and transcultural perspective, where language and culture intermingle in interaction and emerge through practice. As discussed above, Kohn's (2016b) first dimension, awareness, does not take into consideration the fluid and emergent nature of culture and language in ELF Transcultural Communication, while Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness dimension offers a more dynamic and comprehensive understanding of the cultural and linguistic dynamics that underlie ELF use.

Translingual and Transcultural Awareness comprises three levels: Basic Linguistic and Cultural Awareness, Advanced Multilingual and Intercultural Awareness, and Critical Translingual and Transcultural Awareness. Basic Linguistic and Cultural Awareness refers to the development of the awareness that language and culture are interrelated systems consisting of sets of norms, behaviours, beliefs, and values that continuously intermingle with each other. As seen in Chapter 1, language and culture intrinsically and mutually affect each other and it is important that the speaker becomes aware of their fundamental and interrelated role in communication. At this level, speakers need to understand that their linguistic and cultural practices are relative, given that each speaker has a repertoire that is built through experience and continually changing.

The second level is that of Advanced Multilingual and Intercultural Awareness and concerns awareness that language and culture are two evolving systems, and that they can have different manifestations that change along with personal experiences. At this level, speakers need to view communication as an interchange of multiple voices and perspectives that are partial, and not necessarily in contradiction: one speaker's multilingual and intercultural perspectives intermingle with other speakers' views in ongoing communication, and the interlocutors need to understand that both language and culture are two

fluid systems and that each participant to the communicative act has his/her own linguistic and cultural background. In addition, speakers need to be aware that communication can be both successful and potentially problematic, and that understanding is a matter of degree and of joint construction of meaning.

Finally, Critical Translingual and Transcultural Awareness is the level where speakers build their awareness of language and culture as two complex, fluid, and emergent systems, that continue to change and evolve and that cannot be determined a priori, but emerge in communication through the practices. At this level the importance of negotiation in constructing mutual understanding is underscored, emphasising how there are different linguistic and cultural practices that cannot be evaluated on a universal scale. The critical element refers to awareness that communication is never neutral and that, in addition to the meaning that is to be conveyed and the speaker's perspective, the historical and social context determines and affects communication; speakers should be made aware of the process through which the context (both communicative and social) can affect the communicative act and of the way in which they can deal with it appropriately and effectively through the use of their strategic skills. Speakers should understand the relevant role that language and culture have in communication and that diversity is a common condition in ELF Transcultural Communication.

2.4.2 Comprehension and Production Skills

The second dimension concerns Comprehension Skills, that is, the ability to understand diverse linguistic forms and practices, as well as Production Skills, that refer to the ability to use language in an appropriate and effective way, taking into account the context and the participants involved in the interaction. In developing (by learning and/or through practice) Comprehension and Production Skills, it is fundamental to make speakers aware of the existence and use of different and fluid manifestations of the English language and of its global nature. This dimension directly stems from Kohn's (2016) model and thus has the MY English construct as a backdrop: speakers need to be aware and to learn about the variability of manifestations of the English language – not only ENL varieties of

English, but also post-colonial varieties and the ELF diversified practices they could encounter in ELF communicative acts. While the first dimension – the one of awareness – concerns language and culture in general, without a focus on specific differently named languages or cultures, in this dimension the perspective is on multilingualism and diversity as intrinsic to ELF Transcultural Communication. For this reason, on the one hand English is to be seen as a global language that can manifest itself in different, hybrid and fluid forms; on the other hand, there should be awareness that the use of differently named languages and of the linguistic repertoire of speakers represents a positive contribution to the interaction and that, when strategically used, it can help reach the communicative goal. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 1, ELF Transcultural Communication is intrinsically multi-lingual and the linguistic resources available are to be considered rich and fruitful means to achieve successful communication. This dimensions thus includes both the encoded nature of the English language as categorised in different English varieties and the fluid, creative and varied manifestations of ELF usage.

2.4.3 Strategic Communicative Interaction Management

The third dimension, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, is the ability to use one's own linguistic and cultural repertoire to negotiate and construct meaning in ELF transcultural contexts. This dimension focuses on the importance of communication strategies and on their active use in meaning-making and co-constructing mutual understanding. Strategic Communicative Interaction Management is linked to the speaker's linguistic knowledge, and is thus closely related to the second dimension – Comprehension and Production Skills, but also to a speaker's awareness of the processes underlying communication and on his/her conceptualisations of language and culture. Moreover, it concerns the use of the linguistic resources and cultural knowledge at the speakers' disposal: not only English or the speaker's first language, but also multilingual (and translingual) resources, non-verbal elements and communication strategies, which play a fundamental role in interaction and in the co-construction of meaning.

As illustrated in the previous sections, in ELF transcultural contexts it is essential to be able to use all the communication resources available to convey and negotiate meaning and to build mutual understanding; in addition, in reaching the intended communicative goal, it is important to be aware of what is effective and appropriate. For these reasons, ELF users need to build their Strategic Communicative Interaction Management ability, so that they can effectively and appropriately communicate, according to the contexts and the speakers involved. This also means that successful negotiation occurs when the interactants match what is said to the meaning entailed without disregarding the speakers' personal and emotional needs or the requirements derived from the context (Ollinger, 2012: 26). Strategic Communicative Interaction Management stems from Kohn's (2016b: 27-28) model and his strategic communicative interaction dimension; in addition to the important role negotiation has in ELF communication, Kohn (2016b) also highlights the key role that personal expectations and aspirations have in influencing how the speaker strategically manages communication. Certain linguistic standards and conventions that are preferred over others, linguistic and cultural practices that correspond to the identity one wants to display in a specific communicative context, behaviours that are (taken up and) performed to show membership to certain groups, all these aspects come together in how a person manages and strategically uses his/her resources to convey and construct meaning. In the way to negotiate meaning and build mutual understanding, a speaker is likely to be influenced by the image he/she wants to show to others, by how he/she wants to be perceived by the other participants, and by all the factors that are part of and affect the communicative context of the interaction. The linguistic standards and conventions a speaker prefers will determine the linguistic choices he/she will take while communicating; in displaying his/her identity, the speaker will show certain cultural practices and may hide some others, or he/she will choose which linguistic and cultural practices to show in which context; certain behaviours will be performed in order to show membership to, or to reject, a particular group, or to create rapport with other participants.

The dimension of Strategic Communicative Interaction Management in ELF Transcultural Competence brings together personal expectations and aspirations with an active use of linguistic and non-linguistic resources to reach the intended communicative goal, with an appropriate and effective selection of the resources to use in a specific interaction. It is important to emphasise that the achievement of the interactional purpose has to be constructed through the use of effective and appropriate means: the speaker has to take into consideration the fact that reaching his/her communicative goal(s) is not only a matter of success, but also a matter of manner. As discussed with reference to models of Intercultural Competence, appropriateness is essential in the rapport-building processes while interacting, too, where it is important to respect and understand the other participants' perspectives. The ability to strategically manage interaction also focuses on how this management occurs: a competent ELF speaker should be able to understand the most appropriate manner to negotiate meaning and build shared understanding in the most respectful and successful way. As mentioned in Chapter 1, correctness and appropriateness in ELF Transcultural Communication are to be established in situ; therefore, the dimension of Strategic Communicative Interaction Management is fundamental in managing the speaker's linguistic and cultural knowledge, resources and practices to effectively and appropriately achieve their communicative goal(s). Moreover, a competent ELF speaker should be able to flexibly and dynamically use the resources at his/her disposal and to adapt and accommodate his/her meaning-making process to the needs required in a certain interaction (Baker, 2015b: 177). As pointed out earlier, this strategic management does not cover only linguistic means of communication, but all the resources (linguistic, non-linguistic, cultural, and so on) that are available in that moment to the speaker, since interaction is not limited to language, but it is a dynamic and ever-changing process of meaning-making involving the participants, the context of the interaction, the linguistic and cultural practices used by the interlocutors and the role of language and culture in communication (Baker, 2015b: 177). In other words, what is fundamental in ELF Transcultural Communication is the meaning negotiation process that allows for the construction and establishment of a shared frame of reference; as Seidlhofer (2011: 98) explains,

we can observe ELF users absorbed in the ad hoc, situated negotiation of meaning – an entirely pragmatic undertaking in that the focus is on establishing the indexical link between the code and the context, and a creative process in that the code is treated as malleable and adjustable to the requirements of the moment. These requirements have to do with the message speakers want to convey as well as a host of other factors impinging on the accessibility and acceptability of what is said in terms of clarity, time constraints, and on-line processability, memory, available repertoires, social relationships, and shared knowledge.

Accordingly, the Strategic Communicative Interaction Management dimension refers to the ability to effectively and appropriately manage this continuous negotiation, taking into account the diversity of factors, expectations, aspirations, forces, and processes that influence and affect communication.

In addition to awareness of the multiple and fluid perspectives that intertwine in ELF Transcultural Communication, a competent ELF speaker is aware that understanding is an active and joint process that is sustained and co-constructed by all the participants involved, thus cooperation and negotiation become paramount in balancing and managing the knitting of diverse and fluid communicative lines. As Cogo and Dewey (2012: 45) explain, "understanding is [...] seen as a process by which participants engage in building common ground or joint knowledge, rather than taking these for granted". As already illustrated, ELF Transcultural Communication is founded on a negotiated, emergent and fluid framework of reference that is continuously developed through negotiation, accommodation and mediation processes. Furthermore, as discussed in §2.1, understanding is a process that is to be seen as scaled: understanding and non-understanding are situated at the two ends of a continuum and they can always be defined according to a degree of comprehension (Kaur, 2009: Chapter 3). Accordingly, communication is characterised by degrees of understanding that can swing between full comprehension, non-understanding and misunderstanding: a competent ELF speaker knows that communication and miscommunication are both part of the communicative process and he/she can use his/her resources

effectively and appropriately in order to reach understanding and to solve possible miscommunications or communicative breakdowns (Kaur, 2009: 20; Pitzl, 2010: 18-21).

2.4.4 Creativity

The final dimension, that of Creativity, refers to the ability to adopt and adapt linguistic resources and to use them 'creatively' to express the speaker's intended meaning. It is closely connected to the first dimension, since a high degree of awareness allows for a more conscious and critical use of the resources available in communication. In addition, a competent use of Comprehension and Production Skills can support a more comprehensive understanding of the manifestations of language and culture in ELF Transcultural Communication, building a sense of ownership that does not depend on a standard and exonormative authority but that is based on the speaker's creative, appropriate and effective use of the resources at his/her disposal. As discussed in Chapter 1, the 'native speaker' model is no longer a suitable point of reference for ELF use and Standard English norms cannot serve as communicative rules valid universally in all ELF transcultural contexts. As Kohn (2015: 53) underscores, 'deviant' forms and structures do not result in communicative problems per se, but they can instead provide opportunities to negotiate common grounds towards successful communication. An ELF competent speaker is aware that he/she is entitled to use a great variety of linguistic resources and that he/she can adopt and adapt them freely as he/she sees fit for that particular communicative context, without having to feel incorrect or incompetent only because 'native speaker' or Standard English norms are not taken as the model for language use. Several studies have proved that creative use of linguistic resources can result in positive and successful exchanges (e.g. Kecskes, 2020; Pitzl, 2018) and that they are a productive way to co-construct mutual understanding and negotiate shared meaning. ELF speakers ought then to realise and acknowledge that a creative use of all the linguistic resources available can be very fruitful in communication and learn how to take advantage of this powerful tool.
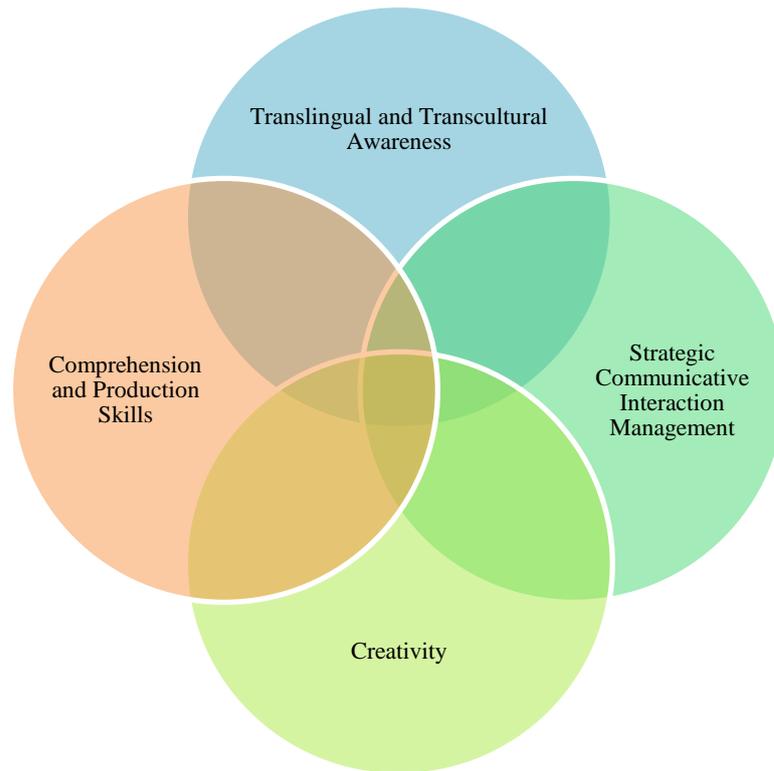
Figure 1: ELF Transcultural Competence: the 4 dimensions I suggest.

As summarised in Figure 1, ELF Transcultural Competence comprises four dimensions: Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, Comprehension and Production Skills, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, and Creativity. These dimensions are closely intertwined and take into account the complex and emergent nature of language and culture, and their relevant role in ELF Transcultural Communication. They account for the linguistic dimension by considering the linguistic forms and manifestations not only of the English language, but also of how it is used in ELF, together with other multilingual resources. Moreover, they remark the importance of negotiation and of the process of co-construction of mutual understanding through communication strategies, as well as other linguistic and non-linguistic resources. Finally, they try to acknowledge the speaker's ownership and freedom over the linguistic means he/she decides to use to communicate effectively and appropriately in ELF transcultural contexts.

It is against this framework that the present dissertation aims at investigating the use of communication strategies. The dimension of Strategic Communicative

Interaction Management described above constitutes the main backdrop for the data analysis that will be presented in Chapter 4, since it is focused on the importance of negotiation and on the strategic use of the linguistic resources available to the speaker. As discussed above, communication strategies are one of the primary tools to strategically manage interaction in ELF transcultural contexts and they are thus fundamental in the processes of meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding. Indeed, as will be further discussed in Chapter 5, the ability to successfully use communication strategies is an important skill in ELF Transcultural Communication. The following sections will outline research studies in communication strategies first from a SLA perspective, to then discuss how they have been examined in ELF research.

2.5 The use of communication strategies: from compensation to active meaning negotiation

As discussed in §2.1, negotiation is fundamental to co-construct mutual understanding and build common ground in ELF contexts, where it cannot be taken for granted that the participants' linguistic and cultural backgrounds are shared. ELF Transcultural Communication refers to these contexts, since the linguistic and cultural practices performed are fluid and dynamic and norms about what is appropriate and correct have to be negotiated by the participants involved in each communicative context. Hence, in ELF transcultural contexts it is fundamental to be able to use communication strategies in order to negotiate meaning and effectively and appropriately communicate. As discussed in the previous section, the dimension related to the strategic management of the interaction refers also to the successful use of communication strategies to negotiate meaning and build mutual understanding. Before looking at how communication strategies are used in ELF transcultural contexts – as will be seen in Chapter 4 – an outline of how communication strategies have been conceptualised until today first in SLA and then in ELF research will be provided. Research on communication strategies started during the 1970s within the field of Second Language Acquisition and "following the recognition that the mismatch between L2 speakers' linguistic resources and communicative intentions leads to a

number of systematic language phenomena whose main function is to handle difficulties or breakdowns in communication" (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997: 174). Early studies focused on understanding the kinds of compensation tools that learners employ while using the target language with 'native speakers', where communication strategies were mainly conceived of as means to resolve communicative problems derived from L2 learners' linguistic deficiency.

The terminology used to address the linguistic and non-linguistic strategies used by learners to deal with communicative problems is very diversified in SLA research: some scholars prefer the term 'learning strategies', to identify "an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language", others use the expression 'production strategies', to refer to "an attempt to use one's linguistic system efficiently and clearly, with a minimum effort", while others choose 'perception strategies' referring to "an attempt to interpret incoming utterances efficiently, with least effort" (Tarone, 1983: 61, 66-68). These differentiations show the different approaches that have been adopted when studying communication strategies; as Ollinger (2012: 43) points out, the boundaries between these definitions are generally blurred and often overlapping. As it will be seen, researchers examining communication strategies developed several definitions and taxonomies, without however coming to a universally accepted model.

In general, some conceptualisations conceive communication strategies as elements pertaining to the cognitive process of language learning, while others see them as part of interactional work performed by the participants. Consequently, research on the topic can be divided into two main approaches: a psycholinguistic view and an interactional view. The former refers to communication strategies as mental processes that underlie language behaviour in dealing with communicative problems, while the latter addresses them as part of interactional work to improve the meaning negotiation process (Nakatani & Goh, 2007: 207). The interactional perspective is the one taken in ELF studies, where communication strategies are seen as tools to pre-empt and resolve communicative problems jointly in interaction. In the following sections, the psycholinguistic and the interactional

approaches will be illustrated, to then focus on how ELF studies have conceptualised and analysed communication strategies.

2.5.1 Communication strategies - the psycholinguistic approach

Selinker was the first scholar to use the term 'communication strategies', seeing them as part of the processes that contribute to the development of the learner's interlanguage (1972: 216-217). Interested in a psycholinguistic theory of second language learning, Selinker (1972: 215) identified five processes, namely, language transfer, transfer-of-training, strategies of second-language learning, strategies of second-language communication, and overgeneralization of target language linguistic material. These processes are conceived according to the kind of errors and fossilised uses of linguistic forms in the target language. Selinker (1972: 216-217) distinguishes between learning strategies, that "are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to the material to be learned", and communication strategies, that "are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to communication with a native speaker of the TL [target language]". Since the focus of the present dissertation is not on learning strategies but on communication strategies, the discussion will focus on the latter category. As it appears from the definition offered by Selinker, communication strategies are used in order to speak in a manner that mimics communication between, and with, 'native speakers', when the learner realises that he/she has not an adequate "linguistic competence with regard to some aspect of the TL" (Selinker, 1972: 219). However, Selinker (1972: 219) himself acknowledged that the concept of 'strategy' was unclear and hard to define at the time, pointing out that the conscious or subconscious nature of the use of communication strategies is hardly determinable and quite ambiguous.

After Selinker's seminal study, there have been several attempts to pinpoint what communication strategies are and how they can be categorised. Early research continued within a SLA perspective, thus linking the use of communication strategies to the process of learning a second language and to learners' use of the target language. According to this psycholinguistic approach, communication strategies are seen as compensation tools that the learner performs to compensate

for an insufficient linguistic competence in the use of a target language (Konakahara, 2012: 201-202). Færch and Kasper (1983: 36) describe them as "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal", while Corder (1983: 16) defines them as "a systemic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulties". These definitions all highlight the use of communication strategies as tools to compensate and cover up for a lack of linguistic knowledge in the target language, intended as 'native speaker' use. Inside this psycholinguistic approach, Yule and Tarone (1997) distinguish between the 'profligate', 'the Pros', and the 'conservative', the Cons', views. The Pros prefer a more unrestricted description of communication strategies categories and focus on variability in language use; they usually separate reduction strategies and achievement strategies, focusing on the description of observed performance data; in turn, the Cons put more attention on the psychological processes underlying second language use, stressing the importance of compensatory strategies (Yule & Tarone, 1997: 17-19).

Since the present dissertation focuses on language use observable in communication, the psycholinguistic approach that the Pros adopt is important to understand one possible perspective that can be used in analysing communication strategies. One example that follows this standpoint is Tarone et al. (1983), who define communication strategies as "a systemic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systemic target language rules have not been formed" (1983: 5). In addressing the learner's lack of acquisition of some aspects of the target language, they identify six main types of communication strategies that help learners to cope with their lack of linguistic knowledge. The first one is 'transfer from the native language' and refers to phonological, morphological, syntactic, or lexical transfers, that are regarded in a negative light since they result in inappropriate and incorrect uses of the target language. The second strategy is 'overgeneralisation', that is, the generalised application of a rule of the target language in forms or contexts where it is perceived by its native speakers as inappropriate. This it is also related to the third strategy, the wrong use of 'prefabricated patterns' in the L2, that is, the use

of "'regular patterned segment[s] of speech' employed 'without knowledge of [their] underlying structure, but with the knowledge as to which particular situations call for what patterns'" (Tarone et al., 1983: 8). The fourth strategy is 'overelaboration' and refers to the learner's attempt to produce elaborated linguistic forms in the target language that yet results in overformal and unnatural uses. The firth strategy, 'epenthesis', refers to the L2 phonological level: the learner does not correctly pronounce consonant clusters and instead introduces additional vowel sounds. Finally, the last strategy refers to 'avoidance' of rules or forms of the target language that have still to be learnt or mastered by the learner, who tries to avoid and bypass them.

Another prominent study that follows a psycholinguistic approach is the one carried out by Færch and Kasper (1983), who identify two criteria to define communication strategies: problem-orientedness and consciousness. Problem-orientedness refers to the high probability for L2 learners to encounter communicative problems while speaking in the target language, where communication strategies are conceived of as tools to deal with such problems (1983: 31); in turn, consciousness refers to the learner's awareness that communicative breakdowns may occur and to the importance of understanding how they arise and how they can be solved in order to avoid possible failures more efficiently (1983: 32). Following this perspective, Færch and Kasper distinguish between two major types of behaviours that learners can adopt in order to deal with communicative problems: "learners can either solve such problems by adopting *avoidance behaviour*, trying to do away with the problem, normally by changing the communicative goal, or by relying on *achievement behaviour*, attempting to tackle the problem directly by developing an alternative plan" (1983: 36, italics in the original). In other words, avoidance behaviour refers to the learner's attempt to avoid the cause of the communicative breakdown by changing his/her communicative purpose, while achievement behaviour relates to the direct identification of the communicative problem and to the learner's explicit attempt to solve it to reach his/her communicative goal. These two ways to respond determine the kind of communication strategies learners can use: reduction strategies are governed by avoidance behaviour and achievement

strategies ruled by achievement behaviour. Reduction strategies are further divided into 'formal' and 'functional', where the former indicates the use of a reduced systems of rules and forms to guarantee a smooth and stable interaction, while the latter refers to the learner's restriction of his/her own communicative aim in order to avoid a problem in communication (1983: 38-44). Achievement strategies, on the other hand, are used to solve the problem: the learner tries to expand his/her resources instead of avoiding or restricting language use; this kind of strategies is further divided into compensatory strategies, that serve to compensate for the learner's linguistic inadequate Communicative Competence, and retrieval strategies, that aim at retrieving those problematic language items that the learner does not seem to be able to access (1983: 45-52).

The psycholinguistic approach focuses on the cognitive processes that underline the use of communication strategies, with a SLA perspective on the learner who is seen as an incompetent speaker that needs to use verbal and non-verbal moves to compensate for his/her lack of linguistic knowledge. This conceptualisation is thus unsuitable to investigate the use of communication strategies in ELF contexts: ELF speakers negotiate meaning in interaction not because they are incompetent speakers, but because they do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and therefore need to build a common frame of reference. In the following section the interactional approach to communication strategies will be described, illustrating its focus on the interactional achievement of mutual understanding, that lies the foundations for ELF research on the use of communication strategies.

2.5.2 Communication Strategies - the interactional approach

The second main approach in analysing communication strategies is set within an interactional perspective. Studies following this approach conceive communication strategies as "a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (Tarone, 1980: 420) or as "elements in the ongoing and contingent meaning-creating process of communication" (Wagner & Firth, 1997: 325). Scholars working within this perspective adopt a conversation analytic viewpoint

and argue that communication strategies serve not only to face and solve communicative problems, but also to help inferential work to construct meaning in interaction (Konakahara, 2012: 202). This approach moves away from a SLA perspective and considers language users in real-life communication: it hence sees speakers as legitimate users of the language who jointly solve communicative problems that may arise in interaction, and not as inadequate learners that need to mimic an ideal 'native speaker' (Konakahara, 2012: 202).

One of the first studies to adopt such a perspective is the one by Tarone (1980), where communication strategies are defined as tools to cooperatively negotiate meaning when it is not shared (1980: 420). Her definition, even in early times of research on this topic, moves away from approaching communication strategies as mere tools of compensation for lack of linguistic knowledge of the target language, and emphasises the interactional dimension that negotiation has in communication (Ollinger, 2012: 46; Vettorel, 2019: 186). However, it is important to mention that Tarone (1980: 418) still analyses the use of communication strategies within an interlanguage perspective, where speakers are seen as learners with an incomplete communicative repertoire. Nonetheless, her approach was one of the first to emphasise the significance of a joint meaning-making process and of cooperation between interlocutors. Tarone (1980: 419) also sets out clear criteria to identify communication strategies in order to differentiate them from other kinds of strategies (production strategies and learner strategies). She argues that the use of communication strategies concerns the conveying of an intended meaning in situations where this meaning is thought not to be shared; the speaker thus has a choice to make, as described in the following steps:

1. A speaker desires to communicate meaning x to a listener;
2. The speaker believes the linguistic or sociolinguistic structure desired to communicate meaning x is unavailable or is not shared with the listener;
3. The speaker chooses to:
a. Avoid—not attempt to communicate meaning x; or
b. Attempt alternate means to communicate meaning x. The speaker stops trying alternatives when it seems clear to the speaker that there is shared meaning

Tarone's (1980) perspective highlights the interactional work communication is based on, and the active co-construction of meaning that goes on in interaction. However, as some researchers suggest, Tarone's (1980, 1983) study is still in-between the two strands, the psycholinguistic and the interactional one, since on the one hand it considers language learning as a cognitive process and on the other communication strategies as interactive means that show the interactive nature of communication (Konakahara, 2012: 202). On this matter, Wagner and Firth (1997: 324-325, italics in the original) criticise Tarone (1980, 1983) for the attempt to merge two incompatible paradigms, since one approach focuses on individual cognitive process and the other on interactional joint work:

> while the psycholinguistic approach to CS [communication strategies] is interested in speech production, the essence of the interactional approach – the approach we are espousing here – investigates how communication is accomplished as a situated, contingent, 'locally managed' achievement. Since code-related problems are a prominent feature of (some) native speaker–non-native speaker discourse-based interactions, its study may shed light on encoding problem-solving techniques in interactions – as far as these problems are related to meaning and, crucially for us, *made public* in the talk.

Wagner and Firth (1997) also argue that the interactional approach their work is based upon sees communication strategies as elements of the communicative act that emerge from interaction, and not as elements of cognitive processes occurring in the speaker's mind and determining his/her behaviours. Moreover, they focus on the interactional aspect of communication, considering both speaker and listener as actors in the meaning-making process; accordingly, they argue, this approach calls for an emic perspective, since only the participants themselves can discern what is problematic and how they solve communicative problems: in this sense, the communication strategies used "are available to the analyst only to the extent that they have been produced and reacted upon by the parties to the talk" (Wagner & Firth, 1997: 325-326). Consequently, an interactional approach can focus only on the explicit (overt) use of communication strategies that is

observable in naturally occurring interactions and not on both overt and covert elements, which are the focus of the psycholinguistic approach.

In another article, Firth and Wagner (1997) also highlight the importance of shifting away from a Second Language Acquisition perspective towards a more contextually based and socially constructed view of language use. They argue that the traditional perspective adopted in Second Language Acquisition studies "is individualistic and mechanistic" and "fails to account in a satisfactory way for interactional and sociolinguistic dimensions of language", while a balance between attention to cognitive processes and the social and interactional dimensions of language use should be adopted (1997: 285-286). Moreover, they also highlight that the SLA notions of non-native speaker, learner and interlanguage are seen as oversimplified and uncriticised, taken for granted. In turn, research should go beyond such stereotyped concepts and consider language use in interaction from an emic perspective: identity is not defined only by a 'non-native' or a learner status, but should be examined according to what is relevant and openly addressed by the participants themselves in interaction (1997: 285-286). From this perspective, communication strategies should be analysed not from a deficient and problem-solving perspective, but as tools used to achieve a successful interaction in a joint process (1997: 288-291). As Firth and Wagner (1997: 290) highlight, "meaning, from this perspective, is not an individual phenomenon consisting of private thoughts executed and then transferred from brain to brain, but a social and negotiable product of interaction, transcending individual intentions and behaviours". This means that an emic and language-in-use approach to look at communicative acts should be preferred to a perspective that focuses only on the psychological and cognitive processes that underlie communicative behaviour. As will been outlined in the following section, Wagner and Firth's (1997) conceptualisation is in line with ELF research and, indeed, they are among the first scholars who analysed communication strategies in ELF interactions.

This interactional perspective is also promoted by Kasper (1997), who emphasises how interaction is jointly constructed and how the learner and 'non-native' status are not relevant as such, but only if directly addressed by the participants to the

interaction (1997: 353-357). Kasper (1997:359) also addresses intercultural communication, arguing how culture and identity have an important role in communication and in the cooperative process of meaning-making; he stresses that cooperation and solidarity are not to be taken for granted, but have to be approached from an emic perspective, that analyses how communication is constructed and how different contexts and relations affect interaction and model it differently.

A similar approach to the interactional one is suggested by Gumperz (1982), who conceives communication as a social activity where meaning is jointly negotiated and interpreted according to the particular context in which the interaction takes place. The scholar takes an interactional sociolinguistic perspective and underscores that "diversity of background and communicative conventions come to take on important signalling functions in everyday interaction" (1982: 7). Gumperz (1982) points out that in order to negotiate meaning and participate in communication, speakers need to go beyond grammatical competence: they are required abilities and knowledge that cannot be based on preconceptions, on linguistic and cultural norms or on the adherence to precise grammatical norms. Instead, Gumperz suggests that interacting entails sharing (at some level) grammatical and social rules and a joint effort to achieve a common interpretation of meaning; nonetheless, it does not necessarily follow that speakers share such rules to the same degree – norms and efforts can indeed greatly vary, and therefore, discourse strategies are necessary to manage interaction and to reach a common and shared interpretation of meaning (1982: 29-30). As Gumperz (1982: 35) emphasises, it is important to focus "on the strategies that govern the actor's use of lexical, grammatical, sociolinguistic and other knowledge in the production and interpretation of messages in context". His approach does not conceive discourse strategies as compensation tools, but rather he sees them as resources used to manage the interactional process of joint meaning making and negotiation in a context-bound way.

As will be further discussed in the following section, the interactional approach to communication strategies has been the starting point for research on the topic from an ELF perspective.

2.5.3 Communication Strategies and ELF research

As seen in the previous sections, communication strategies have been traditionally theorised following two main approaches, one psycholinguistic and one interactional. Psycholinguistic research focusing on communication strategies from a SLA perspective conceives them as problem-solving devices to compensate for a lack of Communicative Competence and linguistic knowledge. On the other hand, the interactional strand that has developed since the 1990s considers communication strategies as interactional means that are used to jointly construct meaning in online interaction. ELF research on communication strategies has moved within this interactional dimension, detached from a deficiency perspective and seeing active negotiation of meaning as a fundamental process in ELF. The approach taken by Wagner and Firth (1997) and partly by Kasper (1997), described above, can thus be seen as closely related to ELF research, since both perspectives consider naturally occurring communication as a joint process of meaning-construction to which all participants take part, and emphasise the importance of language use, identity and culture (Vettorel, 2019: 186-187). Moreover, as pioneering researchers in the study of the use of communication strategies in ELF contexts, Firth and Wagner (1997) highlight the fact that 'native' and 'non-native' speaker status are not relevant, and above all, they are not to be conceived of within a model that sees the former as superior and the latter as incompetent and deficient. ELF research has challenged even further traditional notions of 'non-native' and 'native' speakers, going beyond this distinction and seeing ELF speakers as users in their own right and as owners of the language (Widdowson, 1994, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2011). Since negotiation and accommodation processes are essential in the co-construction of meaning, particularly in ELF contexts, communication strategies play a significant role in offering means to effectively and appropriately negotiate meaning in ELF interactions. In this section, ELF research on communication strategies will be outlined, focusing on the terminology used and on the results that literature on the topic has shown.

2.5.3.1 Terminology – issues

As seen in the previous section, terminology referring to communication strategies has been diversified and fuzzy in traditionally-oriented studies, using a variety of terminological labels. In ELF research different frameworks have been taken into consideration, usually adapting previous categorisations used in psycholinguistic and interactional approaches (Vettorel, 2019: 188). For example, Cogo (2009: 254) speaks of 'pragmatic strategies' as 'accommodation strategies', identifying them as "speech patterns" that "speakers employ in order to adapt to the communicative situation they find themselves in, that is, to accommodate to their interlocutors, for communicative efficiency and cooperation". In turn, Björkman (2011, 2014) uses the expressions 'pragmatic strategies', 'communicative strategies' and 'communication strategies' as synonyms to identify moves used to solve communicative breakdowns and to pre-empt potential problems in the communicative act; however, Björkman (2014: 124) also generally refers to "strategies or other pragmatic phenomena", not providing a clear definition of what accounts for a pragmatic/communicative/communication strategy. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 115) use the general expression 'pragmatic resources' to indicate "particular strategies to achieve understanding and negotiate non-understanding"; they then differentiate between 'negotiation strategies', focusing on the meaning negotiation process going on in ELF communication, and 'interactional strategies', when the focus is on the cooperative interactional behaviours of the speakers involved.

Communication strategies in ELF research have also been addressed in different ways according to the person who performs it (i.e. actor) or their functions. Kirkpatrick (2007: 120) defines 'communicative strategies' as "specific strategies" adopted "in order to ensure that communication takes place as freely and smoothly as possible", distinguishing between speaker strategies and listener strategies, while other researchers prefer the distinction between self-initiated/same-speaker or other-initiated/other-speaker strategies (Björkman, 2014; Kaur, 2009). In turn, some studies look at them as pre-emptive/proactive/pre-realisation moves (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Kaur, 2009;

Mauranen, 2006) or retroactive/post-trouble source moves (Cogo and Dewey, 2012), focusing on the purpose they are performed for.

In some cases, ELF researchers have attempted to propose different categorisations, one example being Ollinger (2012: 44), who suggests the expression 'Strategic Language Use Behaviours' (SLUB) of the 'good ELF user' in order to avoid the problematicity inherent in the word 'strategy', not least as connoted by previous research. Ollinger's analysis focused on 11 research studies on the topic published between 2006 and 2011 in order to identify which "interactive devices/procedures/practices/moves that are used to generally enhance communication" are part of the repertoire of SLUBs of the good ELF user (2012: 74). Ollinger (2012: 74) states that "from an ELF perspective, SLUBs are actions people take to facilitate a communicative exchange". Even though the researcher rejects the term, her analysis still distinguishes between different 'strategies' (e.g. 'strategies to balance the cooperative and the territorial imperative' or 'strategies to keep it flowing'), and other moves such as comprehension checks, code-switching, the expression 'you know' (to keep the flow or as a focus marker), repetition, circumscription, confirmation checks, backchannels, and clarification requests. Nonetheless, Ollinger offers an alternative framework that provides "a portrait of the SLUBs of the good ELF user" (2012: 123), underlying the importance to enact the identified SLUBs in order to keep the interaction going, to co-create meaning and shared understanding, and to deal with and solve non-understandings when they occur.

2.5.3.2 Communication strategies in ELF

In this section existing research on the use of communication strategies in ELF contexts will be discussed. In ELF research, some studies have developed frameworks aimed at offering a comprehensive picture of the use of communication strategies in ELF interactions, while other studies have focused on the analysis of the use of single communication strategies.

One of the first studies to offer a comprehensive framework for communication strategies in ELF interactions is Kirkpatrick's (2007). He analysed audio-

recordings of group sessions with participants from the ASEAN[19] nations. According to Kirkpatrick (2007: 121-122), the strategies used by the speakers "all seem to be aimed at ensuring collaborative communication among peers who see themselves as multilinguals who have learned English as a 'second' language. In short, the strategies are aimed at ensuring communication and preserving the face of the participants". The scholar emphasises the collaborative nature of the strategies used in order to ensure a smooth interaction, classifying them according to the participants' role as speaker or listener (2007: 134). He identifies 17 strategies that are used to negotiate meaning, ensure mutual understanding and promote collaboration: lexical anticipation, lexical suggestion, lexical correction, 'don't give up' strategy, signal a request for repetition, signal a request for clarification, 'let it pass' strategy, listening to the message, spelling the word, repeating the phrase, making explicit, signal topic change explicitly, participant paraphrase, speaker paraphrase, participant prompting, avoid using local or idiomatic terms, and laughter. These strategies are explained in detail, emphasising the interactional work that the participants involved perform; Kirkpatrick (2007: 134) concludes that some of the strategies used could be "part of the conversational behaviour that constitute an emergent ASEAN ELF or ELF in general", highlighting also "the humour, goodwill and collaborative atmosphere" of the data analysed (2007: 133).

Björkman (2014) carries out an analysis of previous studies on communication strategies to illustrate her own framework for the analysis of 15 group sessions in higher education in Sweden. She differentiates between self-initiated and other-initiated communication strategies (2014: 129): the former refers to the use of explicitness strategies (i.e. repetition, simplification, signalling importance, paraphrasing), comprehension checks, and word replacement; the latter indicates confirmation checks (performed also as paraphrasing, repetition, and overt questions), clarification requests, co-creation of the message (anticipation), and word replacement. Björkman argues that the communicative acts analysed were

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[19] The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) included ten countries at the time of the study: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam (Kirkpatrick, 2007: 118-119).

aimed at a transactional achievement of a shared goal, thus the participants' attention was focused on the content and on completing the academic assignment. At the same time, as in other ELF studies, the data shows how the interactions were collaborative and cooperative in trying to reach the goal and preventing misunderstandings.

In turn, other studies on communication strategies in ELF interactions have focused on the use of a single or of a restricted number of strategies. For example, Bjørge (2010) analyses the use of backchannelling to signal active listening in the co-construction of understanding; she examines simulated business negotiations between international students and concludes that both verbal and non-verbal backchannels are an important strategy in ELF interactions to show attention and understanding, and to build rapport between speakers.

Other studies have examined the functions of repetition (Kaur, 2009; Lichtkoppler, 2007). It should be mentioned that repetition is difficult to define as a strategy in communication, since "virtually everything we say could actually be a repetition" (Lichtkoppler, 2007: 42). Lichtkoppler (2007: 43) analyses how and to which degree repetition favours a successful ELF interaction. In her analysis, Lichtkoppler (2007: 48) argues that repetition serves several functions in the co-construction of understanding in ELF; for example, it can facilitate the accomplishment of utterances, help to achieve mutual understanding and it assists with showing participation, solidarity, or attitude (2007: 48). Repetition is also used to gain time, or to give prominence to certain utterances, and to show listenership (2007: 52-57).

Kaur offers another significant study on repetition, which she defines as "the practice of re-saying some or all of the elements occurring earlier in an ongoing turn or in a preceding turn" (2009: 71). Similarly to Lichtkoppler (2007), Kaur emphasises that repetition could also be random and unintentional, therefore she restricts her definition to those utterances that hold a significant relation to the repeated element and that perform some operation in the interaction (2009: 71). Kaur differentiates between same-speaker and other-speaker repetition and her results show that repetition is used in order to secure or enhance recipient understanding, and to request clarification and confirmation of understanding

(2009: 70-122). In addition to repetition, Kaur also analyses paraphrasing, confirmation and clarification practices, showing how shared understanding is achieved through interactional and collaborative practices. Differently from Lichtkoppler (2007), paraphrasing is separated from repetition and is defined as presenting a piece of information in a different form but maintaining the same meaning (Kaur, 2009: 124). Kaur (2009: 123-180) identifies three main functions performed by the use of paraphrasing, namely, to secure and enhance recipient understanding, and to request confirmation of understanding. Moreover, Kaur (2009: 181-183) examines confirmation and clarification practices, that comprise different moves aimed at eliciting confirmations, provide clarifications or additional information. Some examples could be reformulation through the use of 'you mean', direct questions of clarification, requests for repetition, or exemplifications; the main functions they have proved to perform are eliciting confirmation of understanding or clarification, checking recipient understanding, and clarifying meaning (Kaur, 2009: 181-231). Kaur concludes that meaning negotiation and the co-construction of mutual understanding are an interactional achievement in which all participants involved play a fundamental role. Moreover, Kaur argues that these collaborative processes show that the speakers' interactional competence, i.e. "the participant's ability to use various interactional practices skilfully and meaningfully to bring about shared understanding", goes beyond language use since "users of ELF are less inclined to allow linguistic anomalies and irregularities to stand in their way of making meaning and achieving their communicative goals" (2009: 238). Kaur suggests that the speaker's interactional competence is socially constructed and context-bound, since it continues to evolve through practice, while strongly dependent on the communicative context in which the interaction takes place.

As discussed in Chapter 1, an important feature of ELF Transcultural Communication is the underlying presence, and use of multilingual/translingual resources. ELF researchers have amply analysed the use of different languages in ELF interactions, focusing on their relevance as a communication strategy in the meaning negotiation process. As seen in §1.2.2.3.1, the use of multilingual practices and the influence of the speaker's translingual knowledge are not

conceived in ELF as incorrect or inappropriate a priori, nor are they seen as the result on insufficient linguistic knowledge of English. ELF studies on the topic have often used, and still do, the term 'code-switching' even though they no longer conceive language as a fixed and stable entity. Earlier studies considered the use of differently named languages as a 'switch' between 'codes', where speakers would naturally shift from one to the other (Brunner & Diemer, 2018: 61). As already mentioned, however, in ELF research language is considered as a dynamic system and thus code-switching is seen as the dynamic "use of all linguistic resources in the speaker's multilingual repertoire" (Brunner & Diemer, 2018: 62). During the development of ELF research and the rise of the translingual paradigm (see Chapter 1), ELF scholars have revisited their terminology when referring to the use of multilingual practices in interaction. For example, Klimpfinger (2007: 38) uses the term 'code-switching' "to cover all such instances of other-language use in the ELF context", while Brunner and Diemer (2018: 63) see code-switching "as part of a continuum of more or less complex plurilingual resource use in ELF", where their definition "comprises all instances where another language than English is used (if the morpheme, word or phrase is not lexicalized in English), including interlocutors' native languages, as well as other languages and the non-English component of hybrid forms".

Even if recent ELF research acknowledges the fluid and resourceful use of multilingual practices, scholars have suggested the use of a different terminology to emphasise the shift in perspective that research has lived, from languages as fixed and separate systems to include a more fluid use of multilingual resources (see Chapter 1). One of them is Cogo (2016), who proposes the term 'multilingual resources' in order to highlight the translingual and multilingual turn in ELF research. She distinguishes between 'overt multilingual resources' and 'covert multilingual resources', where the former identify the explicit use of linguistic resources in differently named languages, and the latter refer to the influence that the speaker's multilingual repertoire has in the way he/she communicates (2016: 3-4). As mentioned in Chapter 1, Pitzl (2018) suggests the term 'Multilingual Resource Pools', that identifies the multilingual resources available to ELF speakers: "different lingual resources belonging to the interactant(s)' multilingual

repertoires are employed and become thus shared as part of a Multilingual Resource Pool" (Vettorel, 2019: 190).

The use of multilingual resources can have different functions in the meaning-making process underlying ELF interaction and in the building of shared understanding. In earlier ELF research, code-switching has been shown to be used to specify an addressee, appeal for assistance, introduce another idea, or to signal culture (Klimpfinger, 2007). More recent research has shown how multilingual and translingual practices are important in rapport building and in displaying one's identity, and how speakers often strategically use such resources to show membership, to form a relationship with the other participants, and to construct mutual understanding (Brunner & Diemer, 2018; Cogo, 2016).

As discussed above, communication strategies in ELF research have widely proved to be fundamental in the meaning negotiation process and in co-constructing mutual understanding. Moreover, it has been shown that communication strategies can be identified in several and different forms, such as repetitions, paraphrasing, the use of multilingual resources, confirmation checks, backchannels and many more, and that they are used to perform a wide range of functions. However, they are usually conceptualised as tools used to pre-empt or solve communicative problems and not as actively performed means of communication that help speakers in building a shared frame of reference. In the present dissertation a different perspective will be adopted, one that accounts for the creative force that communication strategies have in ELF Transcultural Communication and in meaning negotiation in ELF transcultural contexts.

2.5.3.3 Communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts

As discussed in the previous section, ELF studies have shown the fundamental role that communication strategies have in ELF communication, through the use of several different means aimed at meaning negotiation (e.g. repetition, multilingual resources, reformulation, etc.). The present study focuses on the investigation of how communication strategies are used in ELF transcultural contexts and which role they play in ELF Transcultural Communication.

In the present dissertation, I use the term 'communication strategies' to include all those strategic moves, both linguistic and non-linguistic, that are used in communication to negotiate meaning, co-construct mutual understanding and a shared frame of reference, thus not only to pre-empt or solve communicative problems. Accordingly, the focus will not be on the speaker's identity (as a learner for example) nor on his/her linguistic performance (e.g. 'native-like' or not), but on the interactive work that goes on during communication where speakers negotiate and co-construct understanding using all the linguistic, non-linguistic, and cultural resources at their disposal. As outlined in §2.4, the ability to strategically manage the interaction and thus to successfully use communication strategies to co-construct and negotiate meaning is a fundamental skill to be a competent speaker in ELF Transcultural Communication. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts are a fundamental tool to actively co-construct a shared frame of reference and mutual understanding, as the data analysis will show, communication strategies are not only used to pre-empt or solve communicative problems, but they are actively performed to co-create meaning, thus having an essential role in ELF usage.

2.6 Chapter summary

Chapter 2 focused on the importance of negotiating meaning and co-constructing mutual understanding in ELF transcultural contexts, that is, in contexts where linguistic and cultural frames of reference cannot be taken for granted and need to be negotiated in situ among the participants involved. It has been argued that communication strategies play an essential role in the negotiation processes that underlie ELF use and that it is fundamental to be able to effectively and appropriately make use of all the resources available in order to be a competent speaker in ELF Transcultural Communication.

It was illustrated how traditional definitions of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence cannot provide an appropriate framework for competencies for communication needed in ELF transcultural contexts, and a new framework linking Kohn's ELF Competence with Baker's

Intercultural Awareness was suggested. This model – ELF Transcultural Competence – is aimed at taking into consideration the dynamic, fluid, complex and emergent nature of language and culture and their mutual and interrelated relationship in ELF Transcultural Communication. This framework comprises four interrelated and interdependent dimensions. The first one is Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, that concerns the awareness that language and culture are two fluid, dynamic and complex systems, which practices emerge in the interaction and continue to change and evolve. Speakers need to be aware of the implications that language and culture have on communication and of the diverse linguistic and cultural practices that can co-exist in ELF Transcultural Communication. The second dimension – Comprehension and Production Skills – refers to the ability to use the linguistic resources available to the speaker. It is indeed important to acquire and develop one's ability to make sense of the manifold linguistic practices that are performed in ELF transcultural contexts and to be able to actively use the linguistic resources at disposal to convey the desired message. The third dimension is Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, is directly related to the main backdrop of the present study, since it concerns the strategic use of the linguistic and cultural resources available to the speaker, and particularly to the active use of communication strategies to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding. Finally, the last dimension is that of Creativity, or the ability to creatively use the linguistic and cultural resources at disposal to convey the desired meaning in interaction. This dimension directly relates to building a speaker's self-confidence and language ownership by offering a perspective in which the linguistic means of expressions (as well as cultural practices) no longer have to comply to standard and exonormative norms, but can be freely adopted and adapted to respond to the speaker's communicative requirements.

ELF Transcultural Communication is based on a continuous process of negotiation and construction of a shared linguistic and cultural frame of reference, that the participants continue to build and negotiate together, strategically managing the available resources they have, using them to achieve their communicative goal in the most effective and appropriate way. Chapter 3 will

introduce the study carried out for the present dissertation, describing the methodology used to analyse the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural informal contexts in two ELF corpora, the VOICE corpus and the ViMELF corpus. As will be seen, communication strategies in the data represent a fundamental tool in building and managing the interaction, especially in contexts where linguistic and cultural forms and practices cannot be taken for granted but emerge in communication.

CHAPTER 3 –
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In Chapter 1, the core issues in ELF research and in Intercultural Communication studies were discussed, proposing to link together these two research fields in order to provide a more comprehensive framework for the analysis of the linguistic and the cultural dimensions in ELF. Hence, the conceptualisation ELF Transcultural Communication has been suggested in order to emphasise this joint perspective and the translingual and transcultural approach used in this thesis, that pays equal attention to language and culture as complex and dynamic systems emerging in communication. In Chapter 2, ELF Transcultural Competence was proposed as a renewed model of reference to account for the abilities that are necessary to ELF speakers in ELF transcultural contexts. This framework comprises four dimensions – namely, Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, Comprehension and Production Skills, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, and Creativity. The present dissertation especially focuses on Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, in which the ability to negotiate meaning is deemed to be fundamental to effectively and appropriately reach successful communication. The use of communication strategies is closely related to meaning negotiation, since they have an essential role in building mutual understanding, especially in contexts where the same linguistic and cultural frames of reference are not shared by participants. As already stated (see §2.5.3.3), in the present dissertation, communication strategies are defined as tools to actively co-construct mutual understanding and negotiate meaning. The aim of this dissertation is to analyse how the selected communication strategies that will be presented in the following sections are used to negotiate meaning in transcultural contexts according to the analysis of corpus data.

In this chapter, the data and the methodology used to carry out the study will be outlined. First the data set for the analysis will be defined, describing the two corpora from which data have been selected, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus. Successively, the methodology applied to analyse the selected interactions will be explained, discussing why a mixed method approach,

based on qualitative and quantitative analysis, has been adopted. After illustrating why Conversation Analysis has been adopted as the main qualitative approach, the taxonomy used for the analysis and the working definitions of the selected communication strategies will be provided, in order to illustrate the analytical scheme used. Afterwards, the quantitative approach will be outlined, describing which descriptive statistical techniques have been applied on the data analysed. Finally, as will be better explained in §3.2.3, the pilot study that was carried out to verify and refine the approach to the data analysis will be described and its implications on the methodological choices adopted in the final study explained.

3.1 Corpora and data description

As mentioned in Chapter 1, ELF corpora started to be compiled in order to provide larger and richer data to corroborate early findings and to better understand the processes underlying ELF use in authentic communication (Jenkins et al., 2015). As Mauranen (2016: 19) explains referring to ELFA, it was necessary to compile a corpus that would include "the most visible and fastest-growing use of English" and that could allow to capture the actual use of ELF in real-life communication. As introduced in §1.2.2.1, VOICE[20] and ELFA[21] were the first ELF corpora to be compiled in the early 2000s, soon followed by other similar corpora, notably examples being ACE[22] (the *Asian Corpus of English*) and WrELFA[23] (the *Written ELF in Academic Settings* corpus). While VOICE and ACE are collections interactions in educational, business and informal contexts, the former in Europe and the latter in Asia, ELFA and WrELFA focus on academic communication, spoken and written. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the majority of ELF studies relies on a variety of different-scaled corpora, compiled to analyse and study the actual use of ELF in real contexts with speakers from all around the world (Facchinetti, 2015).

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[20] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[21] https://www.helsinki.fi/en/researchgroups/english-as-a-lingua-franca-in-academic-settings/research/elfa-corpus (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[22] https://corpus.eduhk.hk/ace/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[23] https://www.helsinki.fi/en/researchgroups/english-as-a-lingua-franca-in-academic-settings/research/wrelfa-corpus#section-67179 (last accessed 26/10/2021).

ELF corpora are unique in the kind of data they collect, because they include neither learners' language nor 'native speaker' usage, but data in which ELF speakers are seen as "language users in their own right" (Cogo & Dewey, 2012: 27). In fact, "in contrast to a learner corpus […], an ELF corpus seeks to include speech in a natural, often complex mix, rather than selecting for given L1 backgrounds and comparable proficiency levels" (Mauranen, Carey & Ranta, 2015: 401); therefore, the levels of proficiency of the speakers do not necessarily coincide and, more often, they are very different (Kaur, 2009; Mauranen, 2016; Mauranen, Carey & Ranta, 2015). Additionally, in ELF corpora, native speakers of any English variety are to be considered as ELF speakers as well, since they are not regarded as norm-providers of the English language, but are rather viewed as speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background with the other participants involved and thus choose English as a common means of communication within an ELF context (Mauranen, 2016: 20). "[ELF] corpora reflect the reality of English in lingua franca use, where communication takes place between speakers of different backgrounds and skills. The result is a complex mix of Englishes in authentic co-construction of meaning" (Mauranen, Carey & Ranta, 2015: 404). Accordingly, corpus-based approaches concentrate on the actual use of language through empirically based analysis of naturally occurring interactions, thus moving away from Chomsky's linguistic competence to focus on actual speakers' performance (Mauranen, 2016).

The present study analyses data from two corpora, the Leisure subsection of the VOICE[24] corpus and the ViMELF[25] corpus, since they both include instances of naturally occurring spoken ELF communication in informal contexts. As to the choice of focusing on oral data, as the compilers of VOICE state,

> spoken interactions are immediate and at a remove from the stabilizing and standardizing influence of writing. They are overtly reciprocal and reveal the

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[24] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[25] https://www.umwelt-campus.de/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/case-project/access-vimelf/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

online negotiation of meaning in the production and reception of utterances, thus facilitating observations regarding mutual intelligibility among interlocutors.[26]

Since the main aim of the dissertation is to analyse the use of communication strategies in meaning negotiation and in the co-construction of mutual understanding, spoken data was deemed more appropriate in showing how these processes are built in communication and how they are structured on-line while the interaction is ongoing; as Mauranen (2006: 146) stresses, "in spoken encounters, the flow of discourse is interactively co-constructed, which demands a broader range of skills in the construction of meaning than in written discourse". In turn, written interaction – even in spoken-like channels such as messaging – undergoes a process of selection and filtering that still greatly affects the linguistic forms used and the practices chosen to be performed. Spoken communication has hence a more immediate nature where the speakers have little time to think and to build their discourse. This kind of data offers thus a more clear and explicit scenario on the processes of meaning negotiation that underlie ELF Transcultural Communication.

In addition to being spoken corpora, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus have been chosen among other ELF corpora because they collect data in informal settings, the focus of interest for the present work. Many studies have been carried out on academic and business settings, focusing on how ELF is used in the academic world or for business reasons (i.e. Kaur, 2009; Mauranen, 2012; Cogo, 2016; Pitzl, 2016), but few studies have focused on communication strategies in informal contexts. Amongst the latter, for example, Brunner and Diemer (2018) analyse the use of code-switching in Skype conversations from the CASE project (which ViMELF is the finalised corpus of – as will be explained below), Kalocsai (2014) examined interactions between Erasmus students, Pietikäinen (2017) focused on the multilingual resources in ELF couples, while Vettorel studied the use of ELF in personal blogs (2014) and the use of communication strategies in the meaning negotiation process (2019). Analysis and insights on the use of ELF in informal contexts is hence an underdeveloped area

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[26] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/faq (last accessed 26/10/2021); see also Seidlhofer, 2011.

of research, to which the present dissertation aims at contributing. Being based on the analysis of the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus, that offer spoken data of ELF use in informal interactions, the study indeed aims at closing a gap in ELF research by focusing on how meaning co-construction is carried out through communication strategies.

As will be outlined in the following sections, the data in the selected corpora were collected through different means of communication, one including face-to-face interactions while the other video-mediated communication; if, on the one hand, such diversity provides a richer understanding of meaning negotiation in ELF, it is also true that the use of communication strategies could be affected by differences in the medium: for example, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, the use of repetitions could be determined by problems in connection for the digital data, while in face-to-face conversations this drawback is infrequent. Another aspect that needs to be kept in mind is the fact that the two corpora do not include the speakers' perspective on how they interacted, thus the results will be limited to what can be analysed in the transcriptions; this constitutes a potential limitation in the comprehension of the process of meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding and, particularly, on the functions performed by the communication strategies used. Nonetheless, the approach chosen for the analysis, that will be described in §3.2, aims at limiting such possibility through a turn-by-turn analysis and an exclusion of the turns in which the analyst's comprehension is restricted due to incomprehensible transcriptions.

In the following sections, first the two corpora and their characterising features will be illustrated in more detail and secondly, the data selection used for the analysis will be described, presenting the final corpus investigated in the present study.

3.1.1 VOICE and VOICE-Leisure

VOICE, the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English, is a one-million-word corpus of natural-occurring face-to-face speech events, including 1,250 ELF

speakers from 49 different first languages[27]. It is divided into three main domains – Educational (situations involving institutions, teaching, training or studying), Leisure (situations involving activities that do not comprise working or studying) and Professional (situations involving special expertise) – and it includes different speech events – conversations, interviews, meetings, panels, press conferences, question-answer sessions, seminar discussions, service encounters, working group discussions and workshop discussions[28] (see Seidlhofer, 2011).

Being focused on the use of communication strategies in informal contexts, the present research study refers only to the Leisure domain of VOICE, that counts 101,216 words and contains 21 conversations and 5 interviews. The Leisure sub-corpus offers a great variety of group face-to-face interactions and the topics cover tourism, hobbies, going to the restaurant and many other events that are part of every-day life: as the website reports, "all social situations occurring during the time that is spent doing something one chooses to do when one is not working or studying"[29].

The VOICE project was carried out from 2005 to 2013, with data collection from 2001 to 2007. VOICE was the first ELF corpus to be compiled in the early 2000s and it aimed at providing natural spoken, and machine-readable data to study, to describe and to understand how ELF speakers negotiate meaning, how they cooperate during the communicative process and use ELF to accomplish their communicative goal(s). As the web page explains, "it is the ultimate aim of the VOICE project to open the way for a *large-scale* and *in-depth linguistic description* of this most common contemporary use of English by providing a

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[27] The languages are: Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Catalan, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Modern Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Maltese, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Croatian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Yoruba. https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/stats/voice20_languages (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[28] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/index.php, https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/corpus_description, https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/corpus_information (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[29] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/corpus_information (last accessed 26/10/2021).

corpus of spoken ELF interactions which will be accessible to linguistic researchers all over the world"[30].

Being at the time a pioneering enterprise that aimed at collecting large data of ELF spoken communication, the compilers had to face different kinds of issues while collecting and transcribing the data. First, one of the problems was the identification and selection of what could be called 'ELF conversations': since the field of research was in its early years, the concept of ELF was still being debated and a precise definition was still difficult to establish (Breiteneder et al., 2006). Since there was not a general consensus on what could be defined as 'ELF linguistic features', a selection criterion based on the linguistic output of the speakers was excluded, opting for the selection of "communication between fairly fluent interlocutors […] from different first language background, for whom English is the most convenient shared language" (Breiteneder et al., 2006: 163). In light of this definition, some main criteria were decided to select the kind if interactions to be collected for VOICE: speakers involved in the conversations had to have different L1s, they had to be fluent in English, and, since the aim was to collect spoken data of real-life interactions, speakers had to interact in naturally-occurring scenarios (Breiteneder et el., 2006).

Data collection took place through recordings as well as annotations of non-verbal elements, with the aid of field notes by the researchers involved (Breiteneder et al., 2006). At this stage, transcription of the conversations also raised some issues: in addition to the essential difference between spoken and written language, the compilers had to take into account elements pertaining to prosody, extra-linguistic events, and non-verbal features, in order to transcribe the conversations as faithfully as possible. Moreover, as illustrated in Chapter 1, ELF use was (and is) greatly diversified and the linguistic forms that emerge are not always easy to identify, compelling the transcribers to be trained to represent what they heard in the way it was said by the speakers and not according to standard language norms (Breiteneder et al., 2006). In order to take into account all these elements,

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[30] https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/what_is_voice, italics in the original (last accessed 26/10/2021).

recordings where accompanied by field notes and non-verbal features were also transcribed when possible (Breiteneder et al., 2006).

As will be further explained in §3.1.3, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus was chosen to be part of the data for the present analysis, for its focus on informal contexts and for the important prominence of the VOICE corpus among ELF corpora.

3.1.2 ViMELF

A more recent ELF corpus is ViMELF, the Corpus of Video-Mediated English as a Lingua Franca Conversations, that includes 20 one-to-one computer-mediated interactions between 40 participants for a total of 11,3670 words[31]. ViMELF was compiled at Trier University of Applied Sciences during the development of the CASE project, that collected Skype conversations between students attending 8 different universities (in Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, German, Italy, Spain and Sweden) between 2012 and 2019. The interactions starts with the speakers talking about a prompted topic[32]:

1- "So, what are you studying" – Course of studies and job prospects

2- "And what do you do all day?" – Life as a university student

3- "University here and there" – Different academic cultures

4- "The role and future of English" – Lingua Franca & global attitudes

5- "Should learning be virtual?" – Mobile learning, online courses: pros & cons

6- "How do you celebrate?" – Cultures and traditions

7- "Let's talk about food" – Eating habits and preferences: What do you like to eat?

8- "What's on?" – Popular Culture: Talk about your favourite TV show

After the prompt, the task required the minimum length of 30 minutes to allow for a more natural unfolding of the interaction so conversations last between 30 and 60 minutes (Brunner et al., 2017).

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[31] https://www.umwelt-campus.de/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/case-project/data-description-and-samples/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[32] https://www.umwelt-campus.de/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/case-project/data-description-and-samples/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

While the researchers who compiled the corpus state that ViMELF can be considered an academic corpus, they also point out that the context was informal and outside the university setting: "in contrast to established corpora of spoken academic language […] which mostly consist of seminar discussions, lectures, seminar and conference presentations, academic defences, and other formal and official university settings, CASE can be located at the informal end of the academic language spectrum" (Brunner et al., 2017: 5). For the present dissertation, ViMELF is considered as a corpus of informal interactions that are not academic for a number of reasons. First, the fact that participants are students who were recruited at university does not establish a priori that the content and the context of the interaction is academic. Secondly, in ViMELF the speakers involved interact while being in non-university settings, generally at home, on topics that do not include academic discussions or dialogues about seminars or group work; as a consequence, the settings where the conversations were recorded are mostly informal. Finally, even if the prompted topics are sometimes related to academic life, they do not include direct reference to academic subjects, but vary greatly; indeed, due to their required minimum length, the participants go beyond the initial task-based conversation and are free to speak about whatever topic they prefer.

While VOICE proved to be an innovative corpus at the time of its creation since it was the first ELF large corpus, it is important to note that ViMELF offers an original perspective on ELF communication as well, because participants communicate in video-mediated interactions, thus through a 'modern' means of communication, and both verbal and non-verbal elements, as well as paralinguistic and contextual features, are taken into account and carefully categorised for analysis. As a matter of fact, multimodality is a core element of ViMELF and it had of course to be taken into consideration in the transcription process: in these conversations meaning construction is a combination of linguistic and non-linguistic elements that are equally important in the understanding of the ongoing negotiation process (Brunner et al., 2017). The fact that ViMELF is the first corpus collecting Skype conversations raised several issues during the compiling process since spoken language and video recordings

bring a number of difficulties when transcribed (Brunner et al., 2017). The need to transcribe intonation, non-verbal elements, paralinguistic features, gestures and the physical context pose the question of how, and if, to account for everything that happens in the interaction or to limit, and to what extent, the level of detail of the transcription (Brunner et al., 2017). As the compilers state,

> a corpus containing audio-visual data […] needs to include more complex transcription features, since meaning-producing aspects might get lost when using the usual transcription or annotation framework. CASE compilation procedure aims at including as much of the original data as possible (suitably anonymized) to allow research in a wide range of fields.[33]

Consequently, transcriptions follow strict categorisations and account for both linguistic, non-linguistic and paralinguistic features, in order to make data as accessible as possible in all their aspects for analysis (Brunner et al., 2017).

ViMELF thus provides new and richer data on ELF communication and was included in the present analysis, as will further explained in §3.1.3. However, both Leisure and ViMELF needed to go through a selection process to form a balanced data set for this dissertation. The following section will illustrate how the interactions were selected for the analysis and the final subset.

3.1.3 Data selection

As mentioned in the previous sections, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus were chosen for the data analysis, because they collect spoken ELF informal conversations. The VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus collects face-to-face interactions between ELF speakers, both dialogues and multiparty conversations. Multimodal features are not always indicated in the transcriptions and only some audio-recordings are available; as a consequence, these features only allow for an analysis based on the transcriptions and on the linguistic practices that emerge from the interaction. Nonetheless, when possible and noted in the transcripts, the

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[33] https://www.umwelt-campus.de/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/case-project/data-description-and-samples/ (last accessed 26/10/2021).

non-verbal elements and the contextual factors are taken into consideration to better understand what is happening in the interaction. The ViMELF corpus collects video-mediated dialogues between students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and offers a detailed account of verbal and non-verbal elements, as well as paralinguistic features. Multimodality is a fundamental element of this corpus, but since it cannot be compared to the VOICE corpus, it has been excluded from the analysis and will be used when necessary to add relevant details of the communicative act.

As described in §3.1.1 and in §3.1.2, the two corpora have different sizes, thus some methodological choices related to the selection of the interactions were made in order to create a balanced subset of conversations in the data to be analysed. First, I excluded all the conversations shorter than 15 minutes from the VOICE-Leisure data set, because the discrepancy of time length could result in a different use of communication strategies; second, I excluded the pilot study of the CASE project and the conversations transcribed without the video, since the data had prompt topics that were different from the ones used for ViMELF[34] and the transcriptions of only audio files could present a different depth of details given for the other conversations. After this selection, 14 conversations from VOICE-Leisure, approximately 85,884 total words, and 14 conversations from ViMELF, around 80,014 total words, were chosen for the analysis. The final corpus to be investigated thus comprises 28 conversations lasting from 15 to 141 minutes, for a total of approximately 17 hours, comprising about 165,898 words, as presented in Table 3.

Of these conversations, three interactions per corpus were selected for a pilot study to test the methodology chosen for the analysis. As will be explained in §3.2.3, these six conversations have been selected according to their topics and length in order to have a representative and smaller sub-corpus, to analyse whether the approach chosen for the analysis was adequate for the whole study.

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[34] The initial phase of the CASE project has been carried out between Saarland and Sofia Universities and it used different prompted topics from those described in §3.1.2 that have been renumbered afterwards in order to include the conversations in the main corpus.

The initial results have indeed determined some changes in the methodology, as will be discussed later.

	Speech event	Duration (approx.)	Word count (approx.)	Participants	
				Male	Female
1	VOICE- LEcon8	30'	3114	1	4
2	VOICE- LEcon227	15'	2538	2	0
3	VOICE- LEcon229	21'	3285	1	1
4	VOICE- LEcon329	30'	4704	1	3
5	VOICE- LEcon417	17'	2392	0	4
6	VOICE- LEcon420	29'	4576	1	2
7	VOICE- LEcon545	37'	7413	1	6
8	VOICE- LEcon547	15'	1220	1	3
9	VOICE- LEcon548	45'	6909	1	4
10	VOICE- LEcon560	2h21'	21867	4	4
11	VOICE- LEcon562	1h14'	15388	4	4
12	VOICE- LEcon565	28'	3979	1	1
13	VOICE- LEcon566	49'	5634	1	1
14	VOICE- LEcon575	24'	2865	1	1
15	ViMELF_01SB32FL06	39'	5255	1	1
16	ViMELF_01SB36FL10	31'	5164	2	0
17	ViMELF_01SB75HE01	35'	6831	0	2
18	ViMELF_01SB78HE04	33'	5571	1	1
19	ViMELF_02SB80HE06	39'	5735	1	1
20	ViMELF_04SB33FL31	41'	6440	0	2
21	ViMELF_04SB69ST05	33'	4457	0	2
22	ViMELF_05SB70ST07	33'	4569	1	1

23	ViMELF_05SB93HE19	34'	7223	0	2
24	ViMELF_06SB73ST14	42'	5249	0	2
25	ViMELF_07SB50FL34	39'	7257	2	0
26	ViMELF_07SB51ST01	32'	5128	1	1
27	ViMELF_07SB53ST03	33'	4793	1	1
28	ViMELF_08SB106HE03	44'	6342	1	1
TOTAL	28	17h01'	165898	31	55

Table 3: Final data selection.

3.2 Methodology

The methodology of the study is based on a mixed approach that combines a qualitative and a quantitative analysis. First the interactions were analysed through a qualitative approach based on Conversation Analysis, that was used to identify through a structured analytical scheme the communication strategies and the functions performed by the speakers. Secondly, a quantitative approach was applied to the results of the qualitative analysis, in order to provide more insights on the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts. As discussed above, a pilot study was conducted to test the methodological choices applied before adopting the chosen methodology to the whole data set.

In the following sections the methodology will be described in more detail, focusing on how Conversation Analysis can be a fruitful method for ELF research and on the analytical scheme used to carry out a classification of communication strategies and functions as objective as possible. The quantitative approach adopted will then be illustrated to clarify why a mixed method approach has been used in the present study. Finally, the pilot study will be described to illustrate some major methodological issues and the choices made to overcome them.

3.2.1 Conversation Analysis for ELF Transcultural Communication

In the present study the data is first analysed through the use of a qualitative approach based on Conversation Analysis (henceforth CA). CA is a methodology that aims at investigating social interaction and its underlying structure through

the analysis of talk-in-interaction (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). In CA the object of investigation is not only the linguistic form an utterance takes, but also, and primarily, the action performed through language:

> CA is a radical departure from other forms of linguistically oriented analysis in that the production of utterances, and more particularly the sense they obtain, is seen not in terms of the structure of the language, but first and foremost as a practical social accomplishment. (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998: 14)

CA aims at analysing why a contribution occurs, why it occurs in a certain form and why it occurs in a precise moment – that is, "Why that, in that way, right now?" (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973: 299). CA thus always investigates an utterance in context, as part of a process of continuous negotiation, and from an emic perspective that assigns relevance only to what is made relevant by the participants themselves (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Gumperz, 1982; Seedhouse, 2004).

According to CA any conversation follows certain dynamics and the way in which these dynamics can be unfolded is through the investigation of turn-taking, that is, through the analysis of how interactional sequences are constructed (Sacks et al., 1974). The turn-taking system shows how interaction is inherently ordered: turns are neither pre-fixed sequences, nor chaotic contributions; they seem to occur following a precise order and with a precise timing, even when the interaction apparently looks confused (Sacks et al., 1974; Wooffitt, 2005). Turns tend to occur one at a time and the floor, i.e. the interactional space, is generally occupied by one speaker and data analysis has shown that even the order in which speakers contribute to the conversation is regularised by some rules that naturally govern any interaction (Sacks et al., 1974; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). CA hence provides a detailed and meticulous method to look at data and to carry out data analysis, especially through the examination of the structure of the interaction; this has led to important insights on linguistic patterns, prompting a shift from a norm-following model to a more dynamic awareness of real-life linguistic practices (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Fox et al., 2013). These aspects have also made CA an adaptable and effective method that has been applied to different

scopes in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics, including ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies (see Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Fox et al., 2013; Kaur, 2021; Pietikäinen, 2017).

Nonetheless, there are some issues that should be considered when undertaking a CA-based analysis of ELF transcultural interactions. As Firth (2012) points out, CA is based on the assumption that the co-membership of analyst and participants to the same speech community leads to a shared linguistic and cultural background, that helps the analyst to develop justifiable observations on the data. This perspective validates the analyst's interpretations as 'correct' on the basis that he/she belongs to the same speech community of the participants and thus *knows* how language is performed and why some linguistic choices are preferred over others:

> the 'working assumption' of a community-wide shared competence in and knowledge of language is viewed, in CA, as a resource for both participants and conversation analysts alike for, as Sacks (1995, p. 116 [Lecture 14, 1964]) puts it: "we [professional analysts] can use that information which we have as members of the same society that these […] people are in". This "information", taken to be accessible by dint of co-membership of the lingua-cultural community, enabled Sacks and his colleagues[35] to recognize phenomena as "ordinary", "canonical", or "anomalous", and to make "intuitively plain observations" (Jefferson & Scenkein, 1978, p. 170, n. 10) on the collected data. (Firth, 2012: 1044)

However, as already discussed, ELF speakers do not belong to any precise speech and cultural community and ELF communication mostly shows flexible and diversified usage (Firth, 1996). Moreover, even when co-membership to the same speech or cultural community is present, it does still not guarantee a proper interpretation by analysts of what is going on in the interaction and why the participants act as they do. As illustrated in the first chapter, ELF Transcultural

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[35] During the 1960s, Harvey Sacks, collaborating with Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, was one of the first researchers who started to investigate social acts through the analysis of language (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Seedhouse, 2004).

Communication shows indeed a great variety of linguistic means that are implemented to co-construct and negotiate mutual understanding; language and culture are emergent and complex systems that continuously evolve and common ground between the participants needs to be negotiated in loco. Accordingly, even if the analyst and the participants come from the same (national) speech community, their linguistic and cultural backgrounds could (and possibly would) greatly differ and thus the researcher's interpretation of the data would need to be justified in the data itself and not according to a hypothetical common background.

Another issue concerns the CA turn-taking system, that could can present possible obstacles for the analysis of ELF interactions. In early CA, turns were thought to occur one at a time and speakers would not usually speak together or occupy the floor simultaneously; turn-interventions, i.e. instances where one of the participants interferes in or overlaps with the speaker's turn, were usually conceived as rare and brief since they disrupted the flow of the conversation (Sacks et al., 1974). However, more recent research in CA and ELF studies have shown that overlappings, interventions, and mutual turn completions are usually collaborative moves to reach mutual understanding (Santner-Wolfartsberger, 2015); as Wolfartsberger (2011) underscores, ELF communication shows unproblematic overlapping and jointly built utterances that break the one-at-a-time principle governing turn-taking in presenting 'shared' floor and cooperatively authored turns.

Though these limitations have to be tackled and taken into consideration in undertaking CA as a methodology to analyse ELF, many studies have shown that a CA-based approach to data analysis in ELF research is fruitful and advantageous, bringing important insights in data analysis (Firth, 1996, 2012; Kaur, 2009, 2016a, 2021; Pietikäinen, 2017). Just to mention a few examples, Firth (1996) demonstrates how a CA methodology can be used to analyse ELF telephone conversations, Wagner and Firth (1997) focus on ELF business interactions, House (2002) and Kaur (2009) investigate interactional practices in ELF students conversations, Cogo and Dewey (2012) analyse lexicogrammatical and pragmatic patterns in ELF, Konakahara (2015) examines overlappings in the

process of meaning construction, and Pietikäinen (2017) focuses on identity and multilingual practices in ELF couples interactions.

In addition to ELF research, it is important to emphasise that CA has also been used in Intercultural Communication studies, proving to be a highly successful approach for the field when analysing interactions between people with different cultural backgrounds and the intercultural issues participants address in their conversations (Brandt & Mortensen, 2016). CA has proved to be a successful response to structuralist approaches to culture, where cultural practices were categorised a priori in stable national groups, because it allows for an interactional analysis that focuses solely on what emerges from the communicative act and thus on the participants' perspectives and behaviours, without pre-conceived categorisations (Brandt & Mortensen, 2016). CA offers a method in which stereotypes and fixed national membership do not influence the results, since the analysis is based on what is made relevant in the interaction by the speakers involved. Accordingly, as Brandt and Mortensen (2016: 303) emphasise,

> from a CA perspective, then, the relevance of participants' national (or any other) cultural membership is determined only by what those participants do and say with one another as they conduct their social business, rather than according to researchers' hypothesis, research questions, theoretical assumptions, or personal beliefs.

Since in the present study ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies are connected, it is important to underline the common features that these fields of research have with a CA approach to data analysis to explain why this qualitative approach has been chosen. First of all, CA, ELF and Intercultural Communication research share some similar aspects in their views on understanding, meaning negotiation and context. As Brandt and Mortensen (2016: 298) state, in CA "understanding is negotiated on a moment-by-moment basis, where each action is seen and understood in relation to the prior action […] and, at the same time, opens up for a new understanding of it". As discussed in Chapter 1, ELF Transcultural Communication shows a joint process of negotiation and interactional cooperation that has to be examined without preconceptions but

through a strict adherence to the discourse itself, through the analysis of the turn-taking system and of the context of the interaction. Moreover, the conceptualisations of context and of joint negotiation of meaning have an important role in combining CA and ELF transcultural analysis: one of the common points between these areas of research is the fact that social interaction is jointly constructed and the communicative goal is achieved cooperatively (Firth, 2012; Kaur, 2009, 2016a, 2021). A turn-by-turn analysis that is context-bound thus provides a very effective tool to explain language use in interaction and how meaning is co-constructed and negotiated in situ.

CA unprejudiced observation of data fits not only ELF views as to variability in language use, but also the perspective on the fluidity of cultures as complex and emergent systems in ELF and in Intercultural Communication studies (Brandt & Mortensen, 2016). As Pietikäinen (2017: 26) emphasises, "CA's objective to study how speakers achieve intersubjectivity in interaction is compatible with one of the core questions in (E)LF, namely how speakers from diverse linguacultural backgrounds achieve understanding through the medium of a lingua franca". Through a turn-by-turn analysis and an emic perspective, a CA-based approach can explain what is going on in the interaction according to the participants' viewpoints, justifying the analyst's observations in the data itself and excluding a-priori assumptions on what is right or wrong in the communicative act; this approach allows for a more open-minded analysis of ELF transcultural data and for a more insightful understanding of the processes underlying linguistic and cultural practices used in a precise context (see also Kaur, 2021).

Similarly, an important aspect to take into account is the shift from a SLA traditional perspective to a transcultural and translingual view in ELF research, Intercultural Communication studies and CA; as Firth (2009: 158, italics in original) states,

> interactions such as these [lingua franca interactions] are complex and skilful accomplishments, crying out for *unprejudiced description*. That is, descriptions devoid of the linguistic/competency "deficiency" mindset so characteristic of cognitive SLA […]. These language users are, then, just that: language users.

In this view, ELF users' language production is not considered on the basis of pre-conceived linguistic rules based on an unquestionable 'Standard English', since in ELF they are free to adapt and adopt whichever linguistic resources they have at their disposal in order to negotiate meaning and achieve their communicative goal (Firth, 2009; Pietikäinen, 2017). Moreover, the emphasis on variability and fluidity in ELF research through a CA-based approach is no longer to be considered variation from the 'standard rule', but a core characteristic of ELF interactions. From this viewpoint, it is important to note that CA has provided the appropriate method to incorporate these issues and to let ELF data 'speak for themselves'. As Kaur (2016a: 163) underscores,

> CA, which emphasizes fine-grained analysis of participants' turns at talk to uncover how understanding is locally negotiated and jointly accomplished, provides ELF researchers with reliable means to identify the communication strategies and practices that speakers in ELF settings employ to arrive at shared understanding.

A CA-based approach can thus provide a useful framework to qualitatively analyse ELF Transcultural Communication, since it allows for the rejection of pre-conceived assumptions both on language and on culture and for the investigation of emerging and negotiated practices. An approach to data analysis that takes into consideration a joint perspective between CA, ELF and Intercultural Communication research can offer a richer comprehension of what is happening in the ongoing interaction analysed (see Chapter 1 for the joint perspective between ELF and Intercultural Communication studies). Since CA focuses on meaning negotiation and on the co-construction of mutual understanding, it provides important tools to analyse the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts. Hence, the present study uses a CA-based approach in which a turn-by-turn analysis and an emic perspective are combined with a more general understanding of the linguistic and extra-linguistic context of the interaction so as to comprehend as much as possible what is happening in the conversation and why.

Moreover, in order to guarantee an analysis as rigorous as possible, in addition to a CA-based analysis, the identification and classification of the communication strategies selected and their functions are based on an analytical scheme specifically developed for the present study. In the following sections the analytical scheme will be presented and explained before discussing the other phase of the study, that is, the quantitative approach to the data. Following an analytical scheme in addition to a turn-by-turn analysis allows a more objective process that tries to go beyond possible personal interpretations by the researcher and provide a more solid view on the use of communication strategies and of their functions. Moreover, a structured analytical scheme favours a classification that is comparable in all conversations analysed.

3.2.1.1 Analytical scheme for the study

The present study adopts a mixed method that applies first a qualitative approach, through CA analysis, and successively a quantitative approach, through a statistical analysis of the results obtained in the first phase. In addition to a CA-based approach, an analytical scheme was developed in order to increase the objectivity of the qualitative analysis, since, as Dörnyei (2007) emphasises, one of the main characteristics of a qualitative approach is its interpretative nature. This scheme aims at assessing the kind of communication strategy, the speaker who performs it and the function it has. The scheme was developed in two phases: the first one analysed already existing literature regarding communication strategies in ELF and their functions, in order to structure a working definition for each of them to be then applied in the data analysis; the second phase was developed during the pilot study, where new functions found in the data were added, and functions with similar purposes were unified under the same category.

As shown in Table 4, four elements were structured in the scheme used to analyse the conversations that were selected: type of communication strategy, speaker, function, and interactional site. Firstly, the communication strategies already investigated in ELF research were identified and a selection was made according to their prominence in the studies analysed; as explained in more detailed in the next section, backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and lexical

corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions and spellings were chosen for the analysis in the present study. In addition, the distinction between same-speaker and other-speaker was made in order to identify who performs the communication strategy (see §3.2.1.1.2); this can help in understanding if there are differences in functions for the same strategy when performed by different participants and hence offers a more insightful comprehension of the interaction. As mentioned, functions were distinguished according to communication strategy and to the speaker performing it. Finally, the last category of the analytical scheme regards the interactional site in which the communication strategy identified is performed, that is, the degree of understanding that is perceived by the participants involved as emerging from the data – namely understanding, non-understanding and misunderstanding (see §3.2.1.1.3).

Before presenting the quantitative approach adopted in the study, the categories of the analytical scheme will be further illustrated in the following sections.

TYPE	SPEAKER	FUNCTION	INTERACTIONAL SITE
Backchannels	Same-Speaker		Understanding
Lexical Anticipation			
Lexical Suggestion and Correction			Non-understanding
Overt Multilingual Resources	Other-Speaker		
Reformulation			Misunderstanding
Repetition			
Spelling			

Table 4: Analytical scheme.

3.2.1.1.1 Communication Strategies: a taxonomy

As illustrated in Chapter 2, terminology on communication strategies has always been fuzzy and greatly diversified. Ollinger (2012) and Björkman (2014) rise the issue of how to identify communication strategies, referring particularly to early research on communication strategies within a SLA framework and on its limited

focus based on compensation. As mentioned in §2.5.3.2, Ollinger (2012: 73-74) coins a new term, SLUBs (Strategic Language Use Behaviours), to challenge the problematicity of the word 'strategy' as connoted by earlier research, and to include all the practices and moves that constitute and are part of the meaning negotiation process. In turn, Björkman (2014: 129) addresses the difficulty in defining and identifying communication strategies and suggests to study "the surrounding discourse carefully and considering the previous and following turn". Following Björkman's approach, in addition to a data analysis based on Conversation Analysis and thus on a turn-by-turn investigation, the present dissertation also adopts a specific classification of communication strategies.

In the present study, the expression 'communication strategy' refers to any strategy performed by a speaker to negotiate meaning and co-construct shared understanding, where a strategy is conceived as any linguistic and non-linguistic strategic move and practice performed in interaction to create and negotiate meaning, to co-construct mutual understanding or to solve a communicative problem. I believe that the word 'strategy' is needed to address the strategic dimension of the interactional work that speakers do in communication and to indicate the very strategic nature of the process of negotiation that underlies ELF Transcultural Communication. Moreover, the term 'strategy' can embrace all the processes, moves, and practices that are employed by the participants to the interaction since it is general enough not to exclude any move used by the speakers in the meaning-making process. From this perspective, communication strategies are thus means to actively construct and negotiate meaning, used in the strategic management of communication in order to reach and build a shared understanding and a common frame of reference, *as well as* in the strategic resolution of potential and actual miscommunication.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the communication strategies studied in ELF contexts are manifold, thus a thorough analysis of all of them would not be feasible for the present research. This is why, as mentioned above, a selection of the most common communication strategies used in ELF contexts according to existing literature has been made. As shown in Table 5, the studies examined in order to choose which communication strategies are the most common and used in ELF

are Bjørge (2010), Björkman (2011, 2014), Brunner and Diemer (2018), Cogo (2009, 2016, 2018), Cogo and Dewey (2012), House (2003), Kaur (2009), Kirkpatrick (2007), Klimpfinger (2007, 2009), Lichtkoppler (2007), Mauranen (2006), Meirkord (2000), Ollinger (2012), Pölzl (2003), and Watterson (2008) – which focus on the use of communication strategies and on the meaning negotiation process underlying ELF interactions. These studies brought to a selection of 8 verbal communication strategies: backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings. Although non-verbal elements or paralinguistic features are not considered in the analysis, for they are reported in detail in ViMELF but not in VOICE and thus they would not be comparable across the two corpora, they are taken into account as contextual factors in the meaning making process when possible. Each communication strategy has been analysed from two perspectives: one is from a top-down point of view, where the communication strategy has been characterised according to existing studies, the other is from a bottom-up standpoint, where the functions and characteristics of the communication strategy have been categorised according to the data analysis in the pilot study. Since several functions are fundamental in the meaning-making process and can be performed in different ways, they may overlap – as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Type	Author
Backchannels	Bjørge 2010, Björkman 2011, Cogo and Dewey 2012, Kirkpatrick 2007, Meierkord 2000, Ollinger 2012
Multilingual/plurilingual resources (also referred to as code-switching)	Brunner and Diemer 2018, Cogo 2009, 2016, 2018, Cogo and Dewey 2012, Klimpfinger 2007, 2009, Pölzl 2003
Lexical anticipation	Kirkpatrick 2007
Lexical suggestion and correction	Kirkpatrick 2007
Reformulation	Björkman 2014, Kaur 2009, Kirkpatrick 2007, Mauranen 2006, Ollinger 2012, Watterson 2008
Repetition	Björkman 2014, House 2003, Kaur 2009, Lichtkoppler 2007, Mauranen 2006, Ollinger 2012,

| Spelling | Kirkpatrick 2007 |

Table 5: Studies on communication strategies in ELF consulted for the analysis.

In the following paragraphs, each communication strategy selected will be illustrated providing the definition used to identify it in the data and the functions it performs as reported in existing literature and as additionally investigated through the pilot study.

a. Backchannels

As research has demonstrated, backchannels are generally employed to show active listenership, because it is a kind of listener feedback to the speaker's ongoing turn (Bjørge, 2010; Cogo & Dewey, 2012). This term was first used in the 1970s, by Yngve (1970: 568):

in fact, both the person who has the turn and his partner are simultaneously engaged in both speaking and listening. This is because of the existence of what I call the back channel, over which the person who has the turn receives short messages such as 'yes' and 'uh-huh' without relinquishing the turn.

Accordingly, Schegloff (1982) emphasises how speakers accomplish discourse in interaction through mutual cooperation, pointing out the importance of the use of backchannels in the construction of discourse to show cooperation and participation between interlocutors and to help the flow of the interaction to proceed smoothly. Bjørge (2010) explains that backchannels can be verbal or non-verbal: verbal backchannels can be non-lexical (e.g. 'mmm'), lexical (e.g. 'amazing'), phrasal (e.g. 'very good') or syntactic (e.g. 'that's interesting'), while non-verbal backchannels can be signalled through nodding, laughter, facial expressions, and so on. Differently from other communication strategies, backchannels are to be found in a precise position in interaction in order to be classified as such: they do not interrupt the turn of the speaker, they do not elicit any kind of response from other participants and they are not used to ask for the floor (Bjørge, 2010; Cogo & Dewey, 2012). Moreover, backchannels do not provide any kind of new information, but they rather show the attitude of the

interlocutors; they can help manage the conversation by providing signals of attention, agreement, support, engagement, or even disappointment, disinterest, or indignation (Bjørge, 2010; Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Schegloff, 1982).

The definition used in the present study thus sees backchannels as *any kind of feedback given by the interlocutor that does not interrupt the speaker's turn, is not used to ask for the floor nor for an answer and does not provide new information*. Three functions have been identified in existing literature, namely a) to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation, acknowledgement, to respond to new information; b) to indicate lack of interest; and c) to signal indignation, indifference, impatience. Nonetheless, since it is very difficult to distinguish them with the approach used in the present dissertation, they have been grouped together in the analysis. Indeed, without hearing the intonation used (that is not possible for the whole data set), the classification would not be objective and could fail to assign the right function to each occurrence. In order to limit such possibility, backchannels are considered to perform only one main function:

- to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation, acknowledgement, to respond to new information

b. Lexical Anticipation

Lexical anticipation is a communication strategy identified by Kirkpatrick (2007: 123) as "a speaker supplying the appropriate lexical item". This strategy shows a great degree of cooperation among the participants in the conversation, because one speaker provides a word or a sentence to finish what another speaker is saying before they say it (Kirkpatrick, 2007). The message is thus co-created and being the strategy anticipatory in nature it shows that the speakers are on the same wave length (Björkman, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2007). Therefore, lexical anticipations show engagement, listenership, mutual understanding and cooperation (Kirkpatrick, 2007). The definition used in the present study thus sees lexical anticipation as *a move where a speaker completes or anticipates what the main speaker is saying*

during the turn before the turn itself is completed and the functions identified is mainly one:

- to express engagement and listenership, to show mutual understanding and cooperation

c. Lexical Suggestion and Correction

Lexical suggestion and correction is a strategy similar to lexical anticipation, but has a slightly different outcome. Kirkpatrick (2007: 123) defines it as "a speaker actually supplying the appropriate lexical item"; this means that a speaker provides the (correct) word or sentence when the main speaker does not seem to be able to access or retrieve it. Importantly, Kirkpatrick (2007) underlines that this strategy shows a cooperative attitude on the side of the speakers because it is usually aimed at ensuring successful communication and mutual understanding. The definition used in the present study thus sees lexical suggestion and correction as *any move that completes the main speaker's turn by providing the appropriate (or correct) linguistic item when the main speaker seems to have difficulties in accessing or retrieving it*. The functions identified are two:

- to help out other participants with word selection
- to ensure successful communication

d. Overt Multilingual Resources

As illustrated in Chapters 1 and 2, ELF Transcultural Communication includes the underlying presence and use of different languages and recent research on ELF has focused on the multi- and trans-lingual aspects that English used as a lingua franca has by definition (Jenkins, 2015). As Cogo (2018: 358) points out,

> […] ELF does not only concern the English language, but includes other languages depending on the sociocultural context of the communicative exchange, the repertoire of the participants involved and other possible linguistic constraints. The multilingual research has also helped overcome a misunderstanding of ELF as consisting of 'English only' (mainly in English language teaching publications, but also in EU policy documents), therefore

placing more emphasis on the diversity implied in the 'lingua franca' perspective.

Since ELF is transcultural and multi-/trans-lingual by definition, the knowledge and use of different languages is an important characteristic of ELF settings. Following a fluid and dynamic view of language and culture, multilingualism in ELF is seen as the use of different languages and language resources in addition to English (Cogo, 2016).

This multi-/trans-lingual dimension is fundamental and as ELF research has proved, it serves several functions in the meaning-making process. As already described, Cogo (2016) differentiates between *covert multilingual influences* and *overt multilingual resources*: the former are cognitive resources that show in the use of English the presence of other languages that are part of the speaker's repertoire (for example translations from other languages into English); the latter are resources that appear in the communicative act through the explicit use of expressions (of any kind) in languages that are not English. Since the present study focuses on the analysis of the data from two compiled corpora, where comments on the utterances are not comprised, it is not possible to objectively identify covert multilingual resources (see §2.5.3.2) and consequently only the explicit use of different languages will be analysed. In this dissertation I will thus focus on the use of *overt multilingual resources* defined as *any explicit use of linguistic items taken from languages other than English*. This term shows a translingual approach that surpasses the concept of 'code-switching' for it does no longer conceive 'language' as a fixed entity that can be 'switched', but as a dynamic set of resources that speakers have at their disposal and that is permeant to other linguistic and non-linguistic resources (Cogo, 2016). The functions that are performed through the use of overt multilingual resources are mainly six:

- to underline group membership and identity
- to create rapport
- to use a *mot juste* [the 'right word'] or to express a particular cultural concept
- to give a metalinguistic commentary

- to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance
- to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches

e. Reformulation

Reformulation in this study is used as an umbrella term to include different strategies that aim at clarifying meaning or at enhancing successful communication through the modification of part of an utterance (Kaur, 2009; Ollinger, 2012; Watterson, 2008). Reformulation refers to the "displaying [of] given information in a new and different way, either by simplifying the form of the message or by expressing it in different words" (Kaur, 2009: 124). However, it is important to highlight two aspects that have to be taken into account when referring to this strategy: first, the meaning of the reformulation has to be the same of the utterance that is reformulated; second, the majority of the words used have to be different from the original expression (Björkman, 2014; Kaur, 2009; Watterson, 2008). The definition used in the present study views reformulation as *any paraphrase, simplification, exemplification, explanation, circumlocution and use of synonyms and antonyms to modify an utterance maintaining the same meaning expressed*. The functions identified are numerous:

- to secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding
- to check recipient understanding
- to request confirmation of understanding
- to confirm understanding, to signal confirmation
- to clarify meaning
- to elicit clarification
- to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony
- to retain a smooth speaking flow
- to create coherence

f. Repetition

Repetition is a strategy where an utterance is intentionally re-said in the same way in order to achieve the communicative goal (Björkman, 2014; Kaur, 2009; Lichtkoppler, 2007). Even if in repetition all the elements of the utterance that is repeated are included, Schegloff (1997: 525) points out that it "allows for transformations geared to deixis, tense shift, speaker change etc., as well as change of prosody". Repetition in the present study also includes repeats (i.e. repetitions of a single word), but only when a pause follows each repeats, since false starts are excluded from the analysis. It is indeed important to try to distinguish between random repetitions – that is, unconscious repetitions that do not respond to a communicative purpose – and repetitions performed as communication strategies, that is, as intentional repetitions that aim at reaching a precise goal in communication and which seem to be performed with the speakers' awareness that a repetition in occurring (Kaur, 2009).

Lichtkoppler (2007) offers a detailed classification of repetitions, since she analyses how and to which degree repetition favours a successful ELF interaction, defining three preconditions that help identify repetitions. First "the repeated element must have occurred before and must be identifiable as a repetition's model" (2007: 43); second, this model has to be part of the same conversation of the repeated element; third, for her analysis she includes only lexical and syntactic constructions, excluding fixed expressions and greetings. In addition, the scholar identifies several kinds of repetition. The first one marks the degree of variation of the repeated element in 'exact/full repetition', 'partial repetition' or 'repetition with variation', and paraphrase. The first type refers to a repetition where neither the original form nor meaning changes, while, as Lichtkoppler (2007: 44) explains,

> repetition with variation begins as soon as the slightest change is made to the original appearance (distinguishing it from exact repetition) and ends when the variation covers every word of the original, which would lead to the third type of repetition, namely the paraphrase, where only the idea or concept is reiterated.

A further distinction, based on a temporal scale, is made between an immediate repetition, that "occurs immediately after the original", and a delayed repetition, that occurs "at any time later in the text" (Lichtkoppler, 2007: 45-46). The last classification made by Lichtkoppler (2007: 46) refers to the person who performs the repetition: we have a self-repetition when a speaker repeats him-/herself or an other-repetition when the speaker repeats the utterance (or part of it) of another participant to the interaction.

The definition used in the present study sees repetition as *any identical or slightly changed re-say of an occurred utterance to perform a communicative goal* and the functions it performs are several:

- to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony
- to signal confirmation
- to signal problematic items, to address the trouble source
- to secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension
- to request confirmation of understanding
- to keep the floor, to gain time
- to create coherence
- to show listenership

g. Spelling

Kirkpatrick (2007) identifies the strategy of 'spelling out the word' as a useful resource when other strategies do not work in order to clarify the concept or word that is at the core of the problem. This strategy, among the ones selected, is the only one used predominantly to solve a communicative problem in the data. The definition used in the present study is *spelling of a word that is not read as a spelling in its most common use* and its main function is only one:

- to clarify meaning

Communication strategy	Function
Backchannels: *any kind of feedback given by the interlocutor that does not interrupt the speaker's turn, is not used to ask for the floor*	- to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation,

nor for an answer and does not provide new information	- acknowledgement, to respond to new information - to indicate lack of interest - to signal indignation, indifference, impatience
Lexical Anticipation: *a move where a speaker completes or anticipates what the main speaker is saying during the turn before the turn itself is completed*	- to express engagement and listenership, to show mutual understanding and cooperation
Lexical Suggestion and Correction: *any move that completes the main speaker's turn by providing the appropriate (or correct) linguistic item when the main speaker seems to have difficulties in accessing or retrieving it*	- to help out other participants with word selection - to ensure successful communication
Overt Multilingual Resources: *any explicit use of linguistic items taken from languages other than English*	- to underline group membership and identity - to create rapport - to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept - to give a metalinguistic commentary - to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance - to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches
Reformulation: *any paraphrase, simplification, exemplification, explanation, circumlocution and use of synonyms and antonyms to modify an utterance maintaining the same meaning expressed*	- to secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding - to check recipient understanding - to request confirmation of understanding - to confirm understanding, to signal confirmation - to clarify meaning - to elicit clarification - to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony - to retain a smooth speaking flow

	- to create coherence
Repetition: *any identical or slightly changed re-say of an occurred utterance to perform a communicative goal*	- to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony - to signal confirmation - to signal problematic items, to address the trouble source - to secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension - to request confirmation of understanding - to keep the floor, to gain time - to create coherence - to show listenership
Spelling: *spelling of a word that is not read as a spelling in its most common use*	- to clarify meaning

Table 6: Summary of communication strategies and functions.

As summarised in Table 6, the communication strategies analysed in the present dissertation are backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings. For each strategy a list of functions has been identified according to existing literature and after a pilot study was carried out. As shown in Table 6, some functions overlap between different communication strategies and thus the same function can be performed in different ways. In the following sections the other components of the analytical scheme will be described.

3.2.1.1.2 Defining speakers: same-speaker and other-speaker

As discussed in Chapter 2, ELF research uses different terms to identify who performs the communication strategy: for example, Kirkpatrick (2007) distinguishes between speaker strategies and listener strategies, while Björkman (2014) and Kaur (2009) use self-initiated/same-speaker or other-initiated/other-speaker strategies. In the present dissertation the distinction is made between same-speaker and other-speaker strategy: the former refers to a strategy that is performed by the speaker who has initiated the sequence of negotiation or that

refers to something he/she has previously said, while the latter to a strategy that is performed by the speaker who responds to another speaker's turn. For example, backchannels can only be classified as other-speaker because they are, by definition, a feedback that shows listenership to the person who is speaking. In turn, reformulation can be either same-speaker or other-speaker since it can refer to one's own turn or to another speaker's turn. Through the turn-by-turn analysis communication strategies can be thus defined as same-speaker or other-speaker, too.

3.2.1.1.3 Defining an interactional site

Since "for communication to be successful, shared understanding between the interacting parties is essential" (Kaur, 2011: 97), for the aim of the present study it is fundamental to examine how 'shared understanding' is achieved through negotiation and cooperation between speakers. As mentioned in Chapter 2, both in ELF and in Intercultural Communication studies understanding is seen as an active and joint process that is achieved through cooperation and negotiation by all parties. This conceptualisation of understanding as a "collective achievement" lines up also with CA, that sees understanding as a process that emerges from the actions performed by the participants to the interaction (Heritage, 1984; Kaur, 2009, 2010; Mondada, 2011: 542; Pitzl, 2010). The process of understanding should be seen as a continuum and thus, in a scale of "varying degrees of non-understanding or partial understanding" (Kaur, 2009: 40), communication is balanced between complete understanding and non-understanding (Kaur, 2009, 2010; Pitzl, 2010; see also §2.1). As Kaur (2010: 194) explains,

> achieving mutual understanding […] constitutes an ongoing process of 'coming to an understanding' (Weigand 1999: 769), in which varying levels of non-understanding or partial understanding are locally negotiated and jointly addressed in order to allow for an adequate level of understanding to prevail between participants in interaction.

The analysis of the present study focuses on the communication strategies as used on the three main degrees of this scale: understanding, non-understanding, and misunderstanding – defined as follows:

a. Understanding

Understanding is regarded as a "dynamic process" and as an "interactional achievement" (Kaur, 2009: 40); this means that complete understanding is jointly accomplished and co-constructed, and needs cooperation between the participants of the interaction (Kaur, 2009, 2010; Pitzl, 2010). As Mondada (2011: 545) underlines, understanding is usually taken for granted because it is the underlying requirement for communication to continue: "understanding is constantly actively managed by the participants along with the emergent, incremental, sequential organization of turns moment by moment; in the way in which they respond, they allow the speaker to go on with a continuer, or repair the previous bit of talk". The present study aims at investigating how communication strategies are used in this cooperative process, where understanding is defined as mutual agreement on meaning and as a joint construction and negotiation of shared meaning.

b. Non-understanding

Non-understanding and misunderstanding concern levels where mutual sharing of meaning does not take place; however, in ELF literature both are not regarded negatively as communication breakdowns, but as natural processes of communication (Kaur, 2009, 2010; Pitzl, 2010). Both non-understanding and misunderstanding involve all the participants in communication, since all participants co-construct meaning together and are thus responsible for both communicative success and failures (Kaur, 2009, 2010; Pitzl, 2010). Non-understanding happens when there is a total lack of comprehension of the message and thus meaning is not shared between the speakers (Pitzl, 2010); this absence of shared meaning is often directly addressed in the communication act by the participants who can openly declare that they are not making sense of what the interlocutor is saying (Kaur, 2009, 2010; Pitzl, 2010).

c. Misunderstanding

Several ELF studies have been carried out on misunderstanding (e.g. House, 2002; Kaur, 2009, 2010, 2011; Mauranen, 2006; Pitzl, 2010), and this phenomenon has proven to be quite challenging for the analyst to identify, since the speakers themselves are mostly unaware of its taking place until an incoherent answer is given (Kaur, 2009, 2010; Pitzl, 2010). Misunderstanding consists in a misinterpretation of the message and in this dissertation, following a collaborative perspective of the process of understanding, the definition by Humphreys-Jones (1986: 1, quoted in Pitzl, 2010: 32) will be used: "a misunderstanding occurs when a communication attempt is unsuccessful because what the speaker intends to express differs from what the hearer believes to have been expressed".

3.2.2 A quantitative perspective on the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts

As shown in Chapter 2, most ELF studies on communication strategies have focused on a qualitative perspective, analysing how and why communication strategies are used in ELF communication (e.g. Björkman, 2014; Kaur, 2009; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Ollinger, 2012). Quantitative approaches have been more often applied to lexical and grammatical studies and to comparisons of linguistic traits between different groups involved in ELF interaction (e.g. Brunner, 2021; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Jafari, 2021; Jenkins, 2007; see also Jenkins et al., 2011 for a comprehensive description). However, as Dörnyei (2007) emphasises, a mixed method approach could provide fruitful insights that would be difficult to obtain focusing only on qualitative or quantitative research. There are aspects that are better investigated through the use of a qualitative approach – such as practices that emerge in communication or the interactional achievement of mutual understanding – while there are others that are better examined through a quantitative method – such as frequency of occurrence or the percentage of use of a specific practice.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the present study adopts a mixed method approach: the first phase is a qualitative analysis of the data based on Conversation Analysis and a turn-by-turn analysis; the second phase consists of a

quantitative investigation of the outcome found in the first phase, where the categories and results identified through the qualitative approach are examined through a quantitative analysis. In this way, a more insightful understanding of the role of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication can be outlined, enhancing the qualitative analysis through a complementary quantitative perspective.

In order to do so, two main aspects of the results obtained in the first phase will be analysed through descriptive statistical techniques. The first one regards the most used communication strategy(/ies) and the most performed functions for each of them, in order to examine whether or not some communication strategies are used more often than others and whether or not they are used more frequently for particular functions. The second aspect concerns the use of communication strategies in interaction, by providing quantitative data on the ratio between strategic and non-strategic turns and the distribution of the use of communication strategies along the communicative act. This kind of analysis could provide a more comprehensive scenario on the role and use of communication strategies and on their effect on communication, looking at whether they are predominantly employed in interaction or whether their role is not as fundamental as it is thought to be. Moreover, it could offer an important perspective on the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication, by adding a quantitative point of view on how much strategic communication makes up interactions in ELF transcultural contexts.

In order to do so, descriptive statistics has been applied. Since the data was selected from two different corpora, the conversations chosen (see Table 3 in §3.1.3) could not be quantitatively compared, since their transcription systems are different. In order to work with comparable numbers, turns have been chosen as the measuring unit rather than words or minutes, for they better mirror the process of meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding; however, since indication of turns was not provided for ViMELF, they had to be manually

added and each turn was assigned to each shift of speaker. Afterwards, all the data has been normalised and related to 1000 turns[36].
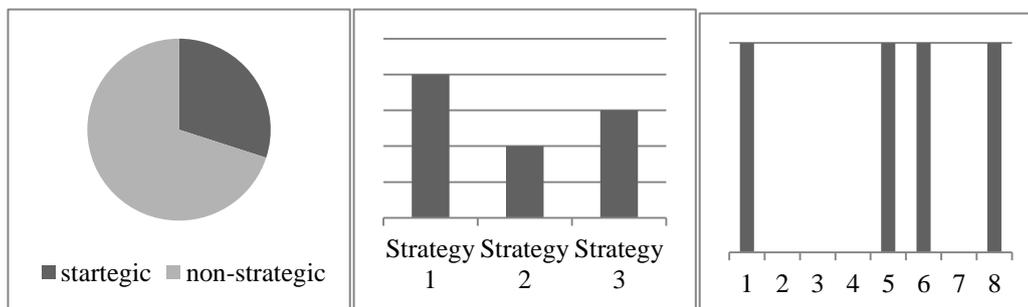
Figure 2: Pie chart.   **Figure 3**: Histogram type 1.   **Figure 4**: Histogram type 2.

In addition to the frequency of use of the selected communication strategies and of their functions – presented through a histogram as shown in Figure 3, two more aspects will be displayed through the use of two graphs. The first one refers to the ratio between strategic turns, that is, turns in which at least one occurrence of the use of one communication strategy has been identified; non-strategic turns, namely, are turns in which none of the selected communication strategies appear. This proportion will be represented through a pie chart (Figure 2), that illustrates the ratio of the strategic and non-strategic dimensions of the interaction. The second aspect refers to the distribution of the use of communication strategies in the interaction and this feature will be shown through a histogram in which each strategic turn is counted as one and each non-strategic turn is counted as zero along all the turns of the interaction, shown in the horizontal bar (Figure 4). Finally, an analysis of the interactions that combines a qualitative and a quantitative approach has been carried out since it can can offer a more comprehensive and insightful understanding of the process of meaning making and of the co-construction of mutual understanding.

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[36] All the occurrences have been related to 1000 turns using the following formula: the count of occurrences of a certain communication strategy were multiplied by 1000 and divided by the total number of turns of the interaction.

3.2.3 Pilot study

In order to verify the appropriateness and effectiveness of the methodology chosen for the study, a pilot study was carried out on 3 conversations from the Leisure sub-corpus and on 3 conversations from the ViMELF corpus, that are part of the selected conversations as discussed in §3.1.3. These six interactions were selected for the pilot study for their similarities: they have indeed corresponding length and topics, providing a representative sample of the data selected. The pilot study was aimed not only at testing the analytical scheme and to verify whether there were additional functions other than the ones identified in existing literature, but also at understanding and verifying if the chosen approach was fit to study communication strategies in the ELF Transcultural Communication data and to solve or limit any potential problem in the chosen methodological approach. Afterwards, the results have been integrated in the main analysis that will be presented in Chapter 4.

One of the objectives of the pilot study was to investigate whether CA could provide the appropriate methodological tools to answer the research questions, that is, to analyse how communication strategies are used to negotiate meaning in transcultural contexts according to corpus analysis and how cultural concepts are negotiated through the selected communication strategies. Second, the pilot study aimed at verifying whether the criteria used for the categories and features of the analytical scheme were suitable for the study and if they could allow for a methodical and objective (as much as possible) method of analysis. Third, the qualitative approach used for the study aimed to combine a top-down and a bottom-up approach, so the pilot study was used to show if this method would be successful in identifying the selected communication strategies and their functions in the data. Finally, the pilot study served to understand, with a smaller set of data, if the qualitative approach of the research could be supported by the quantitative analysis described above, and if this could provide further insights – and of what kind – on the results of the research.

In order to be as objective as possible in verifying the aforementioned aspects, the pilot study followed a precise process of analysis. First the speakers of each conversation were identified through the metadata provided in the corpus

description for both corpora, that is, their age, gender, first languages and the situation they were in when the communicative act took place. These features are important to comprehend who is talking and the communicative context of the interaction, so that a more finely tuned interpretation of the ongoing conversation is possible. Second, the whole conversation was taken into account in order to better understand the context and dynamics of the interaction. Then, the analysis was carried out focusing on ne communication strategy at a time, to check and analyse in depth how each communication strategy was used in negotiation. During this phase, a specific coding scheme was assigned to each communication strategy and to each function, aimed at clarifying which strategy was used, by whom, for which reason and in which interactional site, following the criteria outlined in the previous sections. As mentioned, the functions of the analytical scheme were based on existing literature, and during the pilot study data analysis new functions were added to the table when and if needed, combining the top-down and the bottom-up approach. Moreover, functions that were similar in aim and that could not be objectively separated through the turn-by-turn analysis of the conversation were grouped under a single function. Additionally, some turns were excluded from the analysis because it was not clear who the speaker was or what was said due to incomprehensible language (as reported in the transcriptions).

In order to better explain the procedure, I will provide the example of how the analytical scheme of 'backchannels' changed after the pilot study. As shown in Table 7, I identified the functions as emerging from existing research literature, then I assigned a code to each one of them in order to be able to easily classify the strategy (+B=backchannel), the speaker performing it (O=other-speaker), the number assigned to the function in my list, and the interactional site (U=understanding, N=non-understanding, M=misunderstanding).

TYPE	SPEAKER	FUNCTION	I.S.	Code
BACKCHANNELS	Other-speaker	To signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation, acknowledgement	U	+BO1U
			N	+BO1N
			M	+BO1M

		To request clarification/to elicit new information	U	+BO2U
			N	+BO2N
			M	+BO2M
		To respond to new information	U	+BO3U
			N	+BO3N
			M	+BO3M
		To indicate lack of interest	U	+BO4U
			N	+BO4N
			M	+BO4M
		To signal indignation, indifference, impatience	U	+BO5U
			N	+BO5N
			M	+BO5M

Table 7: Analytical scheme – backchannels.

Due to the fact that the data consists of transcriptions, during the analysis the high diversification of functions as identified and described above was difficult to maintain, since the choice between one function and another was often subjective and not always clearly justified in the data. As a matter of fact, it was not always possible to establish a clear function and it was usually the case that similar functions could be at work in the same turn. For this reason, some changes were made to the list of functions for all the communication strategies described in the previous section. Following with the explanation of the example of backchannels, the functions were hence gathered under three main groups: 1) to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation, acknowledgement, to respond to new information; 2) to indicate lack of interest, and 3) to signal indignation, indifference, impatience. As discussed in §3.2.1.1.1a and in Chapter 4, after the whole analysis and after obtaining clear results, further groupings were made in order to present a clearer view of the use of communication strategies in the data and backchannels were classified with only one main function.

In addition to the difficulty in defining which functions were performed in the data, other issues arose during the pilot study. One of the differences between VOICE-Leisure and ViMELF is their approach to non-verbal language (as discussed in §3.2.1.1.1): while in ViMELF the transcription of non-verbal

elements is highly detailed and based on video recordings, in VOICE the non-verbal features are based on the report of field notes, thus they are not always exhaustive. As a consequence, when analysing data in VOICE-Leisure, it is not always possible to clearly comprehend what is happening in the communicative act by analysing the transcription, because the contextual elements provided (e.g. non-verbal language, objects, etc.) do not always offer enough information to understand the context in which the selected communication strategies are performed or the negotiation process that is going on in that precise sequence. An additional point to be considered is that in both corpora there are external speakers that sometimes enter the conversation, but it is not always possible to clearly establish the dynamics of the interaction in these cases; their contributions have hence been excluded from the analysis.

3.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter the data and methodology used have been described. The data set analysed is based on a selection of 28 conversations from two ELF spoken corpora of informal conversations, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus. The study was carried out adopting a mixed method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis. In the first phase, a qualitative approach based on Conversation Analysis and on a turn-by-turn analysis was used to examine and identify the instances of the selected communication strategies and their functions. In order to categorise such occurrences an analytical scheme was developed for the investigation, classifying the instances by kind of communication strategy, speaker who performs it, function, and interactional site. In the second phase, a quantitative approach based on descriptive statistics was adopted in order to investigate the most and least used communication strategies in the data and the most performed function for each strategy. In addition, the percentage of strategic and non-strategic turns was analysed, as well as the distributions of such turns in the conversations. A pilot study was carried out in order to test and hone the methodological choices adopted before applying the methodology chosen to the whole data set.

In the following chapter, the results of the analysis will be presented, showing the important role of communication strategies and how they are used in the data examined.

CHAPTER 4 -
COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND ELF TRANSCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN VOICE-LEISURE AND VIMELF

As discussed in Chapter 1, ELF Transcultural Communication is presented as the backdrop of the present study, since it refers to the translingual and transcultural dimensions of ELF, entailing a fluid and intertwined relationship between them in contexts where linguistic and cultural backgrounds are not shared. Indeed, in the present dissertation it is suggested to combine ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies, in order to shape a more comprehensive framework that takes into consideration not only the linguistic dimension of ELF communication, but also its cultural one. The core issues addressed in these two fields of research have been discussed, eventually rejecting a stable and fixed conceptualisation of language and culture in favour of a translingual and transcultural approach (Baker, 2015b; Delanoy, 2020; Piller, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2020).

Since a common frame of reference among participants in ELF transcultural contexts cannot be taken for granted, the co-construction of mutual understanding and the negotiation of meaning become fundamental to ensure successful communication and to reach the intended communicative goal(s). In order to be able to effectively and appropriately manage communication in ELF Transcultural Communication, in Chapter 2 a new model of competencies for communication has been suggested, one that takes into consideration not only the complex linguistic dimension of ELF, but also its emergent, fluid and dynamic transcultural nature. This framework stems from Kohn's (2016b) ELF competence and Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness models and it comprises four dimensions – Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, Comprehension and Production Skills, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, and Creativity. The backdrop of the present study is in particular the third dimension, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, since it focuses on the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication and it refers to the ability to appropriately and effectively negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding through the use of all the linguistic and non-linguistic resources

available to the speaker. This ability is essential in contexts where meaning and understanding need to be jointly and collaboratively achieved through negotiation, and the active use of communication strategies as tools to reach the intended communicative purpose hence plays a fundamental role in the meaning making process.

In the following sections, the results of the study on the effective use of communication strategies in the VOICE-Leisure and the ViMELF corpora will be presented. First, the qualitative results will be illustrated, providing examples for each function of the selected communication strategies identified. This perspective will explain why and how the strategic moves investigated are used in communication and their relevance in the meaning negotiation process. Secondly, the quantitative analysis will be discussed, to provide a more general interpretation of the strategic dimension of the interactions examined. It will be observed that communication strategies have a significant role and that they are frequently and regularly used during the communicative act. Finally, a combined perspective will be outlined: relevant examples from the data in which a mixed analysis has been carried out will be provided, in order to comprehend more fully why and how communication strategies are used in the communicative act and their importance in the co-construction of mutual understanding.

4.1 Analysing communication strategies in the VOICE-Leisure and ViMELF corpora: methodological considerations

As seen in Chapter 3, there are some methodological considerations that need to be taken into account before presenting the results. First, the selected communication strategies are shown to often co-occur with other strategic moves and to perform several functions at once. This aspect has brought to the need to choose how to identify and categorise them in the analytical scheme presented in §3.2.1.1. In order to have a clear and objective classification (as much as possible), only the most prominent function has been considered for each strategy identified. Secondly, multimodal and non-verbal elements have been excluded from the analytical scheme, but, when possible, reference to these annotated elements (for example nodding, eye contact, body features) will be mentioned,

since it can help to contextualise the meaning negotiation process and it can provide elements to better comprehend what is going on. These features will thus be presented and discussed in the examples in order to help understand how they may affect communication. Finally, given that the analysis is based on the transcriptions of the conversations selected, another aspect to consider is the impossibility to have access to the speakers' ongoing thoughts and possible comments on the interaction. This affects the identification of, for example, misunderstandings, since what emerges from the analysis of the transcripts does not always allow to understand whether a misunderstanding occurred or not. As a matter of fact, the participants could use let-it-pass strategies (that is, they could drop the topic or the meaning negotiation process to go on with the conversation), or they could pretend to understand, or fail to realise that something went wrong. If this kind of miscommunication does not openly affect the communicative act, namely by emerging in the interaction and by being addressed by the participants, it is hardly possible for the analyst to clearly identify a misunderstanding. Consequently, the fact that misunderstandings are rare in the data set analysed is to be taken with caution because it could be that misunderstandings occurred without being overtly displayed in the interaction.

In the following sections, first the qualitative results will be presented, and organised according to strategy and function (see §3.2.1.1). Successively, the quantitative data will be described. It is important to note that the quantitative data are based on the qualitative results and that it has been normalised to 1000 turns in order to have comparable data between conversations and across the two corpora (see §3.2.2). As illustrated in §3.2.2, some graphs will be used to present the quantitative results. First, a pie chart (as shown in Figure 2 in §3.2.2) will be used to display the percentage of strategic turns (that is, turns in which at least one occurrence of a communication strategy has been identified), and non-strategic turns (namely, turns in which no occurrence of the selected strategy has been identified) in the whole data set. Secondly, a histogram (see Figure 3 in §3.2.2) will be used to display the occurrences of communication strategies and functions identified in the whole data set and in the two corpora separately. Finally, a combined perspective will be discussed in reference to six conversations chosen

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as a representative sample of the data set in order to further discuss how a mixed method approach can bring more insights on the analysis of ELF transcultural interactions. For this kind of investigation, in addition to the graphs mentioned above, another kind of histogram (Figure 4 in §3.2.2) will be used to display the distribution of the use of communication strategies through the conversations analysed. This graph presents one line for each turn in which at least one communication strategy has been performed and no line for turns in which there is not an occurrence.

4.2 Qualitative analysis: the use of communication strategies in VOICE-Leisure and in ViMELF

The qualitative analysis of the present study focuses on the use of seven communication strategies selected from existing ELF research: backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings. The functions performed through each strategy have been identified drawing from relevant ELF studies and after a pilot study (see §3.2.2 and §3.2.3), and will be presented separately in the next sections. As will be pointed out throughout the analysis, each occurrence can serve several functions at once and the co-use and co-occurrence of more than one communication strategy to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding is frequent; however, each strategy and each purpose will be described singularly in order to provide a clearer view on the different uses of the selected communication strategies.

As will be outlined, backchannels, reformulations and repetitions have proved to be performed more frequently than the other communication strategies analysed and they have been observed to have a particularly significant role in communication. For each function some examples from both VOICE-Leisure and ViMELF will be discussed, in order to describe and accurately illustrate how each communication strategy is performed and to serve which function. Many instances have been observed more in understanding than in non-understanding interactional sites, while misunderstandings are rare. It is important to underline

that this low occurrence of misunderstandings could be due to let-it-pass strategies that do not clearly appear in the transcription.

In the following sections each communication strategy will be presented, providing observations on its use in the data set. After this introduction, each function will be illustrated and exemplified through some extracts taken from both the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus.

4.2.1 Backchannels

Backchannels have been identified as a showcase of active listenership that interlocutors perform in order to display comprehension and engagement (Bjørge, 2010; see §3.2.1.1.1). Some studies have focused also on the difference in use of this strategy according to the speakers' first language and national culture (e.g. Heinz, 2003), but, as discussed in Chapter 1, ELF Transcultural Communication goes beyond traditional categorisations of language and culture. ELF speakers do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and their linguistic and cultural practices are negotiated in situ between the participants involved. For this reason, it is not important to analyse how different people perform backchannels differently, but how they are used in situ in the meaning negotiation process to reach successful communication. Backchannels can be verbal and non-verbal, but the present analysis focuses only on the former type.

As seen in Chapter 3, in the present work backchannels are defined as *any kind of feedback given by the interlocutor that does not interrupt the speaker's turn, is not used to ask for the floor nor for an answer and does not provide new information*. They can only be other-speaker initiated, since they are responses to another person speaking, and they can be used to confirm understanding, to signal support or attention, to respond to new information, or to indicate lack of interest and to signal indifference and impatience. The average use of backchannels in the data set is 155.11 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 116.71 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 193.52 in ViMELF, and they have been observed mostly in understanding interactional sites. They are rarely used when misunderstandings occur, but they appear to be useful also in non-understanding interactional sites,

since they can help signal that the speaker is following the conversation while the communicative problem is being solved.

The data shows that the use of backchannels is highly implemented by speakers in order to keep the conversation going and to display active participation and listenership, especially when the context can affect the intelligibility of the communicative act. When the place the speakers are at is noisy, or the Internet connection and/or the microphone are not working properly, for example, it has been observed that the use of backchannels can help in signalling mutual understanding and in showing comprehension and support. Indeed, the use of backchannels keeps the main speaker[37] informed on the interlocutor's level of comprehension and involvement in the communicative act, confirming that the conversation can continue. Their use often intertwines with other communication strategies, because the interlocutor displays attention by using backchannels while the main speaker negotiates meaning.

In the next sections, some examples of the use of backchannels will be provided to show how this strategy is fundamental in co-constructing mutual understanding and in showing involvement in the communicative act. As mentioned in §3.2.1.1.1, an objective distinction between the functions identified in existing literature on backchannels (indicated as a. and b. below) has proved to be difficult in the present study; hence, as will be further explained in §4.2.1b, backchannels will be considered as performing only one main function (namely function a.), that is, to show active listenership.

a. **Backchannels to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation, acknowledgement, to respond to new information**

As Bjørge (2010) observed, among the main functions performed by backchannels is to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention, empathy, enthusiasm, agreement, evaluation, acknowledgement, and to respond to new

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[37] The main speaker refers to the speaker who is holding the turn and is thus speaking. Since backchannels do not interrupt the main speaker and are not used to ask for the floor (as explained in Chapter 3), they are commonly used within the main speaker's turns.

information. This purpose has been observed also in the data set, where participants employ this strategy to make the main speaker aware that the interaction can continue since they are following what is being said.

Example 1[38] shows how backchannels can be used to respond to an explanation and to signal to the main speaker that the interlocutor is paying attention. S1 (who comes from Belgium) and S2 (who comes from Denmark) are talking in a pub about the political system in Belgium and the distinction between the regional parliaments in that country. S1 here is the main speaker since he is explaining his national government and S2 is using backchannels to signal listenership.

Example 1: Backchannels – to show active listenership (VOICE-LEcon227).

57 S1: yeah (.) but you have (.) we have a <pvc> federalized </pvc> state (1) so it's federal (.)

58 S2: **yeah** (.)

59 S1: like in germany and austria (.) but we have a torri- territorial (.) federation (1) but we also have a communal federation (.) which is (1) so we have er:m (1) south north (.) federalism (1)

60 S2: **yeah**

61 S1: and then the capital is also a region (.) but we also have then (1) erm a flemish (.) region (.) which doesn't e- entirely (.) you know (.) overlap with the north region (.)

62 S2: **yeah** (.)

63 S1: and then a french-talking (.) region which doesn't overlap (.) with the: south region (.) and then we have german (.) region (.) which doesn't overlap with anything at all (1) so we have seven governments (.)
seven parliaments

64 S2: **wow**

65 S1: seven prime ministers =

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[38] An overview of the conventions used in VOICE-Leisure and in ViMELF can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B. In the examples from VOICE, the turns will maintain the original numerical sequence of the transcript. Since lines and turns are not provided in ViMELF, they will be added in the examples to make references and discussion of the instances presented clearer.

In line 57 S1 starts explaining that Belgium is a federal state and immediately S2 signals that he is listening. S1 continues to explain how the Belgian federal model is similar to the German one and he tries to clarify which regions are present in Belgium and the language or ethnicity that is predominant in each. In line 59, indeed, S1 uses a reformulation to explain what federal state means by describing how it is in Belgium. Throughout the extract, S2 continues to provide lexical backchannels ('yeah', 'wow') to confirm that he is paying attention and is following what S1 is saying, showing active listenership and involvement (lines 60, 62, and 64). After the explanation, S2 comments on the system and this proves that he was actively listening. In a sequence of explanations as the one presented in Example 1 it is important to remark that the use of backchannels by the interlocutor helps the speaker signal that the description is clear and that he is following. By adding comments afterwards, S2 demonstrates attention and involvement and proves that the backchannels were performed to confirm understanding and to signal support and attention.

Example 2 shows another way in which backchannels can be used to support the main speaker and show active listenership and demonstrates the importance that non-verbal features have as well. SB75 (from Germany) and HE01 (from Finland) are talking about the process of getting a PhD for a teacher in Germany, SB75 is describing how this could be attained and HE01 is showing attention by using both verbal and non-verbal backchannels. As seen in §4.1, the multimodal annotations available in ViMELF allow for a more detailed analysis of the interaction.

Example 2: Backchannels – to show active listenership (ViMELF_01SB75HE01).

 1 HE01: [oka:y]? {nods} .. .h is this usual for teachers in Germany to get their PhD?

 2 SB75: (1.2) {clicking sound} .h: u:hm. .. to be: u:h f: honest, I don't know about it. I just kno:w uhm:, you have to do two big exams? .. the state exams?

 3 HE01: **yeah**, [€€€]

 4 SB75: [so] the first exam is:, .. you finish your studying with that exam. it's like a .h: state degree, .h:,=

 5 HE01: =**yeah**, €€€=

6 SB75: =a:nd uh then you have to work two yea:rs,   #00:08:30-8#   uhm:,

… .t .. like- it's an internship in school.   #00:08:35-5#

7 HE01: {**nods**}

8 SB75:   .. and after this you have a second,   u:h big exam and then you are allowed to: uh be a teacher. .. to work as a teacher,

9 HE01: {**nods**}

10 SB75: .h but I think,   if you: have your academic degree here, your <first STATE exam>,

11 HE01: .. **m:h**. {nods}

12 SB75: .h the:n u:hm you can continue at uni in doing your PhD. ... so:,

13 HE01: **okay**:, {nods}

14 SB75: .. {shakes head} should be normal course of studying then. .h that's what I:'m aiming at so:, .. I [don't want] to do this internship directly after my degree, #00:09:00-9#

15 HE01: [**okay**]?

16 SB75: .h I want to do the PhD. if I get, … uhm: something in London, or, {moves hand in circles} .. around London, yeah.=

17 HE01: =°**mhm**°.

HE01 starts the topic by asking whether it is usual for teachers in Germany to get a PhD (line 1). SB75 pauses to think about the answer and starts explaining what she knows about the topic, describing the process needed to become a teacher and how a PhD qualification can be included in the career. While SB75 is talking, HE01 continues to perform verbal and non-verbal backchannels to show that she is following the answer and that she is interested. Indeed, HE01 is signalling attention not only by speaking (lines 3, 5, 15, and 17), but also by nodding (lines 7 and 9) or by performing both at the same time (lines 11 and 13). After HE01's question, SB75 starts explaining the process that a teacher needs to follow to achieve a PhD qualification. In line 2, she uses a reformulation to clarify that the exams needed are state exams and then she continues by describing each of them. SB75 performs other reformulations to clarify what she means, for example in line 6 where she explains that the two years of work required are an internship, and in line 8 where she reformulates to ensure that HE01 understands correctly. During these explanations, HE01 performs several kinds of backchannels: lexical

('yeah', 'okay'), non-lexical ('mh', 'mhm'), and non-verbal (nods). It is significant to note that these types of responses are also used in combination (lines 11 and 13), showcasing attention and support and a high degree of involvement. It can be observed that SB75 continues to speak because HE01 makes it clear that she is following what is being said and this helps the main speaker in going on.

b. Backchannels to indicate lack of interest, to signal indignation, indifference, impatience

As pointed out in Chapter 3, the distinction between interested and uninterested feedback, especially when considering minimal resources (that is, one word or non-lexical backchannels), is difficult to detect. The interpretation of uninterested feedback depends not only on the non-verbal elements (such as taking relaxed positions or looking away), but also on paralinguistic features (for example a monotone pitch). Without the possibility to be aware of the speaker's perspective and without access to the audios and videos of all the conversations, it is difficult to objectively distinguish between an interested and an uninterested feedback. Consequently, due to this uncertain interpretation, the distinction between these functions has been excluded from the analysis and a backchannel can most easily be interpreted as a general signal of active listenership, since in general transcriptions do not allow for further clarification. As a matter of fact, in VOICE-Leisure no instance of this second function could be observed, while in ViMELF one example has been identified.

Example 3 can illustrate why it is difficult to distinguish between interested and uninterested backchannels. The participants are talking about Liverpool and after HE06 (from Finland) asks SB80 (from Germany) whether he has been to Liverpool, SB80 tries to make small talk by commenting and reporting opinions he heard on the city. However, HE06 does not seem to be interested and this can be inferred because he does not answer the question when prompted (line 4).

Example 3: Backchannels – to indicate lack of interest (ViMELF 02SB80HE06).
    1 SB80:.. I think it's very, .. very modern city right. ... <with: modern culture> things. {grimaces}
    2 HE06: ... **mh**.

3 SB80: ... >is it<?

4 HE06: (1.1) sorry what? ((heh))

5 SB80: ((laughs)) .h it's it's quite a MODERN city right °it's° u:hm,

6 HE06: Liver[pool]?

In line 1, SB80 makes a general comment on Liverpool and in line 2, HE06 seems to be following what he is saying, since he provides a non-lexical backchannel. However, when SB80 asks HE06 a direct question (line 3), there is a second of pause in which HE06 probably understands that she was required to respond to something that she had not comprehended and thus she asks SB80 to repeat (line 4). This repetition request may indicate that HE06 was not really paying attention to what SB80 was saying and thus, when prompted for an answer, she could not reply appropriately, demonstrating that the minimal backchannel used in line 2 was actually uninterested. Nonetheless, this interpretation cannot be entirely verified, since the use of backchannels to show interest or not relates more to the attitude of the speaker than the linguistic dimension available in the data, and the same example could depend on other causes, such as not actually hearing SB80, unstable connection, and so on. As a consequence, since the identification of this function seems to be based on subjective interpretation, it has been excluded from the present analysis.

Backchannels:			
as any kind of feedback given by the interlocutor that does not interrupt the speaker's turn, is not used to ask for the floor nor for an answer and does not provide new information			
Function	**VOICE-Leisure**	**ViMELF**	**Whole data set**
To confirm understanding, to signal active listenership and attention	116.71	193.52	155.11

Table 8: Backchannels – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

As the examples above show, backchannels are an important communication strategy that signals understanding and active listenership, supporting the main speaker by showing involvement and attention. Their strategic function is fundamental to co-construct a collaborative interaction where cooperation and

mutual understanding are achieved. Indeed, in the example above the main speaker is helped by the use of backchannels, since the interlocutor displays attention and comprehension and thus signals that the main speaker can continue. Table 8 summarises the quantitative analysis of backchannels in the data, remarking their high frequency in the conversations examined: active feedback thus seems to be fundamental in meaning negotiation and in building mutual understanding to reach successful communication, showcasing a high degree of collaboration between speakers.

4.2.2 Lexical Anticipation

As seen in Chapter 3, Kirkpatrick (2007) and Björkman (2014) identify the use of lexical anticipation to show engagement and cooperation. This strategy shows indeed a high degree of collaboration between speakers, who need to be on the same wavelength to be able to successfully complete the other speaker's utterance. In the present dissertation lexical anticipations are *moves where a speaker completes or anticipates what the main speaker is saying during the turn before the turn itself is completed*. They can only be other-speaker initiated, since they usually respond to the turn of another speaker, and they have been observed to be more often performed in understanding interactional sites. Indeed, in the data set, they are usually used to express engagement and listenership and to show mutual understanding and cooperation. Their use has been proved to be occasional and not many occurrences have been identified in the data: the average use of lexical anticipation is 3.43 occurrences every 1000 turns, being more frequent in VOICE-Leisure, with 5.38 occurrences every 1000 turns, instead of 1.49 in ViMELF. One cause of this low occurrence could be the not so close relationship between the participants involved.

As Kirkpatrick (2007: 123) highlights, lexical anticipation requires a certain degree of collaboration and involvement among the speakers, that have to be on the same wave length. Nonetheless, some instances have been identified in the data and this can show that ELF communication is highly collaborative in nature even when people are not really familiar with each other.

a. Lexical anticipation to express engagement and listenership, to show mutual understanding and cooperation

Lexical anticipation has one main function, that is, to express engagement and listenership, and to show mutual understanding and cooperation. Since it entails the completion of another person's sentence, it shows collaboration and involvement and it can also favour rapport building among the participants to the interaction. Example 4 displays the use of anticipation to show cooperation and engagement. FL06 (from Italy) and SB32 (from Germany) are talking about SB32's Italian language class, discussing some difficult aspects of learning Italian. FL06, who is indeed Italian, shows engagement and attention to the topic, using a lexical anticipation to conclude SB32's turn before she does.

Example 4: Lexical anticipation – to express engagement, to show cooperation (ViMELF_01SB32FL06).

    1 SB32: and the [passato] remoto ((Italian (1.2))), that's very difficult, so: many,
    #00:25:00-2# .. irregular verbs,

    2 FL06: {raises eyebrows} ... [°mh°],

    3 SB32: [and] the LECTurer said: ((sa/t/)), ... it's: actually not used in Italy, so
    they use-, ... u:hm passato prossimo ((Italian (1.0)))?

    4 FL06: ... [yeah], {nods}

    5 SB32: [and] not:, uhm passato remoto ((Italian (1.4)))? but we still have to
    learn this. ... because, {thumps with hand on desk} ... it's Italian.

    6 FL06: ... °yeah°, {raises eyebrows & smiles} so you really HAD to learn it.
    [yeah],

    7 SB32: yeah I have to [learn] although ((al/s/ough)) our LECTurer SAID, ..
    <it's:> not used, only in, .. li[terature].

    8 FL06: [**literature**]. #00:25:30-3# yeah. (2.4) yeah and have you (have-),
    ((coughs)) you also have to learn the congiuntivo ((Italian (0.8)))? ...
    subjunctive.

    9 SB32: yes:, {looks to side}

    10 FL06: yeah. [((chuckles))]

SB32 and FL06 are discussing about language and, in particular, about Italian grammar. This topic seems to be engaging for both speakers and it helps in

creating rapport. SB32 is commenting on her experience in learning Italian and she is pointing out how difficult Italian tenses are. In particular, she is reporting that even though students need to learn *passato remoto* (a past tense), her teacher told her that it is not often used in Italy since *passato prossimo* (another past tense) is preferred (lines 1, 3 and 5). FL06 is using verbal and non-verbal backchannels to show active listenership and involvement (lines 2 and 4), also commenting on what SB32 is saying (line 6). In line 7, SB32 reformulates the previous turn in order to remark that it is not really necessary to learn *passato remoto* and, before completing her turn by noting that it is used 'only in literature', FL06 anticipates her by saying, at the same time, 'literature'. This lexical anticipation shows that FL06 is involved in the communicative act and that he understands and agrees with SB32. To further display involvement, he also asks about another difficult verb tense in Italian, '*congiuntivo* …subjunctive' (line 8), and after SB32 answers positively, he laughs, displaying empathy and mutual comprehension. Another important aspect this extract highlights is the use of overt multilingual resources by both speakers. SB32 uses the Italian expression to refer to the past tenses she studies, without making reference to their meaning in English, while FL06 uses the Italian term *congiuntivo* (line 8) and then offers the translation in English to clarify the meaning of the word. Example 4 thus showcases not only the use of lexical anticipation, but it also displays the co-occurrence of several strategies in the co-construction of mutual understanding, namely, backchannels, reformulations, and overt multilingual resources.

In turn, Example 5 shows the use of a lexical anticipation that fails to be understood and that does not prove to be useful in co-constructing mutual understanding. S1 (from Austria) and S2 (from Spain) are talking in a club about pronunciation and how one's first language can help in speaking another language. S2 affirms that his country has a reputation to have a bad English pronunciation and he asks S1 whether in her opinion German people have a bad pronunciation as well.

Example 5: Lexical anticipation – to express engagement, to show cooperation (VOICE-LEcon229).

140 S1: <2> an- </2> an:d the germans (.) what do you think about erm this pronun<loud>ciation </loud>

141 S2: it's easy: to the german people speak english because er no- normally they have the same er (.) vowel sounds?

142 S1: bowl =

143 S2: = e:r vowel sounds (.) erm: the same kind of sounds in <3> the:</3>

144 S1: <3> **of the** </3> **of ROOTS** .

145 S2: no not rules (.) but the same sounds.

146 S1: so- okay <soft> okay </soft> =

147 S2: = SOUNDS . and e:r (.) okay the: same kind of e:r (.) i don't know the word but e:r the the words a:re SImilar. (1) in german and <4> english </4>

In line 140, S1 asks S2 about his thoughts on German pronunciation, after saying that his English pronunciation, being Spanish, is one of the worst in Europe. S2 thus explains that German people have it easy since they use sounds that are similar to the English ones (line 141). In line 142, S1 seems not to understand the word 'vowel' and tries to repeat the word, saying 'bowl'. S2 tries to solve the non-understanding by repeating 'vowel sound', and by explaining through the use of reformulation what he means (line 143). At this point, S1 anticipates S2 and says 'of the roots' (line 144), but what was intended as a lexical anticipation fails to be accepted by S2. Indeed, in line 145, S2 rejects the word 'rules', displaying a misunderstanding on his part, and corrects it by insisting on the word 'sounds'. What was a non-understanding thus shifts to a misunderstanding, since S2 did mistakenly understand 'rules' instead of 'roots'. S1 seems to let the conversation go on, signalling confirmation that she is following (line 146). S2 thus tries to finish his explanation starting by repeating the word 'sounds' and by reformulating in order to clarify what he means. This extract is then followed by some examples on similar sounds between the English and the German languages, showcasing that mutual comprehension has been reached. This also proves that even though the lexical anticipation has failed, it did not impede to continue a collaborative conversation. Moreover, it is important to note that the negotiation process in this non-understanding sequence is built through other communication strategies, namely, repetitions and reformulations.

Lexical anticipation:			
moves where a speaker completes or anticipates what the main speaker is saying during the turn before the turn itself is completed			
Function	**VOICE-Leisure**	**ViMELF**	**Whole data set**
To express engagement, to show cooperation	5.38	1.49	3.43

Table 9: Lexical anticipation – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

As Table 9 shows, lexical anticipation is not a commonly used communication strategy, indeed it is rare in the data analysed, but, when performed, it displays how it is pro-actively used by ELF speakers to cooperate and engage in the communicative act. It shows collaboration and it can co-occur with other communication strategies to help the speakers reach successful communication and mutual understanding.

4.2.3 Lexical Suggestion and Correction

Besides lexical anticipation, Kirkpatrick (2007) identifies lexical suggestion and correction. This strategy is used to suggest a more appropriate lexical choice or to correct the other speaker; Kirkpatrick (2007: 123-124) observes that this strategy is usually performed by speakers with a collaborative attitude that aims at ensuring successful communication more than grammatical correctness. In the present study, lexical suggestions and corrections are defined as *any move that completes the main speaker's turn by providing the appropriate (or correct) linguistic item when the main speaker seems to have difficulties in accessing or retrieving it*. This strategy is other-speaker initiated since it is used to help the other speaker(s) find the right word(s) they are trying to use and ensure successful communication. This strategy, performed only in understanding interactional sites, has a low occurrence in the data set and the average use is 1.35 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 2.20 in VOICE-Leisure and 0.50 in ViMELF.

A possible cause of this low presence in the corpora could be that the 'right word' is not always the main objective in ELF Transcultural Communication, that focuses more on intelligibility and achieving mutual understanding than correctness. In ELF transcultural contexts, speakers prefer to show listenership

and involvement instead of correcting the other interactants, especially if the meaning is comprehensible and mutual understanding is achieved anyway. ELF speakers thus try to ensure successful communication even when the utterances are not perceived as accurate and correcting, if not explicitly requested, is rare. When used to cooperate with the main speaker openly trying to retrieve a specific word or expression, this strategy can be seen as collaborative, because the participants try to suggest or guess the word the main speaker is looking for and this shows engagement and support. In this way, lexical suggestions and corrections are not conceived as a strategy that compensates for a poor linguistic output, but as one that helps speakers in reaching the desired outcome and one that ensures a successful communicative act. In the following section, the two functions performed by this strategy will be exemplified.

a. Lexical suggestion and correction to help out other participants

Lexical suggestion and correction can be used to help out other participants, especially when they are trying to retrieve a word and it is evident that they are not succeeding in doing so. In the data, this function has 0.92 occurrences every 1000 turns, 1.44 in VOICE-Leisure and 0.41 in ViMELF.

Example 6 shows S1 (from Germany) and S3 (from Czech Republic) looking at some pictures with other people in one of the student's room. At one point S1 tries to describe what is happening in the picture but does not seem to be able to retrieve the word she is looking for. Her pause signals that she is having trouble and S1 helps by suggesting the word.

Example 6: Lexical suggestion and correction – to help out other participants (VOICE-LEcon420).

    230 S1: looks like somebody is was erm (1)
    231 S3: **EAting it**
    232 S1: eating yeah @@

In line 230, S1 starts the sentence but does not complete it, instead she pauses. S3 thus intervenes suggesting the completion of the sentence (line 231) and S1 confirms she was looking for that specific expression by repeating it in line 232.

Even though the request is not explicit, S1 is hesitant and pauses, thus displaying her need for assistance in retrieving the word.

In turn, Example 7 displays an open reference to the fact that the speaker is looking for an expression that she does not manage to retrieve. SB33 (from Germany) and FL31 (from Italy) are talking about the importance of linguistic and cultural inheritance and how language and culture are closely related.

Example 7: Lexical suggestion and correction – to help out other participants (ViMELF_04SB33FL31).

> 1 SB33: .t and that- that's something I actually, I'm just uhm ((heh)) preparing a paper about this ((laughing)), right now. this weekend, because I have to hold uhm, ...t hold a speech, o:r I don't know how to say, >like< you know in front of class. {snuffles}
> 2 FL31: (**deliver**) **speech**?
> 3 SB33: YEAH. °>something like that<°. u:hm:, ... about uhm language death? #00:17:30-0# so: languages that just aren't spoken anymore because, <people shift> to- to other languages like English for example or, .h: yeah so I- I think that's pretty sad, because with all the LANGuages that get lost, then also like the culture get lost.

In line 1, SB33 is explaining that she is preparing a paper on dead languages and on the cultural heritage that is lost when a language ceases to be used. She has to prepare 'a speech', but she makes it clear that she would like to use a precise expression that she cannot seem to remember by stating 'I don't know how to say' and using a reformulation to clarify what she means, 'like you know in front of the class'. In line 2, FL31 tries to suggest the collocation 'to deliver a speech', and SB33 confirms that the idea is similar to what she indents to say, so she accepts the suggestion, by stating 'YEAH, something like that'. She then continues talking about the content of the speech and the conversation goes on. Example 7 thus showcases an overt request for help to retrieve a particular expression, and the use of lexical suggestion and correction can be interpreted as a collaborative move to help the interlocutor and thus to ensure successful communication.

b. Lexical suggestion and correction to ensure successful communication

Another function of this strategy is to ensure successful communication and thus the suggestion or correction given is to make sure that the meaning intended is the one being understood by the interlocutor. In the data, the average use of this function is 0.42 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 0.75 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 0.09 in ViMELF. In Example 8, S3 (from Serbia) tells the Maltese family she is with (S1, S2, and S4) about the day before.

Example 8: Lexical suggestion and correction – to ensure successful communication (VOICE-LEcon329).

    36 S3: yesterday i was in <LNmlt> valetta {maltese town} </LNmlt> (.) er in the evening (.)

    37 S2: yes

    38 S3: with my hosts a:nd er (.) there were a lot of people from the cars you know (.) hh with sire:ns shout<5>ing </5><6> and we were no </6> (.)

    39 S1: <5> yeah </5>

    40 SS: <6> yeah yeah yeah </6>

    41 S3: we didn't know what's (.) <7> what wa- </7>

    42 S2: <7> **what was happening** </7>

    43 S4: what's happened

    44 SS: @@@

S3, an international student in Malta, starts the topic by stating that she was in Valetta (the Maltese capital) the previous evening with her hosts when they heard some sirens (lines 36 and 38). The other participants provide backchannels and S3 continues to say that they did not know what had happened (line 41). However, after the initial part of the utterance 'what's', she pauses and S2 promptly suggests the expression 'what was happening' (line 42); S4 as well tries to suggest another conclusion, 'what's happened' (line 43). Even though S3 did not ask for help, S3 and S4 suggest the finishing words of the sentence initiated by S3 after the pause showing that they were paying attention and actively listening to S3's story. The turn in line 44 represents laughs, probably indicating that the suggestion was well-received and that it did not pose a problem.

Lexical suggestion and correction:			
any move that completes the main speaker's turn by providing the appropriate (or correct) linguistic item when the main speaker seems to have difficulties in accessing or retrieving it			
Function	**VOICE-Leisure**	**ViMELF**	**Whole data set**
To help out other participants	1.44	0.41	0.92
To ensure successful communication	0.75	0.09	0.42

Table 10: Lexical suggestion and correction – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

Lexical suggestions and corrections, as shown in Table 10, are rarely used in the data set and preferably when an explicit request for help is made by the main speaker. They are generally performed as a collaborative act that aims at ensuring successful communication and helping in constructing mutual understanding, thus they do not appear to have negative consequences on the communicative act.

4.2.4 Overt Multilingual Resources

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, ELF Transcultural Communication includes an underlying presence and an explicit use of different languages in addition to English. This multilingual nature is conceived of as the rightful consideration of the speakers' different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and of their identities. A common frame of reference needs to be negotiated in order to establish shared linguistic and cultural practices and to appropriately and effectively reach successful communication. As illustrated in Chapter 3, multilingualism in ELF Transcultural Communication can be covert, that is, when the use of languages other than English does not explicitly emerge in the linguistic practices of the speakers but it nevertheless influences them, and overt, namely the open use of expressions and words from a language other than English. In the present study, only overt multilingual resources are taken into account and they are defined as *any explicit use of linguistic items taken from languages other than English*. They can be both other-speaker initiated or same-speaker initiated, depending on who starts to perform it first, and in the data set they occur in both understanding and non-understanding interactional sites. The functions of this strategy are to underline group membership, to create rapport, to use a *mot juste* or to express a

particular cultural concept, to give a metalinguistic commentary, to compensate for a lexical gap or to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches. An important aspect to include when identifying the actor of the strategy is his/her mother tongue, because this suggests at least another language in the speaker's repertoire and can add a further dimension in understanding the purpose of the strategy performed.

In the data set examined, the use of overt multilingual resources has a quite high average use, with 31.92 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 44.63 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 19.2 in ViMELF. The use of this strategy is closely related to the multilingual repertoire available to the speakers involved and thus a high or low use of this strategy in a particular communicative act can also depend on the participants' shared linguistic resources and their familiarity in using them. The conversations in which the speakers share a language other than English show a higher use of overt multilingual resources, while those in which only English was perceived as the common linguistic resource have no occurrence of this strategy. Moreover, this strategy has been observed to have a frequent occurrence especially to express precise cultural concepts (15.35 occurrences every 1000 turns in the whole data set), while the function to compensate for a lexical gap has a very low occurrence (only 2.38 occurrences every 1000 turns). This difference shows that overt multilingual resources are generally not performed to cover for a lack of knowledge of the English language, but to enrich the communicative act by including the cultural and linguistic backgrounds that underlie ELF Transcultural Communication. It needs to be remarked that this strategy often co-occurs together with other communication strategies, for example reformulations and repetitions, that are frequently used to explain and underscore the cultural concept expressed by the overt multilingual resource used.

In the following sections, all the functions found in the data for this strategy will be discussed, providing some examples. As discussed in §4.1, a strategy can serve several functions at once and overt multilingual resources are often used to perform more than one function. Indeed, rapport building and emphasis on group membership and identity are often at the basis of the use of this strategy, even when the most prominent function is to express a specific cultural concept or to

give a metalinguistic commentary. As explained in §4.1 and in line with the structure of the analysis, the following sections will analyse one function at a time in order to describe more clearly how this communication strategy can be used.

a. Overt multilingual resources to underline group membership and identity

As mentioned, overt multilingual resources are often performed to serve more than one function at once. One of the functions identified in existing literature (Brunner & Diemer, 2018) is to underline group membership and identity, which in the data analysed frequently co-occurs with other functions. Even though to underline group membership and identity has not appeared to be the most prominent function when compared to other purposes co-occurring, it can be considered to be at the basis of many cultural concepts, where particular traditions, food, events and other *mots justes* represent aspects related to the speaker's identity and his or her attempt at displaying it/them to the interlocutor(s). For example, in a VOICE-Leisure conversation a Maltese speaker explaining some expressions in Maltese also provides a metalinguistic commentary, at the same time foregrounding his Maltese identity (LEcon548); or when a Spanish speaker is explaining *Noche de San Juan*, she is also addressing one important tradition that is part of her identity as a Spanish person (ViMELF_06SB73ST14). In the data examined this function has not been identified as the most prominent one in any case, but it has to be noted that it often co-occurs with other functions and that it seems to be underlying many uses of the over multilingual resources detected.

b. Overt multilingual resources to create rapport

This second function, to create rapport, refers to the speaker's purpose of building rapport with their interlocutors by showing interest on or by using the other participant's first language. The average use is of 3.08 occurrences every 1000 turns, being more frequent in VOICE-Leisure with 4.76 occurrences than in ViMELF with 1.37.

In Example 9, S3 (from Malta) is visiting a Maltese family (S2, S3, and S4), who brings her around the island to sightsee. The extract displays how S2 and S4 are trying to teach to S3 some Maltese words after S3 asked for it. This sequence of utterances exemplifies how the use of overt multilingual resources is aimed at creating rapport by teaching and learning Maltese. As a matter of fact, S3 shows interest in the hosting family's language and this prompts a collaborative sequence in which the whole Maltese family tries to teach some words to their guest.

Example 9: Overt multilingual resources – to create rapport (VOICE-LEcon547).

    85 SS: @@ <4> @@ </4>

    86 S3: <4> teach me something (.) teach me </4>

    87 S4: okay like (.) what?

    88 S3: cheers was really difficult and =

    89 S2: = <L1mlt> **sahha** {health} </L1mlt> =

    90 S3: = i i'm giving up

    91 S4: @@@

    92 S2: <L1mlt> **sahha** {health} </L1mlt>

    93 S4: <L1mlt> **sahha** {health} </L1mlt>

    94 S3: <LNmlt> **sahha** {health} </LNmlt>

    95 S4: @@@ <@> no don't give up </@> (.) so e:rm

S3 is visiting her friend S4 in Malta and S4's family is driving around the island to show some important sites to visit. During the trip, they talk about typical clothes in Malta and after being taught how a kind of dress in called in Maltese, S3 shows interest in the Maltese language, that she presumably does not speak. She explicitly asks to be taught some words in Maltese (line 86). S4 does not know what word to teach and S3 refers to a previous word she was taught in Maltese, 'cheers' (line 88). S2 thus suggests the word *sahha*, that means health (line 89). S3 seems to be discouraged and distressed by the difficulty of the word (line 90). S2 and S4 repeat the Maltese word (lines 92 and 93) and try to encourage S3, who repeats the word in line 94. S4 tries also to support S3 by inciting her not to give up.

The use of overt multilingual resources in the extract can be seen to serve several functions: they are used as a metalinguistic commentary on Maltese words, but also as a way to build rapport between the participants. Indeed, this second function seems to be more prominent because the process of language teaching and learning that goes on in the example appears to be closely related to the creation of a positive relationship between the participants: by showing interest in learning Maltese, S3 tries to build rapport with the family who is hosting her, and in turn, the family seems to be involved in trying to respond to their guest's request. Moreover, S4's laugh seems to display a positive response and attitude (line 95).

In addition to overt multilingual resources, the example showcases the use of repetition (lines 92, 93, and 94). Same-speaker repetitions are performed to ensure comprehension and to make sure that S3 understands the word and the pronunciation of *sahha*, while other-speaker repetition is used to try and show confirmation of understanding. The sequence thus well displays the co-use of two different communication strategies in order to reach successful communication.

Another instance is Example 10, that shows how HE03 (from Finland) uses German to impress and create a good relationship with SB106 (from Germany). HE03 and SB106 have just started their conversation when HE03 speaks German. This early use of the other participant's first language points to an attempt to build rapport and create a positive environment.

Example 10: Overt multilingual resources – to create rapport (ViMELF_08SB106HE03).

    1 SB106: I can delete <the: beginning> so,

    2 HE03: no it's fine, {shakes head} I don't-, I don't mind. [it's], {shakes head}

    3 SB106: [okay]. ((hehe))

    4 HE03: ... **GANZ EGAL für mich** ((German (1.5))).

    5 SB106: "OH" you can speak German?

    6 HE03: yeah, {makes measuring gesture by holding up thumb and index finger} a little bit. ... I uhm, I was uhm,   I've been studying German in_uh,   #00:03:30-4# in- "im Gymnasium" ((German (0.6)))? .h and then_u:h at the university as well, and then I uhm, I was in- in Frankfurt for- for a month. .. .h u:hm two years ago, in the summer so that was [kind of nice].

7 SB106: [°oh wow°], ... then [may]be we should talk in German, ((heh))

SB106 and HE03 have just started their conversation and are discussing the required recording to complete the task they have. In line 1, SB106 is asking whether she should erase the beginning of the interaction, that is, the part in which they talk about the organisation of the recording and of the topic. HE03 answers that he does not mind (line 2) and then remarks it by saying it in German (line 4). He is using SB106's first language, German, to try and build a positive relationship with the interlocutor, by including an aspect that they have in common. His attempt is successful, since SB106 is positively impressed, asking whether he speaks German (line 5). HE03 explains that he knows a little German because he studied it and he uses another German expression, *im Gymnasium* (line 6), to make reference to a German kind of school. SB106 then jokes about the possibility to have the conversation in German instead of English (line 7). This suggestion and the laughing tone (heh) suggest that the attempt to build rapport is successful and that the conversation starts on a positive note.

c. **Overt multilingual resources to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept**

One of the most frequently performed functions of the use of overt multilingual resources is to use a *mot juste* [the 'right word'] or to express a particular cultural concept: the speaker explicitly uses another language to refer to an idea that cannot (or is not desired to) be translated into English. It is important to note that this function not only includes references to traditions, festivals, events, food, and other aspects that characterise a particular culture, but it also refers to places, cities, towns and other everyday aspects that are conveyed using languages other than English, for example titles of songs or TV series.

As mentioned, the average use of this function is high, with 15.35 occurrences every 1000 turns (19.40 in VOICE-Leisure and 11.30 in ViMELF). When referring to this function it is important to note that the 'translation' of cultural concepts into English occurs only when the idea is likely to be internationally known (for example the Oktoberfest in ViMELF_06SB73ST14), but it rarely

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happens when the cultural concept is perceived as closely related to the country of origin and when the participants possibly think that the English translation would somehow minimise the cultural dimension of the notion expressed. As already illustrated in §4.2.4, the expression of cultural concepts is closely related to the speakers' identity, and it has been observed in the data to be highly treasured by the speakers, who frequently remark the 'culture' where the concept expressed comes from. Even though English is not always used to convey and explain a *mot juste*, literal word-by-word translations can be used to help the interlocutor(s) understand the original expression, and are often supported with an explanation of the meaning of the concept addressed.

Example 11 shows how *café au lait* and caffè latte represent different ways to serve coffee with milk and how this difference is closely related to the country in which coffee and milk are served. S1 and S2 try to describe the difference between melange, cappuccino, caffè latte and *café au lait*[39] by explaining how the two elements (coffee and milk) are prepared and put together. Therefore, in this instance, *café au lait* represents a particular cultural concept, the French way to serve coffee with milk, that cannot fully be translated with the English words melange, caffè latte or cappuccino, and that it hence serves to indicate a specific cultural idea.

Example 11: Overt multilingual resources – to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept (VOICE-LEcon565).

169 S1: […][40] but i- it was afternoon so i got just a COffee but i y-you look at the: list of coffee? and there was this (.) coffee called meLANGE (1) <fast> and

---

[39] *Melange* is a typical kind of Austrian coffee that is similar to cappuccino but has a milder kind of coffee in it. It is also usually larger in size. Cappuccino and caffè latte refer to the Italian tradition, the former being a strong coffee mixed with some hot milk foam (usually of medium size), and the latter being coffee mixed with a lot of milk (usually bigger in size). *Café au lait* is similar to caffè latte since it is coffee with hot milk added. The difference between these types of coffee and milk is based on the kind of coffee used and on the ratio between coffee and milk.

[40] The speaker is talking about other kinds of food she found at the restaurant she went to; not being relevant for the analysis of the expression *café au lait* the previous extract has been removed for clarity purposes.

i went </fast> (.) what is melange to [first name1] and erm and then she went oh it's (.) just you know <smacks lips> it's <4> MILK .</4> with coffee. (.)

170 S2: <4> milk </4>

171 S1: and it's cappuccino. that's what you mean. @ <9> @@ </9> @@@ <@> is THAT what you MEAN :</@> and she went no it's not cappuccino it's different TRY it.

172 S2: <9> oh </9>

173 S2: mela:nge (.) this sounds it's a typical austrian.<soft><un> xx </un> that sort of thing </soft>

174 S1: @@@@ i <1> don't know </1>

175 S2: <1> actually </1> my SISter told me. about this.

176 S1: it's actually nice. =

177 S2: = yeah yeah <5> yeah it's </5> typical

178 S1: <5> and it's er </5>

179 S1: yeah yeah yeah it's very NICE . (.) THEY SERVE it. er with a little piece of chocolate? (.) and er a glass of WAter. (1) so: it's VERy nice but it's SImilar to cappuccino i mean (.) i think the FROTH it's less (.) it's a bit (.) DIFFerent. but (.) i mean. (.) it's more or less the same. (.) <soft> obviously.</soft> but in the list there was melange AND cappuccino separately. (.) so they MAKE it <6> diff</6>erently it guess.=

180 S2: <6> (okay.)</6>

181 S2: = (there's a) caffè latte <LNfre> **cafe au lait**. {coffee with milk} </LNfre>

182 S1: <smacks lips> (.) yeah no no i know but (.)

183 S2: this is es- sort of <7><un> xxx </un></7>

184 S1: <7> but they had </7> melange cappuccino caf<1>fè </1> la<2>tte and all the </2> typical ones? (.)

185 S2: <1> hm </1>

186 S2: <2> i understand </2>

187 S1: that you find everywhere. (.) so the the person who DOE- who makes the cappuccino and the meLANGE they MUST make it in a different way. (2) or maybe the it's just the NAME (.) <3><@> it's different </@> </3>

188 S2: <3> the e- is for exa- </3> cappuccino is (that with) the italian (.) ththingy. (.) like (.) the big (1)

189 S1: yeah <4> but the melange was done.</4> (.)

190 S2: <4> chrome on all this?</4> (.) <5> and and the <LNfre> cafe au lait {coffee with milk} </LNfre> for example is </5> the one that you press down like that. (1)

191 S1: <5> the melange was done with the same </5>

192 S1: ah really. is that the DIFFerence. (1)

193 S2: well everybody understands it SLIGHTLY differently <6> (whatever) EXACTLY the different is.<soft> and some people think </soft></6> <soft> it's the same even </soft>

194 S1: <6> @@@ <@> yes </@></6>

195 S1: @@ <7> @@ </7>

196 S2: <7> but </7><loud> french </loud> have the (.) pressing DOWN machine

197 S1: yeah (.)

198 S2: whereas the italian it's the one (.) either THAT one or the (.) big one (.) (the) chrome.

199 S1: yeah. (.) no but yesterday in the cafe they were doing this melange with the big machine (.) and they were preparing it <1> as </1> (.)

200 S2: <1> hm </1>

201 S1: in the SAME way they were preparing cappucci:no. (.)

202 S2: <soft> yeah?</soft>

203 S1: anyway. it was nice whatever it was. and then i had this: (.) CAKE (.)

S1 (from Italy) and S2 (from Germany) are a couple and they are talking about what to cook that day. While they are looking at different recipes S1 tells S2 about a place she went to the day before. She tells her partner that she went to a nice restaurant where she wanted to order coffee, since it was afternoon. The problem arises when S1 looked at the menu and found a long list of coffees. She does not know about melange (lines 169-171). S2 explains that melange is a typical Austrian kind of coffee and S1 thus continues to describe how it was served to her (line 179). In lines 184 and 187, S1 remarks that at the restaurant she went to several kinds of coffee were offered (cappuccino, melange, caffè latte), observing that they had to be different in some way. The discussion on how cappuccino, melange and *café au lait* differ starts, and both S1 and S2 try to come out with why they are different and how. S2 suggests that cappuccino is the 'Italian thingy'

(line 188), while *café au lait* is 'the one you press down like that' (line 190). In line 192, S1 wonders whether that was the actual difference between the two, the 'pressing DOWN machine', that is mentioned later in line 196. However, in lines 199 and 201, S1 reflects on the fact that both cappuccino and melange were made 'with the big machine' (line 199), thus rejecting the first hypothesis of S2. Finally, they drop the topic by concluding that, in any way it was prepared, the melange was nice (line 203). In the extract, the process of negotiation of the meaning of the different expressions used to indicate the types of coffee is centred on the overt multilingual resources which are used and on the different cultural concepts behind them. The French expression *cafè au lait* serves thus as a *mot juste* [the 'right word'] to refer to a particular type of coffee with milk. In addition, even if not considered as overt multilingual resources, the other expressions discussed (melange, cappuccino, and caffè latte) refer to precise concepts that derive from particular cultures: 'melange' represents an Austrian typical coffee, while 'cappuccino' and 'caffè latte' refer to the Italian tradition (that is also S1's national culture). It can also be noticed that several communication strategies are used in the negotiation process in the extract. In line 173, S2 repeats 'melange' to create coherence when initiating his turn, while S2 repeats 'it's typical' in line 177 to signal confirmation. Starting from line 179, S1 uses reformulation to explain and clarify how the 'melange' was served and what 'melange' is, and S2 signals attention by performing backchannels (lines 185 and 186). From line 187, the negotiation process is clearly collaborative since both S1 and S2 perform reformulations and repetitions to jointly define the difference between the kinds of coffee they are talking about. The extract displays the co-use of four communication strategies to negotiate a common frame of reference to agree on the different definitions of 'melange', 'caffè latte' and 'cappuccino'. Even though the topic is somehow dropped because the speakers do not seem to be sure about their conclusions (S1 in line 203 says 'anyway' and then changes topic), the negotiation sequence seems to be successful in providing a characterisation for each type of coffee.

As mentioned above, the function to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept includes also references to everyday aspects that are expressed

through the use of overt multilingual resources, as shown in Example 12. After chatting on their studies, SB106 (from Germany) and HE03 (from Finland) talk about their favourite TV series. Since HE03 explicitly states that he speaks German, SB106 uses the German titles of the TV programmes she watches.

Example 12: Overt multilingual resources – to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept (ViMELF_08SB106HE03).

    1 SB106: [yeah I do]. ((heh)) I- I do watch uh a show that is called, **Gute Zeiten Schlechte Zeiten** ((German (1.8)))?

    2 HE03: ... okay, I don't know that one. {shakes head & smiles}

    3 SB106: yeah. uhm it [uh-],

    4 HE03: [**Gute Zei**]**ten Schlechte Zeiten** ((German (2.0)))?

    5 SB106: ja ((German (0.2))). good times bad times.

    6 HE03: yeah yeah yeah. {nods}

    7 SB106: and uhm yeah but it's, ... u:hm .t, (2.3) >it's< set in BERlin? [in Berlin]. #00:35:30-0#

    8 HE03: [mhm].

SB106 and HE03 are talking about TV series and what programmes they usually watch, when SB106 introduces the show she has been watching, *Gute Zeiten Schlechte Zeiten* (line 1). HE03 points out that he does not know about it and repeats the title in rising intonation to ask for further explanation (lines 2 and 4). SB106 probably perceives the repetition as not knowing what the title means and thus provides a translation in line 5. However, HE03 speaks German and thus repeatedly confirms ('yeah yeah yeah') to signal that he understood the meaning of the title, and SB106 continues by providing the plot of the series. In the extract, in addition to the TV series title, an overt multilingual resources is used in line 5 as an emblematic switch, since SB106 answers positively to HE03's repetition of the name of the programme.

Overt multilingual resources occur also in non-understanding interactional sites, sometimes because the speakers do not know or understand a word. In Example 13 below S3 (from Italy), S4 (from Austria) and S5 (from Austria) are talking

about wine. When S5 introduces the Italian word *Valpolicella* (an Italian red wine), however, S3 does not understand the utterance and points out her problem.

Example 13: Overt multilingual resources – to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept (VOICE-LEcon417).

258 S3: i think (.) er (.) good red wine is

259 S4: mhm

260 S5: i like <LNita> **valpolicella** {italian wine} </LNita>

261 S3: what?

262 S5: i like <LNita> **valpolicella** {italian wine} </LNita>

263 S3: a:h <L1ita> **valpolicella** {italian wine} </L1ita> (.) erm (.) y- not yesterday we (really) but two days ago (.) e:rm (.) we were in a flat of an italian boy (.) from rome (.) and er he bought beer a:nd (.) e:r (.) a bottle of <L1ita> **valpolicella** {italian wine} </L1ita> @@ and er (.) we have drunken it yeah it's good (.) but er (.) in er <L1ita> veneto {region in italy} </L1ita> (.) which is the region of italy (.) where is venice (.) we have er er <L1ita> **merlot** {italian wine} </L1ita>

264 S5: yeah

265 S3: <L1ita> (ed) **cabernet** {and italian wine} </L1ita> and er (.) very good

266 S5: yeah

In line 258, S3 states that red wine is good, and S5 agrees by giving an example of a red wine she likes, *Valpolicella* (line 260). This overt multilingual resource is to be seen as a *mot juste* because it represents a precise kind of Italian red wine; S3, however, signals in line 261 that she did not understand what S5 has said. Therefore, S5 repeats her utterance again and S3 points out her understanding by repeating the *mot juste* used by S5, *Valpolicella*. Moreover, S3 adds an anecdote on the word used, telling her interlocutors how she visited a guy from Rome and how they drank *Valpolicella* together, also adding more information on the wine produced in the area where she lives in Italy (lines 263 and 265). In the extract, the overt multilingual resource used at first is performed by S5, who comes from Austria, but then the same *mot juste* is repeated by S3, who is Italian, that adds other Italian wines, thus other cultural concepts connected to the topic.

d. Overt multilingual resources to give a metalinguistic commentary

In some cases, overt multilingual resources are used to comment and discuss the metalinguistic dimension of a language, explaining grammatical uses, idioms, and so on. The average use of this function is 5.09 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 7.93 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 2.25 in ViMELF. Example 14 shows a linguistic commentary on how 'I have a cold' is expressed in Standard German and in the Saarland regional dialect. SB32 (from Germany) and FL06 (from Italy) are discussing about their career – they both study translation and are familiar with several languages – and start to talk about the dialect spoken where SB32 lives. In the extract, SB32 is explaining an expression in the Saarland regional dialect and how it is different from Standard German, using English as a bridge between the two languages.

Example 14: Overt multilingual resources – to give a metalinguistic commentary (ViMELF_01SB32FL06).

1 SB32: it sounds so: weird:, ... so if FOR EXAMPLE, >if they I-<, I'm-, >I'm not su-, I'm not sure<, I mix it always up, uh me-, ...h I guess uhm, {looks up} #00:34:30-3# if you want to say, "I have a co:ld ((col/t/))". ... in Saarland, I'm-, I'm not sure. I think they uhm, they say, {looks up} (1.4) "**ich hann Freck**" ((German (0.8))). (2.9) a:nd,

2 FL06: [mhm].

3 SB32: [yeah] actually, it's:,

4 FL06: ... it's not Standard German, [((ehh))]

5 SB32: [NO] ((laughing)). {shakes head}

6 FL06: ((laughs)) {shifts position}

7 SB32: >definitely not, I- I mean<, if you want to sa:y, "I have a co:ld", in Standard German? it's-, (1.5) similar to .. English.

8 FL06: {nods}

9 SB32: ... NOT EXACTLY but it's:,   #00:34:59-9#   (2.3)   <more   to>, {looks to side} ... °it is° more similar to <English> than,

10 FL06: (2.2) °yeah°.

11 SB32: yeah to any, ... to- to- to uh_s-, uh SAARland, uh Saarland dialect.

12 FL06: how do you say it? ... in Stan[dard] German?

13 SB32: [uh], >in STANdard German< you say uhm,　　...　　"**<ich　　bin erkältet**>" ((German 2.2))), "**<ich bin**>" ((German (0.3))), it's uhm, .. "<I am>",

14 FL06: I am. {nods} yeah.

15 SB32: and **erkältet** ((German (0.6))) uhm,　　it's ACTually an ADJective, but you have a-, in English you use a noun for it so:, #00:35:30-7#

16 FL06: {nods}

17 SB32: it's uh-, **ERKÄLTUNG** ((German (0.5))), is actually, it's:, {thumps with hand on desk} also co:ld so, (1.2) °yeah°,　　but uhm, ... as adjective °not as noun°.

18 FL06: ... °mhm°,

19 SB32: (2.0) we use in, in- in German you say, <I AM cold>, {thumping sound} instead of I HAVE a cold, {clicking sounds} ... for ... having a cold ((chuckling)).

20 FL06: {smiles} {adjusts glasses with index finger}

21SB32: (2.8) °so that's°, ... Saarland-, {looks down & shakes head} Saarland dialect, °it's° .. really not my favourite ((chuckling)),

SB32 is telling FL06 how difficult it is to understand the dialect spoken in Saarland, thus she provides an example in line 1, *ich hann Freck*, that means 'I have a cold'. After remarking that the expression is not in Standard German, SB32 continues to explain how the sentence would be in German and provides a detailed translation. FL06 uses verbal and non-verbal backchannels (lines 2, 6, 8, 10, 16, 18 and 20), follow-up comments and questions (lines 4 and 12), as well as repetition (line 14) to display involvement, attention and support to SB32, who continues the explanation of the linguistic structure of the non-Standard German expression. Finally, SB32 concludes by remarking that she does not really like the Saarland dialect. This example illustrates how linguistic commentaries can be really engaging for the participants, who display in some way their identities and their linguistic background to the other speaker while describing specific features of a language. While SB32 speaks about her dialect, FL06 signals attention and they also joke about the sounds of German and the Saarland dialect, showing involvement and a positive relationship between them (Brunner, 2021). It is also to be noted that the participants are familiar with different languages and thus they seem to use more freely the linguistic resources at their disposal. In addition to

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over multilingual resources, the example also displays the co-use of other strategies to build mutual understanding, that is, backchannels, repetitions and reformulations, further demonstrating how communication strategies are often performed together to reach successful communication and to productively negotiate meaning co-construct shared understanding.

e. Overt multilingual resources to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance

In ELF contexts the use of overt multilingual resources is not conceived of as a negative setback, but it is sometimes performed to compensate for a lexical gap or to explicitly appeal for assistance in retrieving a word in English. In these cases the aim is usually not related to creating rapport or underlying identity, but refers to the speaker's necessity to retrieve a certain term in English. This function is used when the speaker gives the translation of the word he or she is looking for, instead of reformulating or dropping the topic. The average use is 2.38 occurrences every 1000 turns, being 4.62 in VOICE-Leisure and 0.14 in ViMELF. In Example 15, SB106 (from Germany) and HE03 (from Finland) are talking about the plot of a TV series when SB106 asks how to say *Erziehung* in English.

Example 15: Overt multilingual resources – to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance (ViMELF_08SB106HE03).

1 SB106: [but] it's always funny because they have such different views of the "world", you can say. and yeah they are always getting in situations that, ... >Caroline< which is the rich girl? and uhm, Max is the poor girl, and they are always fighting then and, #00:30:30-7# [yeah because],

2 HE03: [okay].

3 SB106: they have such different uhm, (1.5) how do you say "**Erziehung**" ((German (0.5)))?

4 HE03: ... yeah. {nods} ... [yeah. I know what you mean].

5 SB106: [°I don't know°, °yeah°]. but it's very funny.

6 HE03: yeah. nice nice. .h: u:hm:, (2.0) .t u:h okay cool. .t uhm do you-, {looks to upper corner} ..so do you like u:hm, so you actually, you watch your TV shows online then, #00:31:00-3# do you?

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SB106 and HE03 they are talking about what they usually watch and SB106 is describing the plot of a TV series she is following (line 1). While recounting the story, in line 3, she explicitly asks for the translation of the German word *Erziehung* (education) because, as she says in line 5, she does not know how to say it in English. Previously in the conversation, HE03 said that he knows a bit of German, thus he does not provide the translation, but remarks that he understands what SB106 means (line 4). SB106 then continues to comment on the plot, saying it is funny (line 5), and HE03 goes on commenting as well (line 6). In the extract, a successful use of an overt multilingual resource to appeal for assistance is shown, demonstrating that to appeal for help is a productive way to co-construct mutual understanding, especially when the speakers' linguistic resources overlap.

f. Overt multilingual resources to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches

Overt multilingual resources can be also performed to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches, that is, by using one's first language in interjections, tags, exclamations, parentheticals and responses to non-participants using the language spoken in the context where the communicative act takes place. The average use is 5.81 occurrences every 1000 turns, more frequent in VOICE-Leisure with 7.49 occurrences than in ViMELF with 4.14. Example 16 involves a couple (S1 from Germany and S2 from Italy) who is writing a shopping list and S1 sometimes switches to his first language, German, when he signals confirmation.

Example 16: Overt multilingual resources – to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches (VOICE-LEcon566).

 164 S2: another one (3) another banana?
 165 S1: for one? or for two.
 166 S2: fo:r (more) TWO .
 167 S1: <L1ger> **ach ja** {oh yes} </L1ger> one each (.) <soft> like this </soft> no?
 168 S2: oh MY god.

S1 and S2 are preparing their dessert, probably made with bananas, and S2 asks S1 whether to add another fruit. S2, after a clarification request, exclaims *ach ja* in German to signal excitement, too, using his first language. The extract shows how the use of an overt multilingual resource can be naturally included in the conversation without causing a breakdown or a negative effect, but instead enriching the communicative act by comprising the speakers' linguistic and cultural background.

Emblematic switches also include utterances where the speaker starts the word in his or her own first language and then realises that it is not the same in English and changes it, as displayed in Example 17.

Example 17: Overt multilingual resources – to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches (ViMELF_04SB33FL31).

    1 FL31: .. but you still have English as first language, and then, it's LIKE with °m:° <Gae:lic>?

    2 SB33: >with what<?

    3 FL31: ... Gaelic. #00:23:00-6#

    4 SB33: uh okay >yeah yeah<.

    5 FL31: °Cel°tic language.

    6 SB33: uh huh,

    7 FL31: u:h in **Gal**- ((Italian (0.2))), "in **Gal**- ((Italian (0.1)))". "sorry". Wales. ((heh))

    8 SB33: uh huh.=

FL31 (from Italy) is talking about Gaelic in Wales, but SB33 (from Germany) does not understand what FL31 said (line 2), thus FL31 first repeats and then reformulates to make sure that the message is clear (lines 3 and 5). To further explain what she means, FL31 adds the place where Gaelic is spoken, that is, Wales. However, she first uses Italian and almost says *Galles*, to then correcting herself and using the English word, Wales. Emblematic switches are frequently unconscious uses of one's own first language that emerge in the conversation; in Example 16 the switch is part of the natural flow of the conversation, while in Example 17 it is corrected by the speaker because it is perceived as potentially

problematic. It can also happen that the speaker uses an emblematic switch as a natural reaction to a non-understanding, to indicate that something is wrong, as it happens in Example 18, where S1 (from Austria) seems to not understand what S2 (from Spain) is trying to say.

Example 18: Overt multilingual resources – to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches (VOICE-LEcon229).

    63 S2: but it works. (2)

    64 S1: what works? (1)

    65 S2: because the [first name1] has tell me when anybody makes you a:n an exam? (.) the more IMportant is er not to s- to st- to st- (.) <singing> <imitating> to s- to s- to s- to s- to s- </imitating></singing> to stop

    66 S1: <L1ger><@> **was?**</@> {pardon} </L1ger> =

    67 S2: = to speak.

    68 S1: @ <@><9> to speak </9></@>

S2 and S1 are talking about how to pass exams and in line 65, S2 tries to say that the most important thing in order not to fail an exam is not to stop speaking. However, when pronouncing the word 'to stop' it seems that he gets stuck with the first sound and thus attempts to transform it into something hilarious by repeating it singing. In line 66, S1 is bewildered and uses German, his first language, to ask 'what?/pardon?'. S2 thus repeats 'speak' (line 67) and S1 repeats the word showing understanding. The fact that everyone is laughing, especially S1, shows that the humorous intent was achieved and that there is a positive attitude and relationship between the speakers.

Overt multilingual resource:			
any explicit use of linguistic items taken from languages other than English			
Function	VOICE-Leisure	ViMELF	Whole data set
to underline group membership and identity	0.00	0.00	0.00
to create rapport	4.76	1.37	3.08
To use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept	19.40	11.30	15.35

to give a metalinguistic commentary	7.93	2.25	5.09
to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance	4.62	0.14	2.38
to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches	7.49	4.14	5.81

Table 11: Overt multilingual resources – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

As the examples provided illustrate, overt multilingual resources can be used to perform several functions: to underline group membership and identity, to create rapport, to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept, to give a metalinguistic commentary, to compensate for a lexical gap, or to signal culture through emblematic switches. As shown in Table 11, some functions are more frequent than others: to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept is the most performed function, while to underline group membership and identity appears to be the least used. However, as pointed out above, this last function usually co-occurs with other more prominent ones, and has therefore not been included in the analysis.

The data shows that this communication strategy does not negatively affect the communicative act, but that it is mostly well received by the participants involved and can indeed be a fruitful strategy to create rapport and to connect with the other speaker(s). Above all, the data shows that overt multilingual resources are important to display one's identity and to signal cultural aspects, and in ELF transcultural contexts, where collaboration and mutual support are fundamental, they play a significant role in co-constructing understanding and reaching successful communication. This strategy has also a frequent co-occurrence with other strategies, such as repetitions and reformulations, that are used to explain and negotiate the meaning of the overt multilingual resource used.

4.2.5 Reformulation

As several ELF studies have shown, reformulation is an effective way to negotiate meaning in interaction, since the speakers try to change the way in which they said something to make it more comprehensible for their interlocutors (Björkman,

2014; Kaur, 2009; Watterson, 2008). In the present study, as mentioned in Chapter 3, reformulation is defined as *any paraphrase, simplification, exemplification, explanation, circumlocution and use of synonyms and antonyms to modify an utterance maintaining the same meaning expressed*. As Kaur (2009) remarks, paraphrase (seen as part of reformulation) is a frequently used strategy that enhances and secures mutual understanding, and it is also helpful in solving communicative problems. Kaur (2009) and Watterson (2008) suggest that reformulation is used to pre-empt and solve communicative problems, but the functions identified in the present study go beyond these purposes: the data shows that the speakers pro-actively use reformulations to create and negotiate meaning while jointly co-constructing mutual understanding. Indeed, this strategy is frequently performed in co-constructing and negotiating mutual understanding, since speakers try to be as clear as possible by changing words and by using examples, paraphrases or synonyms.

The average use of reformulation is 106.66 occurrences every 1000 turns, and hence highly used in both corpora, with 75.89 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 137.42 occurrences in ViMELF. It can be both same-speaker and other-speaker initiated and in the data it has been observed to be used in all interactional sites and for several different reasons. The functions this strategy performs are indeed numerous: to check and to secure recipient understanding, to clarify meaning, to retain a smooth speaking flow, to elicit clarification, to remark something or to use humour, to request confirmation of understanding or to confirm comprehension. As will be further explained in the following sections, some among these functions have a higher use compared to others, but in general the data proves that this strategy is very effective in building common ground and mutual understanding, not least since explicitness and clarity are reinforced by the use of reformulation. As it was the case for overt multilingual resources, reformulations too can be used to perform more than one function, but only what emerges to be the prominent purpose will be noted in the analysis. Moreover, it is important to underscore that reformulation, too, often co-occurs with other communication strategies in the process of meaning negotiation. As will be exemplified in the following sections, that discuss one function at a time,

reformulations are productive and are co-used together with repetitions, overt multilingual resources, as well as backchannels.

a. Reformulation to secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding

Reformulation can be used to perform several functions related to the co-construction of mutual understanding and to the meaning-making process. This first function, to secure or enhance recipient understanding, is usually same-speaker initiated and it is pre-emptively used to make sure that the interlocutor understands what the main speaker is saying and to reinforce the message, with an average use of 23.08 occurrences every 1000 turns, high in both corpora (12.58 in VOICE-Leisure and 33.57 in ViMELF).

As shown in Example 19, speakers reformulate in order to make the message as clear as possible. FL10 (from Italy) and SB36 (from Germany) are talking about their careers and FL10 uses reformulation to ensure that SB36 understands what he is asking.

Example 19: Reformulation – to secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding (ViMELF_01SB36FL10).

    1FL10: .. ((hehe)) yeah of course. {raises eyebrows} ... <uhm>, (1.0) so- and how many:? ... **like how many hours** .. **a week**? ... **do you**: >**do you study**<. (1.0) [**I mean at**-] **at university**.= {nods}

    2 SB36: [.h:], {nods & looks to side} =ye[ah].

    3 FL10: [°>so<°],

    4SB36: °phh° well. ... >you know< there's a difference between how many hours I- I SHOULD {raises eyebrows & tilts head} study, #00:12:30-6# and how many I REALLY {raises eyebrows & tilts head} study. ((laughs))

    5 FL10: {nods & smiles}

In line 1, FL10 asks SB36 how many hours a week he studies at university, but FL10 starts with just 'how many?' and then continues to reformulate the question to ensure that the question is clear for SB36. This reformulation is built on the spot to secure SB36's understanding, even though he does not prompt it. The

pause made by FL10 could also be an indication that he is evaluating SB36's reaction and when his interlocutor does not respond, he adds another piece of information, 'I mean at university'. In line 2, SB36 signals confirmation, probably gaining time to think about the answer, then given in line 4. In the extract, reformulation is used as part of the process of building mutual understanding and it does not have a pre-empting purpose, but rather aims at ensuring that the message is clear for the interlocutor.

As already pointed out, reformulations can also be used in order to secure recipient understanding and solve the communicative problem in non-understanding interactional sites, as displayed in Example 20 below. A groups of international students are getting to know each other, and S1 (from Germany) and S3 (from Italy) are talking about when they arrived in Austria. After S3 signals that she did not comprehend, S1 reformulates what she just said in order for S3 to understand the question.

Example 20: Reformulation – to secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding (VOICE-LEcon417).

    37 S1: how long you: (.) here?

    38 S3: sorry? =

    39 S1: = **since when you are here**? (.)

    40 S3: sorry?

    41 S1: <slow> since when (.) you are here?</slow>

    42 S3: a:h six (now) (1)

    43 S1: since when (1) when

    44 S3: a:h i er (.) <4> when i arrive </4>

    45 S4: <4> when did you arrive </4> here? =

    46 S3: = a:h okay on saturday

    47 S1: a:h okay (.) we are all since few (1) few days here

S1 wants to know when S3 arrived in Vienna, where they are at the time of the conversation, but S3 does not understand the question. At this point, S1 employs a series of communication strategies to solve this non-understanding. The first attempt is a reformulation of the question, from 'how long you here?' (line 37) to

'since when you are here?' (line 39). This reformulation is performed to try to secure the recipient understanding, but it fails, for S3 repeats 'sorry?' (line 40). The second attempt is thus a repetition (line 41), to which S3 answers with a number, six, that cannot be identified as any kind of time unit (we do not know if she is referring to days, weeks, or months). Since the answer is not satisfactory, S1 remarks that she wants to know when exactly (line 43) and S3 reformulates to ask for confirmation of understanding (line 44). At the same time, S4 (from Austria) intervenes to clarify the question once again (line 45) and finally S3 understands and answers 'Saturday' (line 46). S1 concludes by remarking that the whole group had arrived at a similar time. In the extract, reformulation is used to attempt to solve a communicative problem, and it is performed together with repetition to reach a successful communicative outcome; moreover, the example showcases a collaborative and joint co-construction of mutual understanding, since while S1 and S3 are trying to understand each other, S4 gets involved to help and positively solve the non-understanding.

b. Reformulation to check understanding, to request confirmation of understanding

Reformulations can be performed to check one's understanding, they can be same-speaker initiated to check the recipient's understanding, or they can be other-speaker initiated, when the interlocutor requests a confirmation on what he or she understood. This function has an average use of 3.92 occurrences every 1000 turns (5.45 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 2.40 in ViMELF).

Example 21 displays an other-speaker initiated reformulation where ST05 (from Spain) reformulates what SB69 (from Germany) asked her about having 'non-native speakers' as roommates in English speaking countries.

Example 21: Reformulation – to check understanding, to request confirmation of understanding (ViMELF_04SB69ST05).

1 SB69: (1.7) a:nd do you think u:hm, {scratches head} … there's a:, (1.8) {claps hands} a big difference u:hm between, {imitates difference by holding up hands; palms facing each other} (2.4) o:r let's say, {opens hand & squints & looks up}   if you live .. in an English speaking country? {lifts & lowers hand} ..

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but you don't live with NAtive speakers of English? … but you live with not-other non-native speakers. (1.4) .h: u:hm do you think?

2 ST05: {nods}

3 SB69: .. the English {moves hands back and forth alternately}, .. is different?

4 ST05: (1.1) **if I live with non-native**- #00:10:29-5# … **non-native speakers**.

5 SB69: yeah. {nods}

6 ST05: … u:hm. {looks up} .. uh- I think if I live with no- non-native speakers, mh, {purses lips} ... if they speak {raises eyebrows} my- .. my own language, in this case Spanish, .. I think it will be: counterproductive.

7 SB69: {nods} .. yeah.= {lifts head}

SB69 and ST05 are talking about living abroad and how a person can better learn the language living in English speaking countries. SB69 asks for ST05's opinion about having roommates who are not 'native speakers of English' (line 1) and whether 'the English is different' (line 3). ST05 pauses before reformulating part of the question to check whether she understood correctly. After SB69's confirmation, ST05 uses repetition ('if I live with non-native speakers', line 6) to create coherence and gain time to think about the answer, then given in the same turn. In the extract, it can be observed that reformulation has several functions and it co-occurs with other strategies in the meaning negotiation process. First, line 1 shows a reformulation performed by SB69 to ensure that ST05 understands the question. ST05 nods (line 2) to signal attention, using a non-verbal backchannel, so that SB69 can continue with her question. In line 4, as illustrated, reformulation is used to request a confirmation of understanding, and after a confirmation mark (line 5), repetition is used to create coherence and gain time. Finally, another reformulation is performed in line 6 when ST05 clarifies that her first language is Spanish ('my own language, in this case Spanish').

Example 22 shows how this function is also used when non-understandings occur. S1 (from Austria) and S2 (from Spain) are talking about how to pass an English exam, but S1 signals that she has not understood what S2 means.

Example 22: Reformulation – to check understanding, to request confirmation of understanding (VOICE-LEcon229).

74 S2: <10> no (.) no </10> but [first name1] has i- [first name1] is er (.) teaching me how (.) HOW to: to <11><soft> to pass an exam </soft> </11>

75 S1: <11> to speak english </11> (1) NO <1> w- </1> WHAT ?

76 S2: <1><soft> yeah </soft></1>

77 S2: not <2> to speak </2> english because he n- works (1)

78 S1: <2> to s- </2>

79 S2: in a: =

80 S1: = **he can't speak english**?

81 S2: yeah he can't but er it's not e:r to speak (.) er english in a: good way but er just how to pass a:n or- oral exam.

82 S1: okay (.) ok<12>ay </12>

S2 is explaining how he is being taught by [first name1] about how he could pass an English oral exam even without really knowing English (line 74), but S1 seems puzzled and confused. In line 75, S1 anticipates S2 with the utterance 'to speak English', but she understands immediately that her prediction is wrong since she pauses and then exclaims 'NO'. At this point, she signals not to understand what S2 is implying and thus she reformulates what she thinks he is saying to request if she is understanding correctly (line 80). S2 confirms that what S1 is stating is right and adds more information to ensure a successful meaning negotiation: he repeats that his friend cannot speak English well but knows how to pass an oral exam in English. S1 signals that she now understands by using a backchannel ('okay, okay', line 82). The extract displays a successful resolution of a communicative problem in a collaborative process of meaning negotiation; in addition to reformulation, also repetition and lexical anticipation are used to reach mutual understanding, showcasing again how communication strategies often co-occur.

c. Reformulation to confirm understanding, to signal confirmation

Reformulations can also be used to confirm understanding, that is, to tell the interlocutor that the message is clear, and they can signal confirmation as well, when the speaker not only signals that mutual comprehension is achieved, but also that he or she agrees with the content that is being conveyed. The average use is

6.87 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 5.06 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 8.67 in ViMELF. Example 23 shows a reformulation made to confirm that the speaker understands the long narration of his interlocutor.

Example 23: Reformulation – to confirm understanding, to signal confirmation (ViMELF_01SB32FL06).

    1 SB32: =I said lik-, I said at university, {thumps with hand on desk} >I was like<, "yeah", {looks to upper corner} talk but I DON'T UNDERSTAND what you're saying ((laughing)).

    2 FL06: °yes°, {shifts position} (2.4) yeah, **so you** s-, #00:30:29-8# **move to Italian**, °okay°.

    3 SB32: yes:, because I learned that's uhm, uh I learned Italian also at school? for three years.

    4 FL06: °yeah°,

    5 SB32: and yeah, ... I did m- uh, >much better< in Italian. {smiles}

    6 FL06: ((thh)) {nods} °yeah°, {looks to side}

SB32 (from Germany) and FL06 (from Italy) are discussing the languages they can speak and have learnt at school. SB32 states that she learnt French when she was young, but her high school did not offer French classes and thus she started learning Italian. Currently she lives in Saarland, where also French is often spoken, although she cannot understand it anymore (line 1). In line 2, FL06 thus reformulates what SB32 had previously stated, that she can now speak Italian, to confirm that he is following what she is telling him. Indeed, SB32 continues by confirming that it is right: she is still learning Italian, since she was better at speaking it compared to French. Here the reformulation performed by FL06 can be interpreted as made to signal understanding and confirmation, to support SB32's story.

Another instance is Example 24, that shows how reformulation can be used to confirm that the interlocutor is following what is being said.

Example 24: Reformulation – to confirm understanding, to signal confirmation (VOICE-LEcon566).

    479 S1: so what do you think about (.) [first name10]'s email.

480 S2: o:h (.) i forgot to reply. (.) well (.) it's good that he: they haven't (.) had any problems right? (1)

481 S1: yeah

482 S2: no what you are referring to to the: erm <reading> you're all in my prayers </reading> sentence.

483 S1: i don't remember that

484 S2: Okay (3) {sound of water running, S2 rinses the dishes (3)}

485 S1: <clears throat> (1) he wants to renew his passport huh?

486 S2: he what o:h yea:h yeah the **PASSPORT thing**. o:h that's <4> what you are referring to </4> (.)

487 S1: <4> so he wants to COME .</4>

488 S2: yeah. he wants to come.

S1 (from Germany) and S2 (from Italy) are a couple and they are having lunch together. In line 479, S1 starts a new topic by asking S2's thoughts on the email they received from [first name10]. After some general comments on the content of the message, S1 remarks that their friend wants to renew his passport (line 485). At this point, S2 seems confused, since she starts her turn by asking 'he what' to signal non-understanding (line 486), but then she immediately displays comprehension by saying 'oh yeah yeah', reformulates what S1 had said and addresses 'the passport thing' as the subject of the question to show confirmation of understanding. This turn (line 486) shows that S2 initially thought that she did not understand correctly, but she then signals comprehension to S1 by using confirmation marks and reformulation. Moreover, she repeats 'that's what you are referring to' (already said in line 482), displaying that she is following the conversation and what her partner is saying. S1 continues the conversation and comments that their friend desires to go to (presumably) London, and S2 repeats 'he wants to come' (line 488) to signal confirmation. This extract showcases once again how the co-use of different strategies can be very helpful in resolving communicative problems (or presumed problems), as well as in co-building and negotiating meaning to reach mutual understanding.

d. Reformulation to clarify meaning

Another important function performed through the use of reformulation, closely related to the meaning-making process, is reformulation to clarify meaning. This function is widely used in the corpora analysed: indeed, the average use is 38.19 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 31.21 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 45.18 in ViMELF. It can be both same-speaker and other-speaker initiated and it is performed in all the interactional sites.

Example 25 shows that reformulations can be performed also using a series of examples to clarify the concept expressed. SB53 (from Germany) and ST03 (from Spain) are talking about food and how much it costs depending on the place. SB53 thus comments that food in Germany is generally cheaper than in other countries, especially 'basic food'. In order to clarify what she means by 'basic food', she provides some examples: 'bread, cheese, ham, sausages'. Finally, he repeats that this kind of food is really cheap, to remark his point.

Example 25: Reformulation – to clarify meaning (ViMELF_07SB53ST03).

> 1 SB53: yeah I think, food in general:, is pretty cheap in Germany. that is also one thing I realised when I was TRAvelling, .. .h uhm .. so BASIC food, #00:30:00-0# like .. **bread cheese**:, {tilts head} .t **ham**, {shakes head} >**sausages stuff like that**<, is r:eally cheap if you buy it in the supermarket here.

Reformulations are also frequently used to clarify cultural concepts such as typical dishes, food, traditions, festivals, and so on. Even when the cultural concept is not expressed using overt multilingual resources (as seen in §4.2.4c), a clarification may be needed to explain to the interlocutor what the speaker is talking about. As discussed in Chapter 1, indeed, ELF speakers do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and they need to negotiate mutual understanding to reach successful communication particularly with concepts that are specific to a certain culture(s). Example 26 displays the use of reformulation to clarify a cultural concept, that is expressed through an overt multilingual resource.

Example 26: Reformulation – to clarify meaning (ViMELF_06SB73ST14).

1 ST14: is Christmas:, {looks up} any different? .. in Germany,

2 SB73: ... u:hm .. .t I can't [tell you], {shakes head & shrugs}

3 ST14: [is there something] special? {squints}

4 SB73: u:hm .. .t I think what is special about Christmas, {looks to upper corner} you uhm: (1.2) bake these cookies? I don't know if [you] do that?

5 ST14: [mhm]. {nods}

6 SB73: (1.5) uh Plätzchen ((German (0.6))) [I don't know] <°in German°>?

7 ST14: ((clears throat)) [we don't]. {shakes head}

8 SB73: (1.5) no? uh[m] **you have** .. **uh dough** ((d/ʌf/))?

9 ST14: [huh]? {leans forwards} #00:03:31-8#

10 SB73: .. **and then you uhm**, .. .h **uh have figures**,

11 ST14: ((clears throat)) {covers mouth with wrist}

12 SB73: **and you you you- just uhm make_som:e**, ... **yeah sta:rs or Christmas trees**, **out of** .. **the dough** ((d/ʌf/)),

13 ST14: {nods} right. (0.9) {looks to upper corner} well- I think that- that people do that also in England {makes swiping gesture}, right? {squints & nods}

14 SB73: yeah? {nods} okay,

ST14 (from Spain) and SB73 (from Germany) are discussing holidays and special traditions and ST14 asks about special customs in Germany. SB73 thus introduces the German tradition of baking *Plätzchen*, particular traditional German biscuits that are usually baked during the Christmas holidays (line 6). Since ST14 answers that they do not usually do the same in Spain, SB73 continues by explaining what *Plätzchen* are and how they are made. In the extract above, SB73 uses the German word to indicate a specific cultural concept and the general English word 'biscuit' is not enough to explain the tradition she is referring to. As Brunner (forthcoming) remarks, this overt multilingual resource underlines the German identity and personal experience of SB73 and her use of a *mot juste* signals a cultural concept that is not translatable according to her. After SB73's mentioning 'these cookies' (line 4) and the German word *Plätzchen*, ST14 does not signal any negative response to the use of an overt multilingual resource, but states that she does not know about these particular biscuits. After the explanation, she nods and says 'right' (line 13), signalling comprehension, and continues commenting on the

topic. The extract well exemplifies a successful use of a reformulation to clarify a cultural concept, with an effective negotiation of meaning between the participants, who do not indicate any sign of miscommunication.

In turn, Example 27 displays the use of reformulation to clarify meaning during a non-understanding sequence: since S2 (from Norway) does not comprehend what S3's studies are, S3 (from Italy) tries to explain by using several reformulations.

Example 27: Reformulation – to clarify meaning (VOICE-LEcon417).

    21 S2: yeah (.) and what do you study here?

    22 S3: i study archaeology

    23 S2: o:h yeah that's right <2> that's </2> right yeah yeah (.)

    24 S3: <2> yes </2>

    25 S2: interesting (.)

    26 S3: yes (.) me- er mesopotamian (.) and archaeology

    27 S2: haeh?

    28 S3: **mesopotamia** (.) er **ancient iraq** (.) you know? (1)

    29 S2: <shakes head> (.)

    30 S3: **er (.) egypt erm: (.) babylonia (.)**

    31 S2: a:h <fast> yeah yeah </fast>

    32 S3: okay er (.) egyptio- egypt =

    33 S2: = a:h yeah okay yeah (.) i see

S2 asks S3 what she is studying and when S3 answers talking about 'Mesopotamian archaeology', S2 signals that she does not understand (lines 21-27). To solve the communicative problem, S3 reformulates her words trying to clarify the expression used in the previous turn. She then tries to clarify 'Mesopotamian archaeology' using the word 'Mesopotamia' and she further reformulates saying 'ancient Iraq' (line 28), asking S2 whether she understood. S2 shakes her head, proving how non-verbal language is also relevant in the (communicative) negotiation process, since it is this feature that prompts another reformulation with words such as 'Egypt' and 'Babylonia' (line 30). Finally, S2 confirms that she now understands (line 31) and the conversation goes on with further information on S1's university career. The extract shows how

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reformulation not only consists of paraphrasing (as seen in Example 26), but it can also include synonyms and one-word clues that can explain the problematic concept.

e. Reformulation to elicit clarification

Sometimes reformulations are used to elicit clarification, and this can be both same-speaker and other-speaker initiated. The average use of this function in the data is 3.96 occurrences every 1000 turns, with 3.67 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 4.25 in ViMELF. Example 28 shows how S1 (from Germany) reformulates her own question to ask about the English word for *Zecke* .

Example 28: Reformulation – to elicit clarification (VOICE-LEcon420).

> 7 S1: and what was the name?
>
> 8 S2: the sign is that <3> you have </3> er you get a red <4> spot </4> and it a really big one (.)
>
> 9 S3: <3><LNger> zecke {tick} </LNger></3>
>
> 10 S1: <4> no the:</4>
>
> 11 S1: the english one
>
> 12 S3: the english one? (.) no it was the german one (.) i was e:rm
>
> 13 S1: **do you know what's the english word for** <L1ger> **zecke?** {tick}</L1ger>
>
> 14 S2: erm bug i thought
>
> 15 S1: bugger?
>
> 16 S2: BUG
>
> 17 S1: <@> bug </@> @ @ @ @
>
> 18 S2: <6> bug </6>
>
> 19 S3: <6> n-n n-n </6> that's the ge<7>neral that's </7> general =
>
> 20 S2: <7> it's not yeah </7>
>
> 21 S2: = it's just =
>
> 22 S1: = what bug?
>
> 23 S3: that's the general word <2> for any (.) tick </2>
>
> 24 S1: <2><spel> b u g </spel></2>
>
> 25 S2: mhm {S3 points at the computer}
>
> 26 S3: it's tick (1)

27 S1: t<4>ick </4>

28 S2: <4> ti</4>ck (1)

29 S1: tick? (.)

30 S3: mhm

31 S1: @@@@@ hh (1) i have a tick @@S2: erm bug i thought

The group is talking about a health problem and S1 asks how it is called (line 7). S2 (from Germany) does not directly provide the term, but she explains the symptoms, using reformulation to clarify meaning. S3 (from Czech Republic) provides the German word, *Zecke* (line 9), but S1, even though speaks German and understands, asks for the English word (line 10). S3 explains that he used the German one, so S1 reformulates what she said to elicit further clarification on the English term to express the problem they are talking about. In line 14, S2 offers the answer, that is, 'bug', but S1 understands 'bugger' (line 15), and S2 repeats 'bug' to ensure comprehension. S3 comments that bug is the general translation for the word *Zecke* and suggests the lexical item 'tick' in line 23. S1 thus uses spelling to further clarify and S3 finally states that the translation for the German word is 'tick'. After some repetitions to ask for confirmation and to confirm that the word is actually 'tick', S1 laughs and states that the health issue was that she has a tick (line 31). In the extract, reformulation is used to elicit clarification, but it can be observed that in the meaning negotiation sequence several communication strategies are put into practice to reach a successful outcome. An overt multilingual resource is used to refer to the concept in German, providing a common reference that serves as a guideline in trying to retrieve the English word; repetitions are used as well to ensure comprehension, and the spelling of the word 'bug' is performed to clarify meaning. This example shows the effective use of different communication strategies to reach a common communicative purpose, at the same time showcasing a successful joint negotiation: the three speakers involved try to come up with the English word together, in a cooperative co-construction of mutual understanding.

f. Reformulation to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony

Reformulation is also a very powerful communication strategy used to signal importance and to remark a certain concept, or to add humour. This function can be both same-speaker and other-speaker initiated and it has an average use of 23.76 occurrences every 1000 turns in both corpora, with 14.79 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 32.72 occurrences in ViMELF. Reformulation to remark something can take the form of simple reformulated exclamations, for example from 'quite nice' to 'amazing' or 'very interesting', or it can be a specification, by adding adjectives and adverbs, for example changing 'a celebration' into 'a big celebration' (as in VOICE_LEcon329). Example 29, in turn, shows a reformulation that aims at remarking a particular concept.

Example 29: Reformulation – to signal importance (ViMELF_01SB78HE04).

1 HE04: =so I thought I could also try, .. try teaching. {smiles}

2 SB78: {nods}

3 HE04: .. just for fun, because I >I like uh i-< in Finland you can, .h: uh just put your name on a list, {twists wrist repeatedly}

4 SB78: {nods}

5 HE04: .. and then if someone, {moves hand forwards} like a si- teacher is sick, {opens hands} they will call you and ask like, {moves hands towards chest} can you come and help out today, {opens hands} #00:10:30-7# and then you can go and help out for a day. {smiles & rests head on fist}

6 SB78: {nods}

7 HE04: .h: so I think I will try, {opens hand} try that, .. just for fun, because it seems really {raises eyebrows}, ... it's doesn't. .. >I don't know<. it seems FUN and really challenging at the same time so,

8 SB78: {nods}

9 HE04: (1.9) °so it's really great°.

10 SB78: °yeah°? ... that sounds great? [°but°] °uh I guess°,

11 HE04: [mh].

12 SB78: .h: {frowns} you can do that in Germany as well but, but mainly in: in: like, .. language in private {raises eyebrows} language schools {nods}.

13 HE04: .. okay. {nods}

14 SB78: ... **not in °in in our public schools°**, so,

15 HE04: [mhm]. {nods}   #00:11:00-3#

HE04 (from Finland) and SB78 (from Germany) are talking about their experience in teaching and HE04 is describing how in Finland it is possible to substitute a teacher even without a particular title (lines 1-7). SB78 comments that this is great (line 10) but that it is impossible in Germany, where a person can teach without having an official training only in private language schools (line 12). In order to remark this aspect, SB78 reformulates and specifies that it is not possible in public schools (line 14). In the reformulated expression, from 'in private language schools' to 'not in our public schools', we find an opposite concept (private vs public) to underscore that only in a certain kind of schools, that is the private ones, teachers can teach without a state qualification. The extract shows that reformulations can successfully be performed also through the use of antonyms and that they are productive in emphasising a particular concept.

g. Reformulation to retain a smooth speaking flow

Reformulations have proved to be useful ways to create coherence and cohesion in the communicative act, which can be done also through retaining a smooth speaking flow, where the speaker gains time to think before speaking. The average use of this function is 6.16 occurrences every 1000 turns in the whole data set, with 2.86 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 9.46 occurrences in ViMELF. In Example 30, S1 (from Malta) is trying to think about the way in which she can explain how people wear cloths in Maltese churches.

Example 30: Reformulation – to retain a smooth speaking flow (VOICE-LEcon547).

59 S3: <7> in church </7> in church we are talking about that (.) yeah

60 S4: <8> what did you have?</8>

61 S1: <8> **cos if we** </8> **ha- cos i- if we ha- had a sleevel- a sort of a a a sleeveless top (.) we used to have so- erm (.) something sort of TUBE with an elasti- (.)**

62 S3: <1> aha </1>

63 S1: <1> something </1> elastic

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64 S4: <2> an elastic </2>

65 S3: <2> aha </2> yes =

66 S1: = uhu uhu er so that it holds (.) onto your arm (.) to cover your arm

A Maltese family is driving around Malta to sightsee with a friend, S3 (from Serbia). They are discussing Maltese traditions and they start to talk about how people dress in church. In line 59, S3 recaps the topic of the conversation, and after S4 asks for an explanation, S1 starts reformulating in order to fluently gain time to think about how to describe what she wants to say (line 61). After some attempts she finally manages to clarify what they used to wear and continues in the following turns, supported by the continuous backchannels of S3 and S4. The reformulation in line 61 is aimed at retaining a smooth speaking flow since the speaker does not want to lose the turn and tries to keep it by continuously changing her words: she also gains time to think by paraphrasing 'if we had a sleeve[ess]' into 'a sort of sleeveless top we used to have' and finally to 'something sort of tube with an elasti[c]'. The backchannels of the other speakers signal comprehension, and she finalises her explanation in line 66, 'that it holds onto your arm to cover your arm'.

h. Reformulation to create coherence

Another function that helps in reaching a cohesive and coherent communicative act is to create coherence, that is, to refer to a previous turn or topic by reformulating what has been said. This function has a low average use: 0.7 occurrences every 1000 turns in the whole data set, with 0.26 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 1.18 occurrences in ViMELF. Example 31 shows how SB69 (from Germany) explicitly reformulates what ST05 (from Spain) previously said to create a coherent correlation with the topic.

Example 31: Reformulation – to create coherence (ViMELF_04SB69ST05).

1 SB69: [**what you- what you**] **said before**, **that it's**, {looks up} .. **about your own personality**, **uhm**. ... [**which**:] .. **is**,

2 ST05: [mh]. {squints & nods}

3 SB69: ... **I don't know**, **kind of INfluencing** .. **YOUR**, ... **own** {points to screen} .. **kind of language** ((lang/u/age)). ... so I don't know you [hear] people talking in English, #00:25:31-2#

4 ST05: [yeah]. {nods}

5 SB69: and then you say "okay", {opens hands} ... you know this is American, {counts with fingers} .. and this is ((chuckling)) a:, {points to side}

6 ST05: {nods}

7 SB69: .. British man or woman, {counts with fingers} .. .h and then, .. >I don't know when< .. people hear ME {points at herself} talking, they say "oh yeah? .. you're from Germany right? you've got that German accent". o:r °uh° [French] people, {shakes head}

8 ST05: {nods} [°yeah°].

9 SB69: o:r, (1.4) I don't know, {opens hands}

10 ST05: {nods}

11 SB69: Spanish people,

12 ST05: ... {nods} m[hm, .. yeah].

13 SB69: [sometimes it's- it's] quite easy {looks to upper corner} to:, .. to hear, {points to ear} .. where the people are from. ... but I [think that's] no-t,

14 ST05: [yeah but], {raises eyebrows}

15 SB69: .. that's not a bad thing? {shrugs & tilts head}

SB69 and ST05 have been talking for some time about language, accents and about the criteria that are used at school to choose language teachers. In line 1, SB69 wants to make a connection to what her interlocutor previously said and starts with the explicit remark 'as you said before' to signal that she is reformulating ST05's words to make her point. ST05 performs a verbal and non-verbal backchannel, uttering 'mh' while nodding (line 2), to signal attention and understanding. Starting from line 3, SB69 expresses her opinion, commenting that accents can give away the country where a person comes from, but this fact is not so negative in her opinion, while ST05 continues to use verbal and non-verbal backchannels to show active listenership. In order to create coherence in the conversation and make the line of reasoning clear, she reformulates what was said to make a new point, avoiding possible misinterpretations, and explicitly signposts the reformulation, to make her point even clearer and more explicit.

Reformulation: *any paraphrase, simplification, exemplification, explanation, circumlocution and use of synonyms and antonyms to modify an utterance maintaining the same meaning expressed*			
Function	**VOICE-Leisure**	**ViMELF**	**Whole data set**
To secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding	12.58	33.57	23.08
To check understanding, to request confirmation of understanding	5.45	2.40	3.92
To confirm understanding, to signal confirmation	5.06	8.67	6.87
To clarify meaning	31.21	45.25	38.19
To elicit clarification	3.67	4.25	3.96
To signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony	14.79	32.72	23.76
To retain a smooth speaking flow	2.86	9.46	6.16
To create coherence	0.26	1.18	0.72

Table 12: Reformulation – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

As shown in Table 12 and in the examples above, reformulation is widely used in the data under consideration and it is a fruitful communication strategy to perform several functions: it can be used a) to secure recipient understanding and to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding, b) to check understanding and to request confirmation of understanding, c) to confirm understanding and to signal confirmation, d) to clarify meaning, e) to elicit clarification, f) to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something and to use humour and irony, g) to retain a smooth speaking flow, and h) to create coherence. As noted in the analysis of relevant examples from both VOICE-Leisure and ViMELF, this communication strategy has a high occurrence in the data and in all instances it provides a successful way to reach mutual understanding and negotiate meaning. The most performed function has been observed to be to clarify meaning, but signalling importance and securing recipient understanding are frequently

performed as well. On the contrary, the least used function is to create coherence. As observed in the data, reformulation is used to make the utterance as clear and explicit as possible, to clarify particular ideas, especially cultural concepts, as well to solve communicative problems and negotiate mutual understanding. It has been noted that it also often co-occurs with other communication strategies (backchannels, overt multilingual resources, and repetitions) and it is common for speakers to engage in joint negotiation processes to reach a shared communicative purpose through the combined use of these different strategies.

4.2.6 Repetition

Repetition has been analysed in several ELF studies (e.g. Björkman, 2014; Kaur, 2009; Lichtkoppler, 2007), which have pointed out the difficult categorisation of what can be included in research as 'strategic repetition'; as discussed in Chapter 3, speakers perform unconscious repetitions and false starts that do not function as a strategic move to reach successful communication, but are rather spontaneous and unaware repeats (Kaur, 2009). Furthermore, when analysing communication strategies it is important to differentiate between casual repetitions (such as false starts) and strategic repetition, that is, repetitions performed with a particular communicative intent (see Mauranen, 2012). In the present study, as seen in Chapter 3, repetition is defined as *any identical or slightly changed re-say of an occurred utterance to perform a communicative goal* and it can be both same-speaker and other-speaker initiated. The average use of this strategy is of 108.16 occurrences every 1000 turns in the whole data set, with 100.90 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 115.43 in ViMELF. In the data, it has been observed that it is frequently used to perform several functions, such as to secure recipient understanding, to create coherence, to signal confirmation, to remark something, to gain time or to show listenership, and it has been proven to be effective also in solving non-understandings. Together with reformulation, repetition is one of the most widely used strategies in the data analysed and the following section will provide relevant examples to show how this strategy is used in meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding.

a. Repetition to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony

Some similar functions that have been identified in the data (namely, to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony) have been conflated in one since a clear and objective distinction between them would have been difficult. In the data, repetition is frequently used in meaning negotiation and in the co-construction of mutual understanding, and the first function has an average of 14.06 occurrences every 1000 turns, 17.72 in VOICE-Leisure and 10.41 in ViMELF. Repetition is a simple and direct way to remark something and it can be both same-speaker and other-speaker initiated. Example 38 exemplifies how, by repeating the same sentence three times, ST07 aims at remarking and give prominence to the fact that she could not see properly in that particular moment.

Example 32: Repetition – to signal importance (ViMELF_05SB70ST07).

    1 ST07: ... because .. I went under surgery twice, (1.2) eye surgery. .. <and I couldn't> .. be here with my teacher. .. so .. it was SO .. difficult. (1.0) to manage, (1.6) .t ((clears throat)) (°really°)- .. to handle the work.

    2 SB70: {nods}

    3 ST07: uh- .. because on the one hand? .. I couldn't see.

    4 SB70: .. hm. {nods},

    5 ST07: ... **I couldn't see**, I had a hi- I: had eye surgery, so .. I was .. for about two weeks, #00:11:30-4# **I couldn't see**.

    6 SB70: yeah. {nods}

ST07 (from Spain) and SB70 (from Germany) are discussing the positive and negative sides of distance learning and they agree on the fact that they prefer the face-to-face contact that there usually is in school and at university. To make her point even clearer, ST07 tells SB70 about her final exam to get her degree. It was a paper that she had to defend by email, but in that period she had eye surgery and it was really difficult for her. In line 1, she explains that she underwent surgery twice and that handling the work she had to do for the paper was tough. In line 3, she first states that she could not see and in line 5 she repeats it twice again, to

underline how this condition really impeded her work. While ST07 is talking, SB70 continues to perform backchannels, both verbal and non-verbal (lines 2, 4, and 6), to signal that he is paying attention. In the extract, it can be observed how repetition is successfully performed in underscoring the fact that ST07 could not see because of her surgery.

b. Repetition to signal confirmation

Repetitions can also be used to signal confirmation or to show understanding, and this function is highly performed in the data, with an average use of 32.87 occurrences every 1000 turns, being 33.98 in VOICE-Leisure and 31.76 in ViMELF. It is frequently the case that speakers repeat twice (or more times) expressions such as 'I don't know', 'I agree', 'yeah/yes', 'no' to signal confirmation to what is being said or to their not knowing about something. In other cases, repetition is used to confirm something that has been said or to a concept that has been set forward. Example 33 displays a case of signalling confirmation through repetition, where after a request for confirmation of understanding, SB75 repeats the word to signal that it is right.

Example 33: Repetition – to signal confirmation (ViMELF_01SB75HE01).
    1 SB75: so but FIRST of all maybe my name, <so> I want to introduce myself.
.h SB75name? .. that's my name? ... .h <a:n:d>, #00:00:30-5# yeah? .. I'm from
Germany? .. a very small town? .. it's called Bexbach?
    2 HE01: (1.1) Bexbach?
    3 SB75: .. yeah **Bexbach**. ((chuckles))
    4 HE01: o- [okay].

In line 1, SB75 is introducing herself, by stating her name and where she lives. She explains that she comes from Germany and specifically from 'a very small town' called 'Bexbach'; she does so in a rising intonation, seemingly to check whether her interlocutor knows the town. In line 2, after a short pause, HE01 (from Finland) repeats the name Bexbach to request a confirmation; this is provided in line 3, where SB75 repeats the name again after a positive remark to

signal confirmation. The extract thus well exemplifies how repetition is successfully performed first to ask and secondly to signal confirmation.

In turn, Example 34 shows other-initiated repetition to signal confirmation after a non-understanding, and thus to underscore that the trouble was solved.

Example 34: Repetition – to signal confirmation (VOICE-LEcon545).

> 521 S1: they (.) now have lots of like outdoor activities there as well <4> so they've </4> got like mountainboarding (.)
>
> 522 SX-f: <4> yeah </4>
>
> 523 S1: one of the biggest mountainboarding centers in the <spel> u k </spel> =
>
> 524 SX-f: = <5> ooph </5>
>
> 525 S7: = <5><soft> (wow) </soft></5>
>
> 526 S1: it's like (.)
>
> 527 S5: hm =
>
> 528 S7: = i think we've got a big mountainboarding <6> center </6>
>
> 529 S1: <6> yeah </6>
>
> 530 S5: <7> mountain </7> what?
>
> 531 SX-f: <7> yeah </7>
>
> 532 S7: <1> mountainboarding </1>
>
> 533 S1: <1> mountainboa- </1> LIKE snowboarding (.) <2> but with a </2> BIG skateboard
>
> 534 S5: <2> ah **boarding** </2>
>
> 535 S7: <3> on </3>
>
> 536 S3: <3> on </3>
>
> 537 S4: <4> @@ oh no @@ </4>
>
> 538 S7: <4> on (four) wheels on <pvc> downhills </pvc> </4><5> yeah </5>
>
> 539 S1: <4> down- <pvc> downhills </pvc> </4>
>
> 540 S5: <5> yeah </5> sounds like lot of fun <6> @@@@@ </6><7> @@ </7>

A group of Erasmus students is having breakfast and they are talking about holidays and outdoor activities, discussing in particular mountain boarding. In line 528, S7 (from Great Britain) notes that in the UK there could possibly be a big mountain boarding centre but S5 (from Finland) does not understand the word

'mountain'. She thus signals through partial repetition the trouble source ('mountain', line 530) and asks for further clarification ('what?'). S7 repeats the word 'mountain boarding' once again to secure recipient understanding (line 532), while S1 (from Great Britain) follows up with a reformulation to clarify meaning ('like snowboarding, but with a big skateboard', line 533). Finally, S5 understands the word 'boarding' and repeats it to signal confirmation in line 534. The other participants continue to clarify the meaning of the problematic expression and S5 comments on it laughing, showing that the communicative trouble has been solved and mutual comprehension is achieved (line 540). The extract showcases a joint meaning negotiation process where two interlocutors try to explain the problematic expression 'mountain boarding' through repetitions and reformulations. The laugh in line 540 signals that the communicative problem was resolved successfully, which can also be detected in S5's comments that the activity would be fun.

c. Repetition to signal problematic items, to address the trouble source

As shown in Example 34, repetitions and partial repetitions can be used to signal problematic words and expressions, usually non-understood terms, and to address the source of a communicative problem. Nonetheless, they can also be used to signal an issue in the content of the message. This function has a low average use, with 4.84 occurrences every 1000 turns in the corpora, 7.11 in VOICE-Leisure and 2.57 in ViMELF. Example 35 displays a sequence of negotiation of meaning between HE19 (from Australia) and SB93 (from Germany) with the word 'alcohol', that HE19 does not understand and signals as problematic.

Example 35: Repetition – to signal problematic items (ViMELF_05SB93HE19).

   1 SB93: [really]? is i-, is it true that >alcohol's< so expensive there? >or is it<, is-, was that just Norway?

   2 HE19: oh which one? {leans forwards}

   3 SB93: alcohol ((alc/o/l)).

   4 HE19: ... [{tilts head & squints}]

   5 SB93: [was that just in Norway]?

   6 HE19: what is it, **alka**? {leans forwards}

7 SB93: >uh sorry<, alcohol. <alcohol>. {imitates breathalyzer by blowing into top end of pen} [what you DRINK].

8 HE19: [.h o:h the], {leans backwards} .. the brand? {scratches head}

9 SB93: NO i-. {raises eyebrows} .. what you drink and-, #00:28:30-4# what's in beer. .. [and wine. ((heh)) alco-] ((laughing)),

10 HE19: [o:h sorry] ((laughing)), {makes throwing-away gesture with both hands} oh sorry sorry, {shakes head} alcohol. {nods} sorry, now I understand. >yeah yeah yeah<, o:h it's VERY expensive in Finland, I think we have a <very high tax> °on alcohol°?

11 SB93: yeah.

12 HE19: [yeah]. {nods}

13 SB93: [so that] wasn't just in Norway.

14 HE19: ... no:, {shakes head} I think [it's like], {nods & makes swiping gesture}

15 SB93: [>because<],

16 HE19: I think it's the whole of Scandinavia? it's,

17 SB93: yeah.

18 HE19: <not that cheap>. {shakes head}

SB93 and HE19 are talking about trips to North Europe since HE19 lived in Finland for many years when she was younger. In line 1, SB93 asks whether alcohol is expensive in Finland as well, or whether it is so only in Norway. HE19 signals that she does not understand the question ('oh which one?', line 2) and SB93 repeats the word 'alcohol' (line 3) and the last part of the question (line 5) to secure HE19's understanding. However, HE19 does not comprehend and she explicitly asks what 'alka' (line 6) is, signalling the trouble source. SB93 apologises, probably thinking that she mispronounced the word and repeat more clearly 'alcohol', offering an imitation (as in the non-verbal elements description) and provides also an explanation, 'what you drink'. Since HE19 has signalled a problem, SB93 tries to solve it using both linguistic and non-linguistic resources to explain what she means. HE19 has still problems in understanding what her interlocutor is asking and she tries to guess whether it is a brand (line 8). At this point SB93 adds to the repetition of what alcohol is some examples of alcoholic drinks, 'beer, wine' (line 9), and laughs, signalling a positive and non-threatening

atmosphere. Finally, HE19 understands what SB93 is saying and after apologising several times, she repeats the problematic word, 'alcohol' (line 10) and openly asserts that she now understands. She thus gives the answer and they continue discussing the price of alcohol in Scandinavia. Repetition can be very effective in identifying the part of the utterance that is giving problems, since the other interlocutor(s) can easily infer the trouble source from the missing part of the utterance that is repeated. In the extract, it can be observed that repetition is used not only to signal the trouble source, but also to enhance clarity and to ensure mutual comprehension; moreover, here repetition co-occurs with several reformulations, aimed at making the concept as explicit as possible in order to achieve mutual comprehension. It is also relevant the fact that SB93 does not only limit the negotiation to the use of several communication strategies, but she also enacts non-verbal cues, imitating common behaviours related to the word 'alcohol'.

d. Repetition to secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension

Repetitions are also used to secure recipient understanding and to ensure that the message is conveyed successfully, with a frequent average use of 15.29 occurrences every 1000 turns in the whole data set (17.46 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 13.12 occurrences in ViMELF). Sometimes it can happen that the context of the communicative act is noisy or that the connection in video-mediated communication is unstable, and repetition can help in making sure that mutual comprehension is achieved. For instance, backchannels often overlap with the main speaker's turn and, even though their aim is not to interrupt, the main speaker could feel the need to repeat the part of the overlapping utterance to ensure comprehension. As can be seen in Example 36, SB70 repeats what she said because she wants to be sure that comprehension is achieved after ST07's chuckles.

Example 36: Repetition – to secure recipient understanding (ViMELF_05SB70ST07).

 1 ST07: [hm]. (1.4) but- you were asked, .. as a compulsory activity? .. or was it

 just you know, ... the ones who want to participate, .. just raise your hands,

2 SB70: ... no we- .. we- .. we all took part. ... [so],

3 ST07: [a:h] okay. #00:33:31-2#

4 SB70: ... that's- .. that's probably why, (1.6) the German part of the list is {makes swiping gesture with thumb} .. °that long°, .. and you have to do-

5 ST07: ((thh)) [((chuckles))]

6 SB70: [**and you have to do** it] twice, .. as I could see, ((chuckles))=

ST07 (from Spain) and SB70 (from Germany) are commenting the activity they are doing and ST07 asks whether for his class it was compulsory or not (line 1). SB70 answers that everyone in his class wanted to participate and that was probably the reason why ST07 had to record two conversations for the project (lines 2 and 4). However, while he is stating 'and you have to do it twice', ST07 chuckles and SB70 repeats the sentence to ensure that his interlocutor understands what he is saying.

This function can be also observed when overlaps occur and the utterance is not understood, as in Example 37, where S1 (from Germany) needs to repeat his utterance in order to make S2 (from Italy) comprehend what he said.

Example 37: Repetition – to secure recipient understanding (VOICE-LEcon566).

85 S2: <1> @@ </1> @@@@@@@@@ <@><LNger> schlank {slim} </LNger><2> and <LNger> schoen {beautiful} </LNger></2></@>

86 S1: <2> i'll do the </2> washing

87 S2: @@ (.) haeh?

88 S1: **i'll do the washing**

89 S2: yeah (.) shall i prepare a DESSERT ? (2)

In line 85, S2 is commenting in German a book on cooking that she just took from the bookshelf and S1 states that he is going to wash the dishes, overlapping with S2's turn (line 86). However, S2 signals non-understanding (line 87) and S1 repeats what he had just said to ensure comprehension (line 88). S2 shows confirmation of understanding in line 89 and the non-understanding is thus solved. In the extracts above, repetition is used to ensure comprehension and to secure the interlocutor's understanding of the utterance.

e. Repetition to request confirmation of understanding

Repetitions can also be used to request confirmation of understanding, it can be performed by the main speaker to request whether the interlocutor has understood what was said or vice versa, and to ask whether the interlocutor has understood the message correctly. The average use of this function is low, being 2.53 occurrences every 1000 turns in the data set (2.52 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure, 2.54 in ViMELF). In Example 38 it can be observed that HE04 has understood correctly what was said, but she seems surprised and thus she repeats the number, possibly also to ask for SB78's confirmation.

Example 38: Repetition – to request confirmation of understanding (ViMELF_01SB78HE04).

    1 SB78: [>yeah< {frowns}], we do some internships, .. dur[ing] during our studies so uhm,

    2 HE04: [>mh<]. {nods & purses lips}

    3 SB78: ... we have to do FIVE in total. [and],

    4 HE04: [**FIVE**]? {opens eyes wide}

    5 SB78: five internships yeah. {nods} [but].

    6 HE04: [°oh°]?

    7 SB78: >they're< they're really short.

    8 HE04: {nods}

SB78 (from Germany) and HE04 (from Finland) are talking about the process to become a teacher and they are comparing the practices performed in their respective countries. SB78 is explaining what a person needs to do to get a teacher qualification in Germany and she remarks that they need to do five internships (lines 1 and 3). HE04 repeats the number, 'five' in surprise (line 4), also to request confirmation of understanding. SB78 confirms that the internships are five and she continues to clarify when and how long they have to be. As in Example 33, in Example 38 too repetition is used to request confirmation of understanding, by repeating the utterance with rising intonation.

f. Repetition to keep the floor, to gain time

Repetition can also be used to keep the floor and to gain time, with a frequent average use of 21.03 occurrences every 1000 turns in the two corpora (9.20 in VOICE-Leisure and 32.86 in ViMELF). As already mentioned, strategic repetition is different from false starts, because in repetition there are pauses and the speakers do repeat their or someone else's words to have more time to think, and that is to serve a communicative purpose. In the following examples some ways in which speakers can gain time through repetition will be shown. Example 39 displays how S2 (from Italy) repeats the word 'pancakes' in order to gain time to think while she is speaking.

Example 39: Repetition – to keep the floor, to gain time (VOICE-LEcon566).

    452 S2: ah that looks rea:lly nice. (3) with amaretto erm <smacks lips> liquor (.) <smacks lips> but also with the BIScuits o:h <soft> nice nice (yeah) (.) (**yeah**) </soft> (2) **panca**:**kes**: (.) is **PANcakes** like (.) something you cook fo:r erm:<smacks lips> (.) bonfire night. (.) or around that TIME . (1) no. (.) why do you cook PANcakes i forgot (2)

In turn, Example 40 shows how SB53 (from Germany) repeats what ST03 (from Spain) asked him to gain time to think about the answer.

Example 40: Repetition – to keep the floor, to gain time (ViMELF_07SB53ST03).

    1 ST03: .. so, ... uh- wh- what do you think is most typical_of, #00:08:30-3# .. German diet.

    2 SB53: h .t **most typical of German diet** .h, well uhm, .. .t the most typical German dish would be, {purses lips} (1.6) .t usually some kind of meat,

    3 ST03: {nods}

    4 SB53: .. .h with uh vegetables and uhm, (1.4) potatoes at the side.

    5 ST03: {nods} (1.0) okay.

    6 SB53: .t .h but uhm, .. I hardly eat ever eat typical German food because I'm a vegetarian, .h

    7 ST03: okay.= {nods}

    8 SB53: =so:, [((ehh))]

    9 ST03: [((laughs))]

ST03 and SB53 are talking about food and what it is common to eat in Germany and in Spain. In line 1, ST03 openly asks what the most typical German diet is and SB53 repeats part of the question to gain time to think: he repeats it once, then reformulates the utterance in 'German dish' (line 2) and pauses before giving the answer.

g. Repetition to create coherence

Repetition can also be performed to create coherence and to refer to parts of the conversation, with an average use of 13.69 occurrences every 1000 turns in the data under examination (8.69 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 18.70 in ViMELF). In the data, this function has been observed especially when a speaker wants to link his/her utterance to the topic that was just discussed in order to smoothly shift from one question or subject to another. Example 41 shows one way in which coherence can be created.

Example 41: Repetition – to create coherence (ViMELF_01SB75HE01).
   1 HE01: [hello: my name] is HE01name, ((heh)) [I'm u:h],
   2 SB75: [((laughs))]
   3 HE01: .h twenty-seven I am from Finland. u:h currently I live alo:ne, but next week I am moving in with a friend of mine?
   4 SB75: .. oh that's nice okay? ((laughs)) .h [so a flat-share] then.
   5 HE01: [yeah].
   6 SB75: ... have you ever HAD a **flat-share**. #00:02:00-8#
   7 HE01: ... >yeah<. .. u:h in my: second year of studies, uh I am also studying Architecture.
   8 SB75: o:h,

HE01 (from Finland) and SB75 (from Germany) are introducing themselves and HE01 states that she is going to move into a new place with a friend (line 3). SB75 comments and reformulates to signal confirmation using the word 'flat-share' (line 4). After HE01's confirmation, SB75 reuses the word in a new

question to HE01 (line 6). This repetition creates coherence between what has just been said and the new subject.

h. Repetition to show listenership

Other-speaker initiated repetition can be performed to show listenership and as a form of backchannel. In the data this function has an average use of 3.85 occurrences every 1000 turns, being 4.22 occurrences in VOICE-Leisure and 3.48 in ViMELF. In Example 42, S2 (from Denmark) responds with different backchannels, as well as with a repetition to show listenership, while S1 (from Belgium) explains the political situation in his country.

Example 42: Repetition – to show listenership (VOICE-LEcon227).

    108 S2: but erm it's a socialist government you have now? (.)

    109 S1: we NOW have (.) a national level (.)

    110 S2: yeah er <4> of national level yeah that's </4>

    111 S1: <4> a federal level </4> (.) we have er flemish and (.) wa- er (.) walloon socialists

    112 S2: yeah

    113 S1: with (.) flemish and walloon er liberals

    114 S2: **liberals yeah**

    115 S1: so purple they call it (.) purple cos (.) red and blue (.)

    116 S2: yeah

    117 S1: so socialist liberal (1) and on the (.) flemish level (.) we have a (.) liberal a grand coalition liberal christian democrats and socialists (1) so all the three big parties (.)

In line 108, S2 asks for confirmation about the government in Belgium and S1 starts to explain how it is currently composed and the parties involved. S2 offers several backchannels to show listenership and involvement in the conversation, one being the repetition of the last word of the previous turn, 'liberals' (line 114). In addition to the repetition, S2 says 'yeah' (line 114), explicitly signalling comprehension.

Example 43 shows another case in which a participant repeats the word said by the main speaker to show that she is paying attention and is following the conversation.

Example 43: Repetition – to show listenership (ViMELF_06SB73ST14).
    1 ST14: (2.2) uhm. ((ehh)) where were you, what state.
    2 SB73: uh I was in New Mexico, [uhm],
    3 ST14: [**New Mexi**]co. {raises eyebrows & nods} (°cool°).
    4 SB73: ... yeah I visited my aunt? {nods repeatedly}   she's   living   in   Albuquerque?
    5 ST14: (1.2) uh huh?=

ST14 (from Spain) and SB73 (from Germany) are talking about Christmas and SB73 has just said in the previous turns that she once celebrated it in the United States, since she lived there for a year. ST14 thus asks where SB73 lived precisely (line 1) and SB73 answers in New Mexico (line 2). At this point ST14 repeats the name of the state and comments 'cool' (line 3), to show she is listening and paying attention.

Repetition:			
any identical or slightly changed re-say of an occurred utterance to perform a communicative goal			
Function	**VOICE-Leisure**	**ViMELF**	**Whole data set**
To signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and iron	17.72	10.41	14.06
To signal confirmation	33.98	31.76	32.87
To signal problematic items, to address the trouble source	7.11	2.57	4.84
To secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension	17.46	13.12	15.29
To request confirmation of understanding	2.52	2.54	2.53
To keep the floor, to gain time	9.20	32.86	21.03

To create coherence	8.69	18.70	13.69
To show listenership	4.22	3.48	3.85

Table 13: Repetition – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

As summarised in Table 13, repetition is a widely used communication strategy that serves to perform many functions: a) to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony, b) to signal confirmation, c) to signal problematic items, to address the trouble source, d) to secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension, e) to request confirmation of understanding, f) to keep the floor, to gain time, g) to create coherence, and h) to show listenership. The data shows that repetition proves to be a successful way to negotiate meaning and reach mutual understanding, and it is one of the most used communication strategies among those analysed in the data in both corpora. The most performed function has been observed to be signalling confirmation, but repetition is also frequently used to keep the floor, to secure recipient understanding, and to signal importance. The data analysis has also shown that repetition often co-occurs with other communication strategies (e.g. reformulations and backchannels) and it is a very effective way to achieve mutual comprehension.

4.2.7 Spelling

In the present study, the strategy of spelling is defined as *spellings of a word that is not read as an acronym or abbreviation*. Spelling is not a frequently used communication strategy in the data and only few instances in VOICE-Leisure have been observed, demonstrating that it is not a commonly used strategy to negotiate meaning.

a. Spelling to clarify meaning

One case in which spelling was used has been presented in Example 28 above (line 24); another instance can be seen in Example 44, where S2 (from Malta) provides the spelling of the Maltese word *trid* in order to clarify how the word is written even though the pronunciation is similar to that of 'treat'.

Example 44: Spelling – to clarify meaning (VOICE-LEcon548).

    421 S2: \<L1mlt\> trid {do you want} \</L1mlt\> it's \<spel\> **t r i d** \</spel\>

    422 S3: ah \<LNmlt\> trid {do you want} \</LNmlt\>

    423 S1: \<L1mlt\> trid {do you want} \</L1mlt\>

    424 S3: not treat

    425 S1: no

    426 S2: well we say treat but it's spelt with the \<spel\> d \</spel\>

    427 S3: aha okay okay i see (13) {music from tv can be heard}

After a long sequence where S1 (from Malta) and S2 teach the expression '*trid*' to S3 (from Serbia), S2 gives the spelling of the word to clarify how written and spoken forms are different (line 421). This helps S3, who underscores comprehension by repeating the word in line 422 and by explicitly disambiguating the pronunciation in line 424. At this point S2 directly addresses the problematic point and explains the difference in pronunciation, not /trit/ but /trid/, adding that it is spelt with a 'd' (line 426). In the extract above, spelling is combined with an explicit explanation of the pronunciation related to the word, ensuring a successful process of meaning negotiation.

Spelling: *spellings of a word that is not read as an acronym or abbreviation*			
Function	**VOICE-Leisure**	**ViMELF**	**Whole data set**
To clarify meaning	0.20	0.00	0.08

Table 14: Spelling – occurrences every 1000 turns – summary.

Even though the instances for this strategy are not many in the data, as shown in Table 14, this strategy seems to be successful in clarifying meaning and ensuring successful communication.

4.2.8 Qualitative results: a summary

The qualitative analysis illustrated in the previous sections has shown how the seven communication strategies investigated are used in the VOICE-Leisure sub-

corpus and in the ViMELF corpus, and what functions they perform in the process of meaning negotiation and in the co-construction of mutual understanding. As it was illustrated, communication strategies are often used in combination and they play an important role in managing successful communication.

Communication strategy	Function	Occurrence in the data set
Backchannels	To confirm understanding, to signal active listenership and attention	155.11
Lexical anticipation	To express engagement, to show cooperation	3.43
Lexical suggestion and correction	To help out other participants	0.92
	To ensure successful communication	0.42
Overt multilingual resources	to underline group membership and identity	0.00
	to create rapport	3.08
	to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept	15.35
	to give a metalinguistic commentary	5.09
	to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance	2.38
	to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches	5.81
Reformulation	To secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding	23.08
	To check understanding, to request confirmation of understanding	3.92
	To confirm understanding, to signal confirmation	6.87
	To clarify meaning	38.19
	To elicit clarification	3.96
	To signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony	23.76
	To retain a smooth speaking flow	6.16
	To create coherence	0.72
Repetition	To signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and iron	14.06
	To signal confirmation	32.87

	To signal problematic items, to address the trouble source	4.84
	To secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension	15.29
	To request confirmation of understanding	2.53
	To keep the floor, to gain time	21.03
	To create coherence	13.69
	To show listenership	3.85
Spelling	To clarify meaning	0.08

Table 15: Sum up of the selected communication strategies and of their respective functions – occurrences every 1000 turns.

As can be seen in Table 15, they can perform several functions, not only to solve miscommunication, but especially to build common ground and ensure comprehension. As discussed in Chapter 2, the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication is fundamental to successfully reach the participants' communicative goal, and the ability to know how communication strategies can be effectively and appropriately performed is essential to be a competent speaker in ELF transcultural contexts, as will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

A quantitative analysis was carried out, which will be presented in the following section, in order to further investigate how communication strategies are a fundamental part of communication. As will be pointed out, a combined approach can be a fruitful method to strengthen the analysis by showing not only how communication strategies are used – and with which functions – in communication, but also their frequency and distribution in the conversations analysed.

4.3 A quantitative analysis of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication

As explained in §2.5.3.2, many studies have given a thorough account of qualitative insights on the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts, but, to my knowledge, a detailed and comprehensive quantitative

perspective has still not been provided[41]. The present study also investigates how a quantitative perspective could offer novel and further insights in ELF research on communication strategies, by providing quantitative data on their use and on their role in communication. As illustrated in Chapter 3, the quantitative analysis in this study is based on the results of the qualitative investigation and it is aimed at shedding more light on the role communication strategies play in communicative acts in ELF contexts. Descriptive statistics has been adopted to calculate the occurrences of the strategies analysed and of their functions; the results will be presented through three graphs, as explained in §3.2.2 and §4.1.

A possible limitation of the quantitative analysis could be related to the lack of other quantitative studies on similar data and aims, which makes comparisons not possible, also in terms of whether the size of the data set is large enough to show significant results, or a larger corpus would be needed to confirm the analysis and findings in my study. However, it should be noted that, in order to minimise such aspect and potential limitation, the data have been normalised and compared in relation to 1000 turns.

In the following sections the quantitative results will be presented and a combined analysis of six conversations will be discussed in more detail.

4.3.1 A quantitative comparison of communication strategies in the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and in the ViMELF corpus

A quantitative approach can offer an insightful perspective of the frequency of use of the communication strategies analysed in this study, both in each corpus and in the whole data set: it can provide a measure of comparison between the use of different communication strategies and between their functions, too, contributing to point out which are more (or less) prominently used. In addition to the use of different communication strategies, it can also analyse the weight they have in

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[41] Jafari (2021) presents a quantitative analysis of communication strategies and innovative pragmatics moves in her own corpus of naturally occurring ELF interactions, while Brunner (2021) offers a combined approach of qualitative and quantitative data on the use of code-switching and of definitions in the negotiation of meaning and identity in ViMELF.

communication, by investigating the ratio between strategic and non-strategic turns, expressed in percentage, as shown in Figure 5.

Strategic turns are defined as turns in which the occurrence of at least one of the selected communication strategies has been identified, while non-strategic turns are turns in which no occurrence of any of the selected communication strategies appear. This ratio can shed light on the relevance that communication strategies have on the whole conversation; Figure 10 shows that 38.42% of the turns in the whole set of data are strategic.
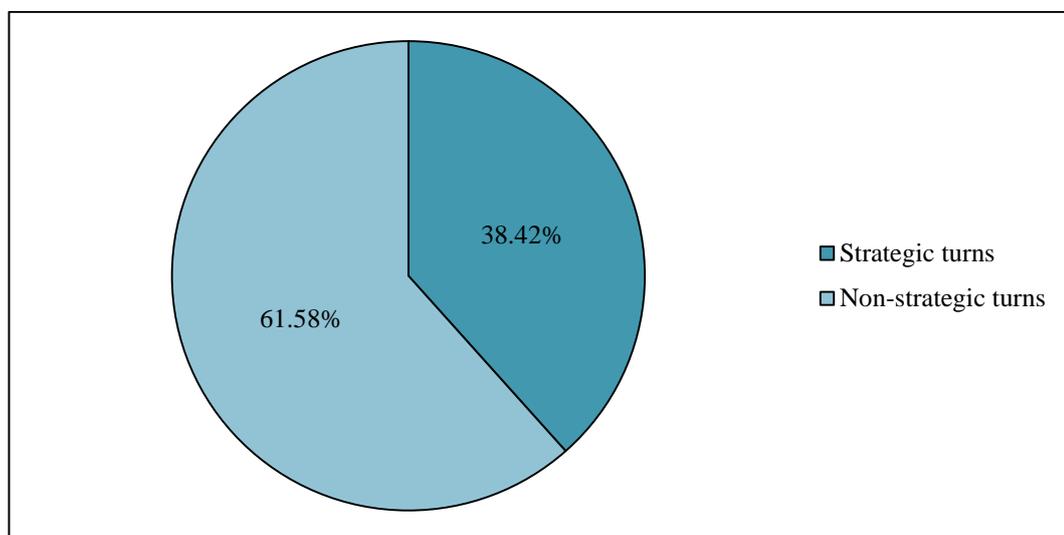

Figure 5: Percentage of strategic and non-strategic turns in all the conversations analysed.

Figure 5 shows the relationship between strategic and non-strategic turns in both corpora. As explained in §3.2.2, each conversation of the data set has been examined according to the number of turns that comprise at least one occurrence of one of the communication strategies selected for this study. This count has been transformed into a percentage to be able to compare the communicative acts in the two corpora. Even though only few conversations have a ratio of strategic turns that equals or surpasses 50% of the whole conversation, the average percentage of the strategic dimension of the conversations analysed covers 38.42% of the turns, thus showing that the strategic use of communication strategies is significantly present in informal communication in the data under discussion. As pointed out in Chapter 2, the strategic dimension of language use is fundamental in the co-

construction of mutual understanding, and not only to solve communicative problems. Of course, negotiation and mutual understanding are fundamental in ELF Transcultural Communication, and Figure 5 offers a quantitative perspective on the actual size of the strategic dimension in the data analysed. In the whole data set, a section of seven communication strategies occupies 38.42% of all turns. This entails that the ability to strategically manage communication (see Chapter 2 as to the Strategic Communicative Interaction Management dimension, §2.4) is highly important in ELF Transcultural Communication. Their significant role is indeed confirmed by the quantitative analysis (Figure 5), that clearly shows an actual elevated use of communication strategies in communication.

To further exemplify the importance of the use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication, Figure 6 displays the average occurrence of each communication strategy every 1000 turns in all the conversations analysed in both corpora, while Figure 7 focuses on the functions performed by every communication strategy examined.
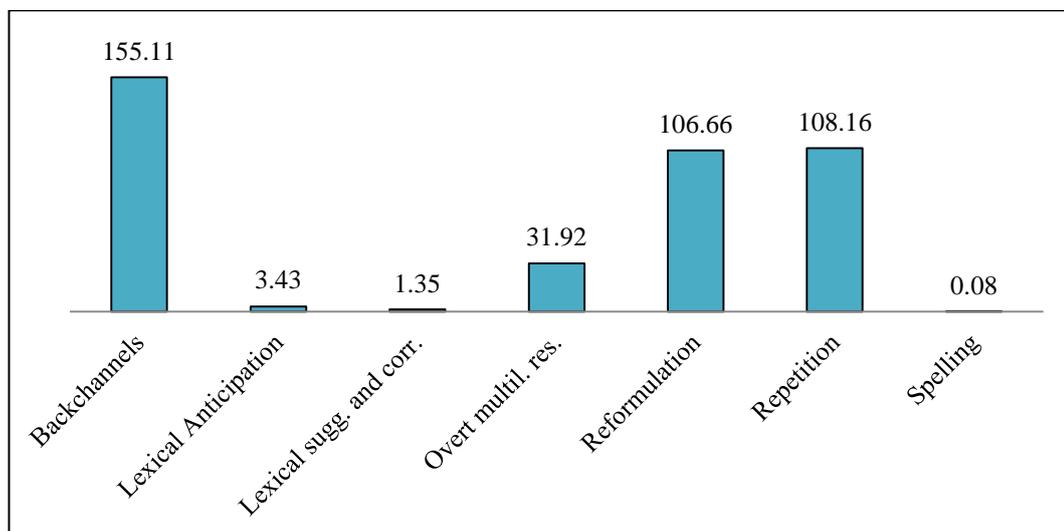

Figure 6: Average occurrence of each communication strategy every 1000 turns in all the conversations analysed.
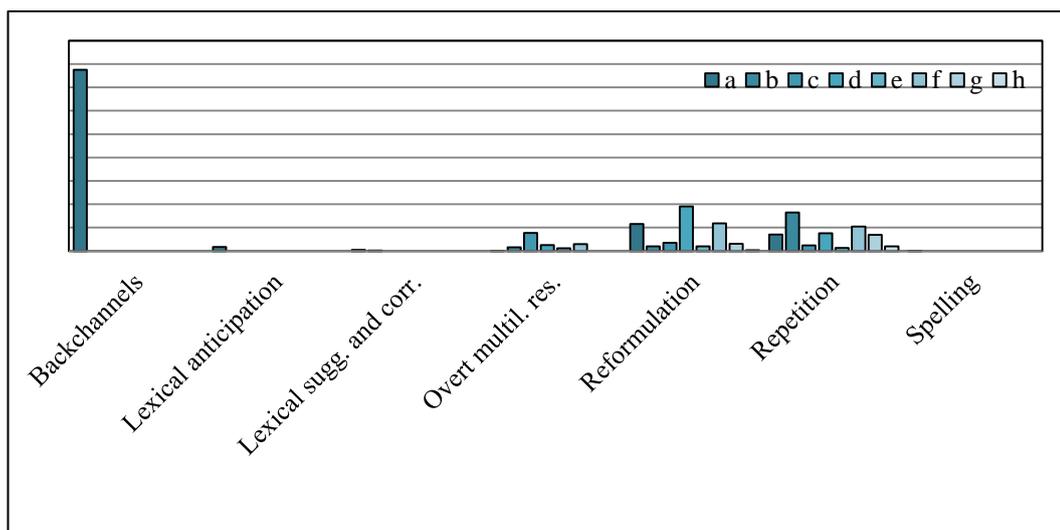
Figure 7: Average occurrence categorised according to function and communication strategy every 1000 turns in all the conversations analysed[42].

As shown in Figures 6 and 7, backchannels have been observed to be performed with an average use of 155.11 occurrences every 1000 turns, being the most performed strategy in the corpus. This data shows that active and collaborative listenership is perceived as very important for the success of the communicative act and thus speakers frequently perform verbal and non-verbal backchannels to

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[42] **Backchannels**: a- to confirm understanding, to signal support, attention. **Lexical anticipation**: a- to express engagement, to show cooperation. **Lexical suggestion and correction**: a- to help out other participants with word selection; b- to ensure successful communication. **Overt multilingual resources**: a- to underline group membership and identity; b- to create rapport; c- to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept; d- to give a metalinguistic commentary; e- to compensate for a lexical gap, to appeal for assistance; f- to signal culture through the use of emblematic switches. **Reformulation**: a- to secure recipient understanding, to enhance or reinforce recipient understanding; b- to check recipient understanding, To request confirmation of understanding; c- to confirm understanding, to signal confirmation; d- to clarify meaning; e- to elicit clarification; f- to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony; g- to retain a smooth speaking flow; h- to create coherence. **Repetition**: a- to signal importance, to give prominence, to remark something, to use humour and irony; b- to signal confirmation; c- to signal problematic items, to address the trouble source; d- to secure recipient understanding, to ensure comprehension; e- to request confirmation/confirmation of understanding; f- to keep the floor, to gain time; g- to create coherence; h- to show listenership. **Spelling**: a- to clarify meaning.

signal that they are paying attention and involved in the conversation. As discussed in §4.2.1, showing listenership and attention in interaction is very important to reach a successful communicative outcome, since backchannels are an active part of the process of co-construction of mutual understanding. Even if the possibility of a lack of interest is taken into account (as discussed in §4.2.1b), the actual use of this strategy confirms that the participants to the communicative acts are aware of the importance to give feedback while a person is speaking. This can further support what previous ELF studies have remarked, that in ELF contexts speakers are generally collaborative and supportive of the communicative process (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Lee, 2020).

In turn, lexical anticipation and lexical suggestion and correction have a really low average use, with 3.43 and 1.35 occurrences every 1000 turns. As mentioned in §4.2.2 and §4.2.3, these strategies are mainly used aiming at recovering or providing a specific word to ensure successful communication. Since ELF Transcultural Communication usually focuses on intelligibility more than grammatical and lexical correctness, the low occurrence of this strategy could signify that even if a word choice is not accurate, ELF speakers do not feel the need to cover for it or to correct it if mutual understanding is achieved.

As presented in Figure 6, overt multilingual resources have an average occurrence of 31.92 every 1000 turns, confirming their significant role in ELF Transcultural Communication. Taking into consideration that the participants involved speak several languages (that are not always shared between the participants to the same communicative act), the use of a language different from English has proved to be quite frequent. As noted in §4.2.4, overt multilingual resources are often used to underline the speaker's cultural identity and to create rapport, since they are performed to represent part of the linguistic and cultural background of the participants. As the data analysis has shown, the use of languages other than English seems to be well received by the participants and it does not raise negative responses or attitudes, even when the linguistic item is not known or promptly understood. Moreover, as presented in Figure 12, it can be observed that this strategy is performed mostly to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept (with 15.35 occurrences every 1000 turns), highlighting the

importance given to present and explain cultural concepts so that they become shared. In a context as that of ELF Transcultural Communication, culture is a fluid and greatly diversified system that strongly influences communication (see §1.4.2); the data shows that explicit references to cultural notions and customs are remarkably important for speakers. Consequently, not only culture is an inherent part of communication, but it is also explicitly addressed through the use of overt multilingual resources to refer to and describe the participants' identities and cultural backgrounds.

As shown in Figure 6, reformulation is also highly used in the conversations, with an average occurrence of 106.66 every 1000 turns. This quantitative data demonstrates that this strategy is productive and frequently performed in the co-construction of mutual understanding and in the meaning negotiation process. A more detailed analysis of its functions (Figure 7) highlights that there are mostly three purposes: to secure and enhance recipient understanding (with an occurrence of 23.08 every 1000 turns), to clarify meaning (38.19 every 1000 turns), and to signal importance and give prominence (23.76 every 1000 turns). Moreover, this strategy is not only used in non-understanding interactional sites, but mostly to jointly build common ground among the speakers. As presented in §4.2.5, clarifying meaning does not only imply to solve a communicative problem, but it also comprises the negotiation of meaning that is essential to co-construct mutual understanding in contexts where a shared frame of reference cannot be taken for granted. In order to reach their communicative goal, the speakers reformulate their words and try to be as clear as possible: clarity and explicitness are important to build shared understanding and to reach successful communication. As discussed above, reformulation is a significant strategy in the joint process of meaning negotiation and its joint use with other strategies reinforces its effectiveness. The quantitative data thus confirms that reformulation is indeed considered a productive way to negotiate meaning in ELF transcultural contexts.

In addition to reformulation, repetition has been observed to be another significant communication strategy in the data, with an average occurrence of 108.16 every 1000 turns. As discussed in §4.2.6, repetition can be performed for many reasons, but five functions appear to have a more prominent relevance, shown in Figure 7:

to signal confirmation is the most performed function with 32.87 occurrences every 1000 turns; to keep the floor comes second with 21.03 occurrences, then we find to ensure comprehension with 15.29, to signal importance with 14.06, and finally to create coherence with 13.69 occurrences every 1000 turns. The diverse nature of these functions confirms that repetition is a relevant and productive way to deal with several aspects of communication: it can be used to ensure that the communicative act continues smoothly and that mutual understanding is achieved and maintained, but also to signal what is considered important or has to be underscored. The data analysis shows that repetition, with its several functions, can be very effective in supporting the speaker's to reach their communicative goal(s) and its co-occurrence with other strategies has proved to be highly effective in negotiating mutual understanding.

Finally, the last communication strategy analysed is spelling, which has been observed to be rarely used by the participants, with an occurrence of 0.08 every 1000 turns, even lower than lexical suggestion and correction. The reason for such low presence could be that in ELF contexts it is not always fundamental to understand discourse word-by-word, since what is important is intelligibility and mutual comprehension, and these can be accomplished even when single words are not understood. Moreover, in ELF contexts speakers try to accommodate and reach clarity, opting for a clear and explicit communicative style, where spellings may not be perceived as necessary to clarify meaning.

While Figures 6 and 7 offer a comprehensive view on the use of communications strategies in all the conversations analysed, it is also important to look at possible differences in findings from the two corpora. Figures 8 and 9 provide a focus on the use of communication strategies in VOICE-Leisure and in ViMELF.
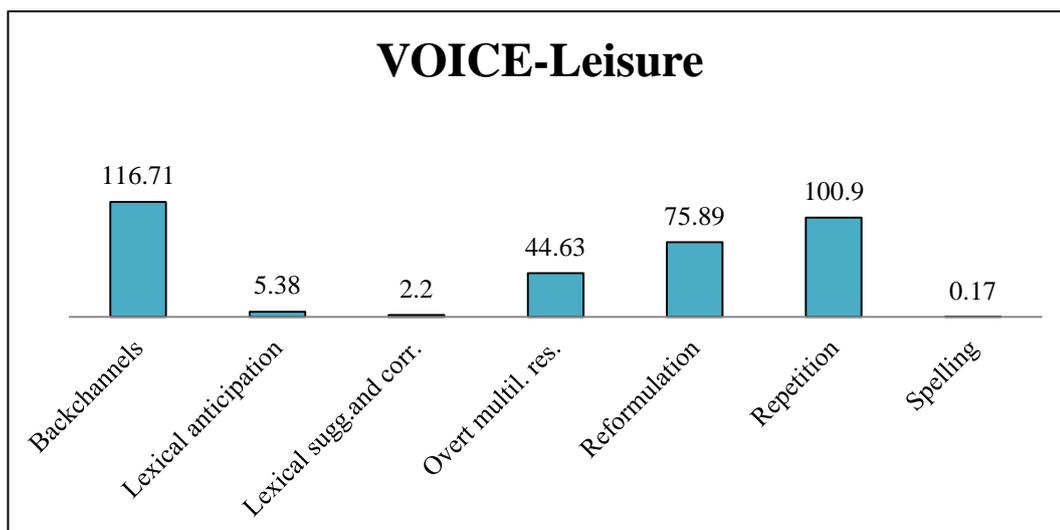
Figure 8: Average occurrence of each communication strategy every 1000 turns in VOICE-Leisure.
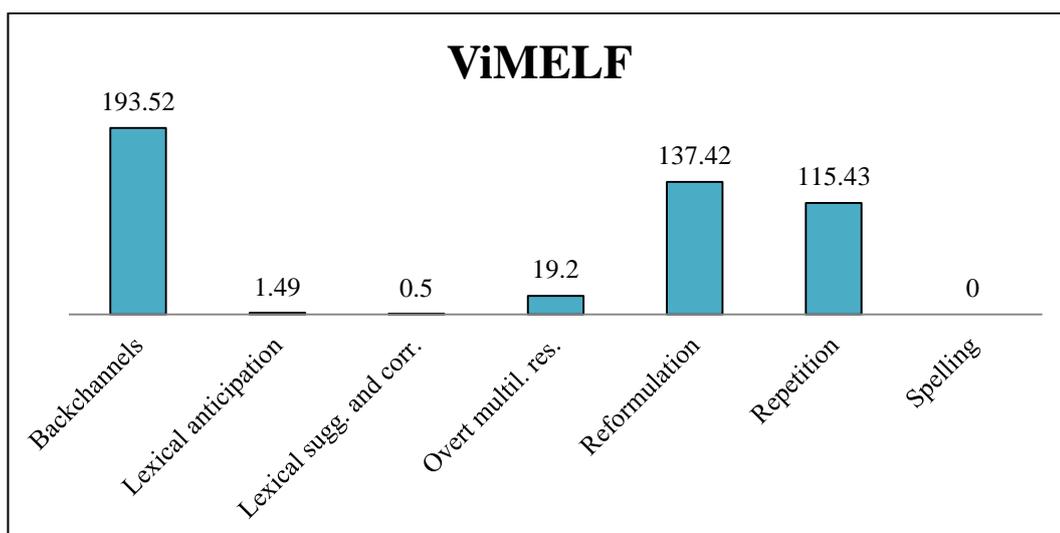

Figure 9: Average occurrence of each communication strategy every 1000 turns in ViMELF.

Even though the two graphs present similar dynamics on the use of communication strategies, some distinct features can be noticed. First, backchannels are significantly more frequent in ViMELF when compared to VOICE-Leisure. This could be possibly ascribed to many factors: the different medium through which the conversations took place, the varying number of participants, and the degree of intimacy the speakers have. Video-mediated communication could have raised awareness of the need to provide feedback to the other person, especially when the connection is not working properly, as it

happened in many ViMELF conversations. The (perceived or actual) instability of the communication channel could have influenced the speakers to explicitly display active listenership, to ensure that successful communication was achieved and the communicative act could continue. Another aspect could concern the number of participants to the conversation: in dialogues, as in ViMELF, the main speaker directly addresses a single person who usually responds and signals attention to make the interlocutor carry on, while in VOICE-Leisure, the interactions analysed are multi-party and thus the participants could feel less required to provide backchannels; moreover, it has also been noted that in VOICE-Leisure, several parallel conversations can occur at once and the participants often continue to shift from one interaction to the other, making it difficult for them to give actual, continuous and regular feedback. Finally, a higher use of backchannels could also be influenced by the degree of familiarity between speakers: providing feedback is often perceived as a polite way to show involvement and the conversations in ViMELF take place between strangers, who have been observed to avoid negative and face-threatening acts while talking (Lee, 2020). This reason could also be related to the higher use of lexical anticipations in VOICE-Leisure and point to the fact that that familiarity among participants affects the way in which communication strategies are used in ELF communication. The aforementioned aspects are preliminary hypothesis based on the qualitative analysis carried out on the data set, and it would indeed be interesting to further analyse informal conversation in ELF transcultural contexts to investigate whether a correlation between these factors can be corroborated and confirmed.

Another difference between the two corpora can be seen in the use of overt multilingual resources, that are significantly higher in VOICE-Leisure – with an average occurrence of 44.63 every 1000 turns, compared to 19.2 in ViMELF. This difference could be ascribable to the context in which the conversations took place. As discussed in §3.1.2, ViMELF has been considered informal because the setting is usually at the speakers' home, the topics are not related to education or work and the length of the dialogues allows the possibility to go beyond the prompted topic. Nonetheless, the participants are students that are completing an

assignment of a course offered in English on its use as a lingua franca, and it could be the case that they feel they are required to hold the conversation in English (only); in fact, one of the conversations (ViMELF_08SB106HE03) directly addresses this issue, thus it is possible that other students felt the same way and spoke English as much as possible. Moreover, when only two people are talking, if their multilingual repertoires do not coincide, it is unlikely that they profusely make use of overt multilingual resources. On the other hand, in VOICE-Leisure the conversations take place between several people and in different places, and this could have encouraged a more diversified linguistic choice.

Another considerable difference lies on the use of reformulation, with an average occurrence of 137.42 every 1000 turns in ViMELF and 78.89 in VOICE-Leisure. As seen, reformulations are frequently performed to ensure understanding, to clarify meaning and to give prominence to something, thus the difference between the two corpora could presumably derive from the nature of the conversations. In addition to being a productive strategy to solve non-understandings, reformulation provides an effective way to add clarity and explicitness. ViMELF comprises dialogues where the participants are discussing a specific topic and where they frequently compare their opinions or their experiences; it is therefore characterised by a more argumentative and descriptive nature than the conversations in VOICE-Leisure. The functions highlighted above exemplify the relevance given to ensuring comprehension, clarifying meaning, and signalling importance, thus supporting the fact that ViMELF dialogues require a greater degree of debate and argumentation than the ones in VOICE-Leisure. Finally, a difference lies on the use of spelling. As mentioned above, the use of this strategy is rare, but Figures 8 and 9 display that all the spellings identified were observed in VOICE-Leisure, not in ViMELF. Although the instances are really low in frequency, when spellings were performed, the data shows that they served to explain how to write words in languages other than English and to clarify their meaning; their use has been noted in contexts where an explicit disambiguation was necessary to achieve mutual comprehension (for instance Example 44, where the speakers deem important to distinguish between 'trid' and 'treat', since they are pronounced in the same way).

The figures presented in this section illustrate the use of the selected communication strategies in the corpora from a quantitative perspective, further supporting that communication strategies are fundamental in communication, to build shared comprehension and negotiate meaning. They underline the relevance of the strategic dimension in ELF Transcultural Communication and confirm how ELF speakers are able to use them effectively and appropriately in order to better manage communication in these complex contexts. Backchannels are the most performed communication strategy in the whole data set, as well as in the two separate corpora, while reformulation and repetition are frequently used in both corpora to co-construct mutual understanding. The quantitative approach has added an additional dimension to how communication strategies are relevant in ELF Transcultural Communication, offering further insights on the role they have in the communicative process.

In order to better clarify and investigate the role of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts, in the next section an integrated perspective of the quantitative and the qualitative analyses will be provided, to show more in detail how communication strategies are intrinsically intertwined in ELF Transcultural Communication.

4.3.2 Qualitative and quantitative perspectives combined: the co-occurrence of communication strategies in the process of meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding

While the qualitative analysis illustrated in the first part of this chapter provides insights on how and to which functions communication strategies are used, a quantitative perspective contributes to shed light on the relevance they have in ELF Transcultural Communication. As discussed in Chapter 2, the model of ELF Transcultural Competence suggests that the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication is a fundamental aspect and speakers need to be able to use communication strategies in order to co-construct mutual understanding and negotiate meaning. As shown in §4.2, communication strategies are very helpful resources in negotiating meaning to reach a shared frame of reference; however, a qualitative analysis seems not to provide a clear

image of the extent to which such role is indeed significant in ELF conversations. The quantitative approach has thus contributed to further show that communication strategies are frequently used and, as displayed in Figure 5, that they are an integral part of ELF Transcultural Communication. As discussed in §3.2.2, investigating the use of communication strategies through a quantitative approach can also provide evidence as to the actual presence of strategic moves in conversation and a more detailed and fine-grained view on their co-occurrence in each conversation.

In order to further examine how a mixed method approach can strengthen the results of the study, a combined analysis of a selection of interactions has been carried out (see §3.2.2 and §4.1). This combined investigation can provide further insights on how communication strategies intermingle in communication, how they are often used in combination to convey meaning and build a shared common ground to reach successful communication in ELF transcultural contexts. On the one hand, a quantitative analysis highlights not only the frequency of use of the strategies analysed, but also their relevance in the communicative act; on the other hand, a qualitative examination can offer insights on the reasons why communication strategies are used and to which aim(s).

As presented in §3.2.2, the examples that are going to be discussed in this section are taken from 6 interactions, 3 for each corpus. They were selected since they are of similar length and topic, hence offering a smaller but representative sample of the data set. The quantitative and the qualitative analysis will show how, in all the six conversations, the use of communication strategies proves to be a relevant part of the communicative act, and that it is essential to take into consideration the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication in order to be able to manage communication by making use of the linguistic (and non-linguistic) resources available to the speaker in order to reach successful communication.

As pointed out during the first part of the Chapter, communication strategies are frequently used in combination, and in the following sections this aspect will be further exemplified. Each interaction will be analysed according to their strategic and non-strategic turns, to the frequency of use of the communication strategies

analysed and finally, to the distribution of the use of the strategies in the whole conversation (see §3.2.2 for the explanation of the graphs used).

4.3.2.1 VOICE-LEcon8: Dinner table conversation among international students

LEcon8 is a conversation between five international students who are eating together in a dining hall. The conversation lasts about 30 minutes and covers several topics, such as food, trips, religion, or going abroad to study. After the qualitative and quantitative analysis, as described in the previous sections, a combined approach has been applied in order to investigate the actual relevance and use of communication strategies in the conversation. Three graphs will be presented to examine three main aspects of the conversation LEcon8: first its strategic dimension, second the frequency of use of the selected communication strategies and third, the distribution of such use during the conversation.

As displayed in Figure 10, strategic turns cover 27.93% of the conversation, being lower than the average percentage in the data set (compare to Figure 5). As further shown in Figure 11, this percentage mostly consists of a high use of backchannels (80.25 occurrences every 1000 turns), reformulations (58.64 occurrences every 1000 turns), and, above all, repetitions (151.23 occurrences every 1000 turns).
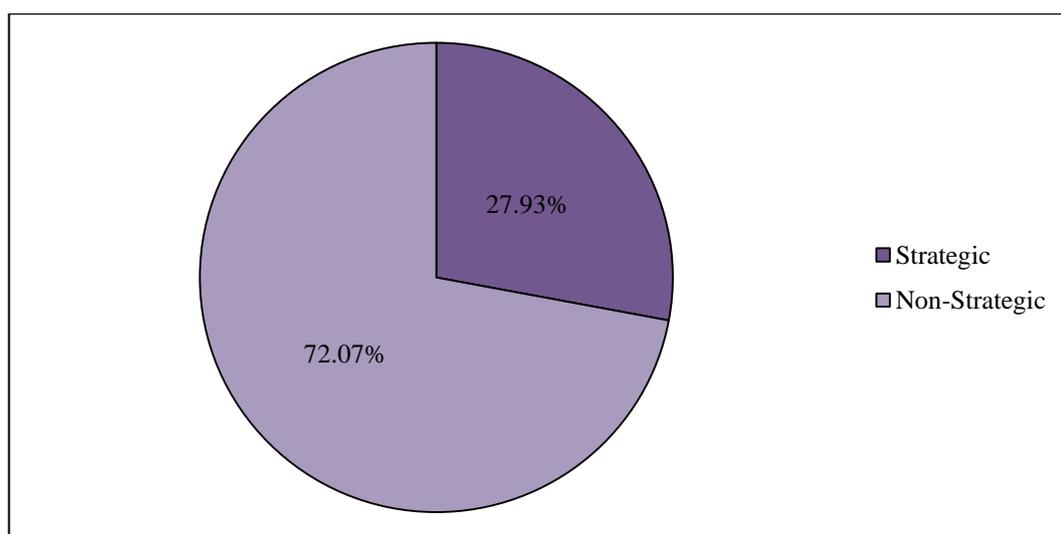

**Figure 10**: Strategic and non-strategic turns in LEcon8.
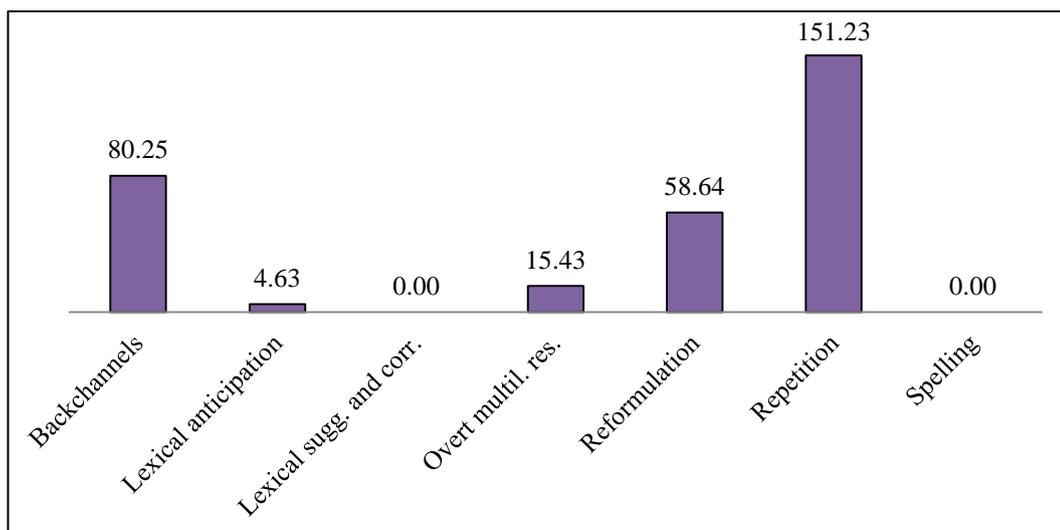
Figure 11: Average occurrences every 1000 turns of the single communication strategies in LEcon8.

From these graphs, it seems that the strategic dimension has not a great relevance on the whole conversation, but two factors should be taken into consideration to get a deeper understanding of how communication strategies are put into practice in ELF Transcultural Communication. First, it should be pointed out that the environment where the conversation takes place – a dining hall – is a noisy place and not all the utterances could be completely understood from the recording by the transcribers, who frequently marked part of the conversation as incomprehensible turns. As discussed in Chapter 3, turns that were not understandable were excluded from this qualitative analysis, thus they are inevitably considered as non-strategic turns in Figure 10, which also affects the frequency of use of the communication strategies analysed. Moreover, this graph does not represent how communication strategies are distributed in the conversation, providing only a facet of what goes on in the communicative act. In order to clarify when exactly the selected communication strategies were performed during the communicative act, Figure 12 was obtained: each line represents a strategic turn and each white space represents a non-strategic turn (see §3.2.2 and §4.1). When the quantitative views in Figure 10 and Figure 11 are combined with Figure 12, the use of communication strategies in LEcon8 becomes relevant, and fundamental, in the communicative act, showing that the

strategic turns are equally distributed during the talk, and the frequencies identified are spread during the whole conversation. This suggests that communication strategies are regularly performed all along the interaction, and that the strategic dimension is intrinsically intertwined with the non-strategic one. Moreover, Figure 12 displays how the occurrences presented in Figure 11 are part of the conversation, since a single line represents the use of at least one communication strategy. As discussed in §2.1 and §2.5.3.2, it can be observed that communication strategies are a fundamental tool for ELF speakers in the processes of co-construction of mutual understanding and meaning negotiation. Indeed, the fact that they are regularly performed along the conversation implies that they are an active part of the interactional process and that the participants continuously engage in meaning negotiation processes to reach mutual understanding.
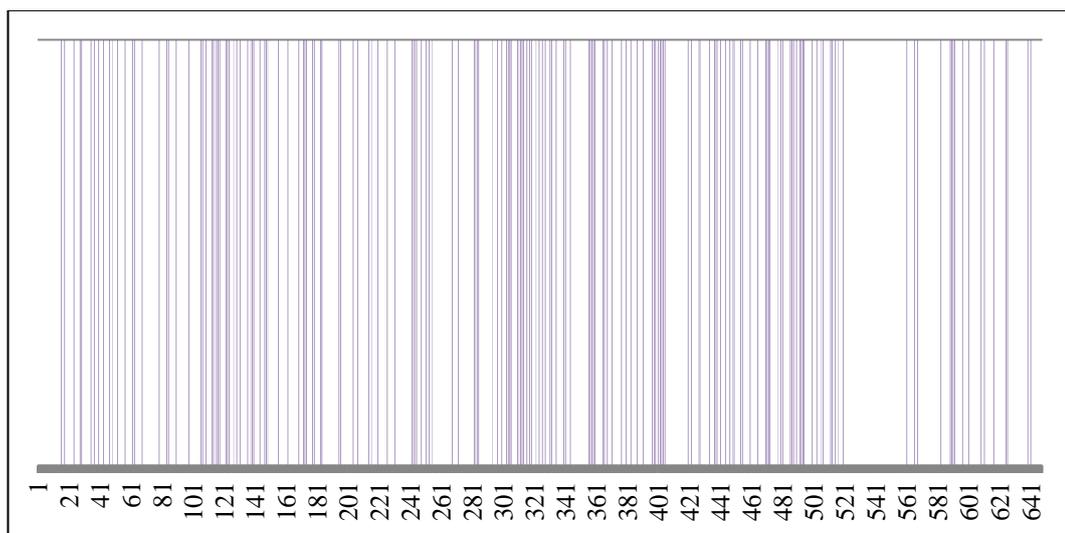
Figure 12: Strategic turns in LEcon8.

To further explore the use of communication strategies in the conversation under examination, a detailed analysis, turn-by-turn, would be necessary to support the point made above. However, it would not be feasible to present the whole analysis here, thus only a sample of turns will be taken into consideration. In Figure 12 there are several thicker lines, indicating that numerous strategic turns are concentrated there. In turn, there is also a long sequence of turns where no

communication strategy has been identified, apparently refuting the fact that communication strategies are frequently used during the whole communicative act. In order to investigate these two aspects more in detail, Example 45 and Example 46 will be discussed. These two extracts have been selected for their relevance in the conversation: the former displays turns from 98 to 141, a sequence that shows several strategic turns in Figure 12, and the latter represents absence of strategic turns, from line 520 to 560.

Example 45: VOICE-LEcon8, from turn 98 to turn 141 – negotiation sequence.
(speakers: S1 – female, Korea; S2 – female, Kyrgyn Republic; S3 – female, Kyrgyn Republic; S4 – female, Albania; S5 – male, Peru).

98 S1: have you been to the <LNger> **kaiservilla**?</LNger> (1)

99 S5: no <1> er </1>

100 S1: <1> you shou</1>ld have <2> it's so nice </2>

101 S5: <2> after lunch </2> (.) and <un> xxx </un> (it's not that) much time

102 SS: **o:h**

103 S1: er er (you) went today?

104 S5: yeah (.)

105 S1: oh i thought you went there <3> yester</3>day

106 S5: <3> (real) </3> no **we went today**

107 S1: **oh**

108 S5: real quick er half an hour maybe (er er) (.) ten minutes over ten minutes back (2) it was quick (1)

109 S1: <soft> yeah </soft> (.) hm you should have been there (.) **it's very nice there** (2) <4> er **not VE**</4>**RY nice but like nice** (1)

110 S5: <4> (er a place) <un> xx </un></4>

111 S5: was it was it better than the one we saw in er salzburg? (2)

112 S1: you mean e:r =

113 S5: = the house (1)

114 S1: <un> xxx </un> **hellbrunn**?

115 S5: yeah (1)

116 S1: **hellbrunn** was much more fun @@@ <5> @@ </5> of course (.)

117 S5: <5> okay </5>

118 S1: (**of cou**)<6>(**rse**) </6>

119 S4: <6> how </6> much how much did you pay (.) to go <7> to the </7>

120 S1: <7> i:</7> paid like erm (1) five fifty (1)

121 S4: euro (.)

122 S1: **euro**. (1) as a student (1)

123 S4: **a:h**

124 S1: <LNger> **erwachsene** {adults} </LNger> is like (.) erm ni<8>ne nine</8>

125 S4: <8> okay </8> how they prove er (.) you are stu<1>dent </1>

126 S1: <1> i have </1> a student card (1)

127 S4: (**like**) **do they do we have here** (1) **for the** (.) **meal**?

128 SS: no

129 S1: <2> no **not (the way) like inter**</2><3>**national student card** </3>

130 S3: <2> you have like erm </2><3><spel> i d </spel> card </3> (.)

131 S2: <3> **international card** </3>

132 S4: well

133 S1: yah (that one) (1)

134 SX-3: isic card (5)

135 S1: (and i showed it) <un> xxx </un> (.) she gave me a discount

136 S4: <soft> (okay) **you have (erm)** (1) **you have an international** <spel> **i d**</spel> **card** </soft> (1)

137 S1: pardon?

138 S4: <soft> **do you have an (an) international** <spel> **i d** </spel> **card**</soft> (1)

139 S1: **another** <spel> **i d** </spel> **card**? (1)

140 S4: **so your** <spel> **i d** </spel> **card is international isn't it**?

141 S1: yeah <4> yeah </4>

Example 46: VOICE-LEcon8, from turn 520 to turn 560 – absence of the selected communication strategies.

520 S1: <2> hm </2>

521 S1: not wearing my glasses now

522 SS: @@@@@@@@

523 S3: you have to go (here like) <@><3><un> xxx </un></3></@>

524 SS: <3> @@@ </3> @@@@@@@@@@@@@ (2)

525 S3: no he's not that good actually he's <@><un> xx </un></@> @@ hh @@ (5)

288

526 SX-f: <soft><un> xxxxxxx </un></soft> (2)

527 S1: maybe (2)

528 SS: @@@@@@@@@@@ <1> @@ </1> @@@@@@@@@ (.)

529 SX-4: <1> she forgot </1>

530 S3: <@> (no my) </@>

531 SS: @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

532 S3: <9> @@@@ </9>

533 SX-4: <@><9> it's like it's </9> like big brother </@>

534 S3: <@> yeah <2> but </2></@>

535 SX-f: <@><2> yea:h </2></@>

536 SS: @@@@ <10> @@ </10> @@@@@@@@@@@

537 SX-f: <10><@> yeah </@></10>

538 SX-1: <@> maybe he's <11> in charge </11> of this </@>

539 S3: <11> @@ </11>

540 SS: @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

541 S3: who cares (1) (he doesn't know who's) <un> xxxxx </un> @@@ (2) oh
sorry

542 SS: @@@

543 S5: <un> xxx </un> name is not pronounced

544 SX-3: <@> yeah </@>

545 SS: @@@@@

546 SX-3: <@> don't tell my name </@>

547 SS: @@@@

548 S1: (n-)

549 S5: <fast> (i told you) </fast>

550 SS: @@@@

551 S1: (n-)

552 SS: @@@@

553 S1: <@> no </@>

554 SS: @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

555 S3: <@><spel> g </spel></@>

556 SS: @@@@@

557 S1: <@> she's trying to hit me </@>

558 SS: @@@@@ <12> @@@ </12>

559 S1: <12><@> do you see that </@></12> @@ <@> she was going like
this </@>
560 SS: @@@@@ @@@@

As seen above, Figure 12 displays numerous lines, indicating a high and
continuous use of communication strategies. Analysing the turns in Example 45, it
can be noted that different strategies are performed, demonstrating how each line
in Figure 12 corresponds to a strategic turn. In line 98, S1 (from Korea) asks a
direct question, using the German word *Kaiservilla*, the name of a place, enacting
an overt multilingual resource. The following turns are answers and a comment to
this question, but not all the utterances are comprehensible[43]. In line 103, S1 asks
whether S5 (from Peru) went to *Kaiservilla* on that day, and from this turn
onwards it can be observed that a negotiation sequence starts. Indeed, in line 106,
S5 repeats that he went precisely on that day, while S1 signals attention and
listenership in line 107 with a minimal backchannel, leaving room to S5 to
comment on his trip to the place (line 108). In line 109, S1 repeats the comment
given in line 100, that 'it is nice', but she also reformulates her words to make her
opinion more explicit. S5 then asks about 'the house' (line 113). After checking
whether she understood correctly by asking 'Hellbrun?' (line 114), S1 answers by
repeating the name *Hellbrunn* (another castle in Austria) to create coherence, and
she states that it was more fun than the villa in *Kaiservilla* (line 116). The next
turns are an exchange of information on the visit, with several strategies
performed, all aiming at making sure that the information exchanged is clear and
comprehensible. For example, in line 124 an overt multilingual resource is used to
refer to the kind of entrance ticket needed for the castle and its price, while later
numerous reformulations are enacted to clarify the type of card that is needed to
get a student discount on the entrance fee. This sequence shows that a process
such as that of exchanging information on a trip can require the use of several and
different communication strategies: as showcased in the extract, common ground
cannot be taken for granted and needs to be negotiated between the speakers;

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[43] The use of <xxx> in VOICE-Leisure means that the utterance was not intelligible to be
transcribed – see Appendix A for the overview of the conventions used in VOICE.

moreover, the co-occurring use of communication strategies and a joint process of negotiation greatly favour the co-construction of a shared frame of reference and of mutual understanding. As discussed in §2.1 and §4.2, meaning negotiation is a joint process that requires several linguistic and non-linguistic resources to be appropriately and effectively enacted.

Example 46, on the contrary, seems to challenge such perspective, since no strategic turn has been identified. Since the main hypothesis of the present study is that the strategic dimension is fundamental and an inherent part of communication, this absence would seem to refute such standpoint by presenting a long sequence (40 turns) in which no instance of any of the selected communication strategies occurs. According to the quantitative analysis, thus, this extract would provide counterevidence to the importance of the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication. However, by applying a qualitative approach to the quantitative results, it can be noted that the turns do not present a complete absence of communication strategies, but rather that this apparent lack is due to the fact that they are turns that have been excluded from the criteria of the analysis (see §3.2) and cannot hence be counted as strategic. Moreover, non-identified speakers have not been included in the analytical scheme applied (see §3.2.1.1).

To conclude, this extract highlights the importance to combine a qualitative and quantitative approach to analyse the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts, for it can significantly contribute to reveal their actual relevance in interaction.

4.3.2.2 VOICE-LEcon545: Conversation among exchange students who are invited to celebrate pancake day

LEcon545 is a communicative act that takes place in a private home in Spain, where seven speakers talk for about 37 minutes about pancake day and how they celebrate this festivity, food in general, as well as the Eurovision Song Contest. As shown in Figure 13, the strategic dimension covers 27.09% of the conversation, which is similar to the percentage in LEcon8. Figure 14 displays

which communication strategies are mostly performed, indicating a high occurrence of backchannels and a frequent use of repetitions and reformulations.
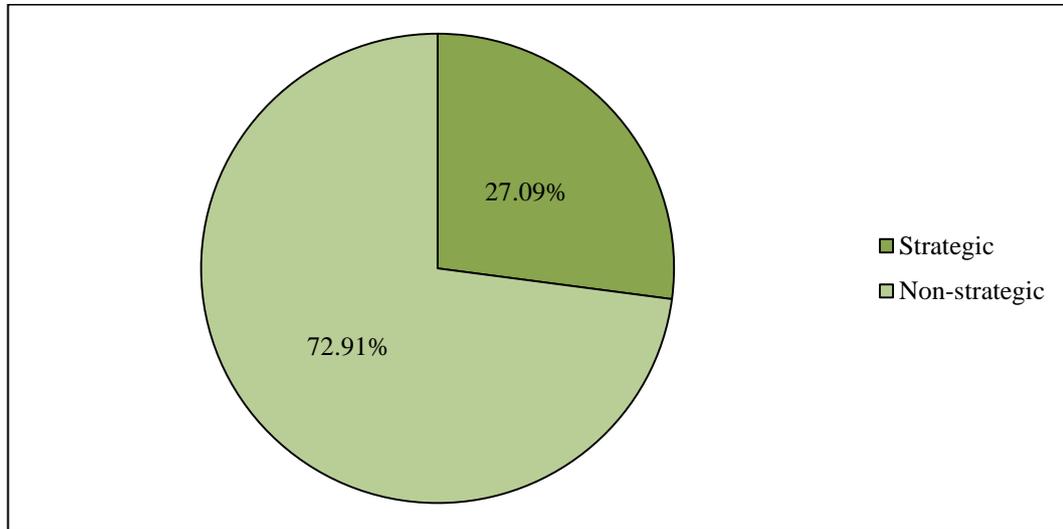
Figure 13: Strategic and non-strategic turns in LEcon545.
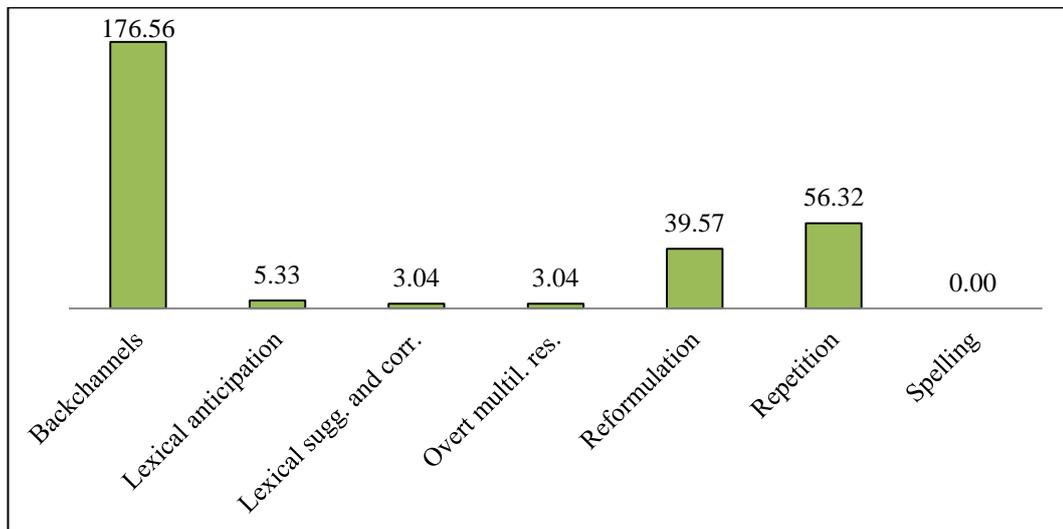
Figure 14: Average occurrences every 1000 turns of the single communication strategies in LEcon545.

As discussed in the previous section, the quantitative results of LEcon545 are similar to those obtain for LEcon8. However, there is a difference in the distribution of the strategic turns in the conversation. As can be seen in Figure 15, it is evident that they are regularly alternating with non-strategic turns.
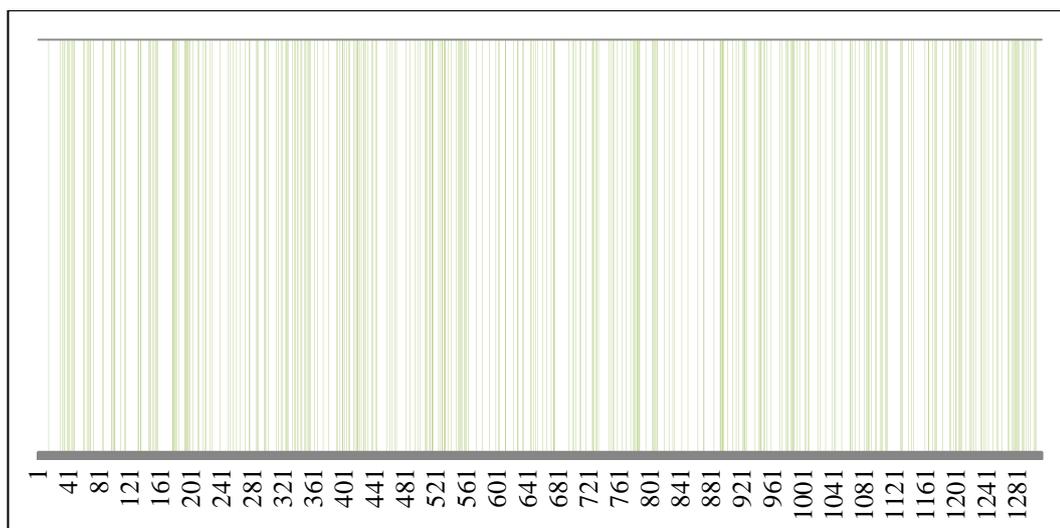
Figure 15: Strategic turns in LEcon545.

This regularity and the high average use of backchannels suggest that speakers frequently provide feedback and signals of active listenership, and an in-depth qualitative analysis of the conversation confirms this hypothesis, as shown in the sample of turns presented in Example 47 (lines 775 to 843).

Example 47: VOICE-LEcon545 – sample of strategic turns (775-843).
(speakers: S1 – female, Great Britain; S2 – female, Austria; S3 – male, Spain; S4 – female, Poland; S5 – female, Finland; S6 – female, Sweden; S7 – female, Great Britain)

775 S3: <7> but i think it </7> was in nineteen eighty-eight er or eighty-seven that celine dion won the contest e:r an:d she was there (.) representing switzerland i think =

776 S4: = **oh** =

777 SS: = <1> @ </1> @@@ <2> @@ </2>

778 S3: <1> so </1>

779 S4: <2> **okay** </2> @ <3> @ </3>

780 S5: <3> so </3> there's <4> the </4> tradition of this <5> in </5> euro<6>vision </6>

781 S3: <4> **okay** </4>

782 S4: <5> **yeah** </5>

783 S3: <6> i mean </6> it's not that strange =

784 S4: = **mhm** =

293

785 S5: = **yeah**

786 S3: well i think last y- a couple of years ago the french er (.) the French entry was actually a girl from from quebec **from canada** so =

787 S6: = **o**<7>**kay** </7>

788 S5: <7> **yeah** </7>

789 S3: so i mean the rules allow that (1)

790 SX-f: mhm

791 S1: it is flexi<1>ble </1> @@ =

792 S5: <1> and </1>

793 S5: = <2> yeah </2>

794 S6: = <2> yeah </2> (.) who won before finland last year? =

795 S5: = g- er =

796 S6: = greece? =

797 S5: = gre- NO er turkey or greece? (.) which one (.) it was in (1) <loud> it was in athens </loud> last year wasn't i- yeah in athens

798 S6: **okay**

799 S5: it was in <3> athens last year (.) and in </3><loud> istanbul </loud> the year before that =

800 S4: <3> well i can't remember the song </3>

801 S6: = oh yeah that's true (.) yeah (2)

802 S5: has (.) SPAIN ever won (.) eurovision?

803 S3: e:r twice (.) <4> erm </4><5> but </5> in the <6> sixties </6>

804 S6: <4><soft> **twice**?</soft></4>

805 SS: <4> @@ </4>

806 S5: <5> **mhm** </5>

807 S4: <6> **o:h** </6> @@@ <7> @ </7>

808 S3: <7> i:n </7> sixty-eight and sixty-nine or sixty-seven and sixty-eight <1> yeah **it was** </1> **two times in a row actually**

809 SX-f: <7> (in the sixties) </7>

810 S4: <1> **he:y** </1>

811 S5: <1> **okay** </1>

812 S2: that's quite a long time ago isn't it

813 S5: <2> yeah </2>

814 S3: <2> yeah well </2> (.) a woman called (massiel) who sung (.) who SUNG a song called lalala?

815 S4: @ <3> @@ </3>

816 S3: <3> that was </3> (the like the) <4> of course the chorus line </4> (1)

817 S4: <4> @@@@ </4>

818 S3: and the next one was a (.) was another woman called salome who got like big hair over here?

819 S4: @@@@ =

820 S3: = and she <5> er she </5> won with the song called <L1spa> **vivo cantando** {i live singing} </L1spa>

821 SX-f: <5> @@ </5>

822 SS: @

823 S3: hm (.) julio iglesias took part like in the sixties as <6> well when </6> <7> he was </7> still quite unknown

824 S6: <6> did he?</6>

825 S5: <7><fast> **yeah yeah** </fast></7>

826 S5: <1> **a:h** </1>

827 S4: <1> @@ </1><2> @@ </2>

828 S3: <2> a:nd </2> (.) <soft> can't remember who else <3> like (who) </3> </soft>

829 S4: <3> so maybe </3> you know this is like the kind of success if you if <4> you </4> DON'T win the eurovision then you get <5><@> famous </@></5> =

830 S6: <4> @ </4>

831 S3: <5> **mhm** </5>

832 S5: = @ <6> @@ </6> @@ (.)

833 S3: <6> **yeah** </6>

834 S5: <7> yeah the better side </7>

835 S1: <7> but what the thing is like </7> a lot of the entries i (.) that I think are good (.) are not the ones that win it? (.) <1> because </1> they're not (.)

836 SS: <1> yeah </1>

837 S1: <slow> EUROvision </slow><2> songs </2> (.)

838 SS: <2> no </2>

839 S1: they're (.) actually good <@> songs </@>

840 S6: yeah the the <3> euro </3> the one who wins are <un> x </un> (.)

841 S5: <3> i </3>

842 S6: like they're like (.) they're a certain (.) <4> TYPE </4> of music and it's
(.)
843 S1: <4> **yeah** </4>

In this extract the participants are talking about the Eurovision Song Contest and about several singers who performed in the competition. It can be observed that everyone contributes to the discussion; feedback is frequently given by several participants to show listenership. This extract displays how the conversation is collaboratively constructed, with all the participants taking part and supporting the other interlocutors. Indeed, in the first turns, S4 (from Poland) provides backchannels to S3 (from Spain), but then S5 (from Finland) intervenes (line 780) and in addition to S4, also S3 signals attention (lines 781 and 782). S3 continues by commenting and also reformulating, while S4, S5 and S6 (from Sweden) perform backchannels to show support to S3. In line 794, S6 asks who won the Eurovision Song Contest before Finland and the answer is provided by several participants who try to remember the winner; successively, S5 goes on asking about other winners and from line 804, backchannels, repetitions and reformulations are jointly performed to agree on how many times Spain has won the contest. In line 820 an overt multilingual resource is used to talk about one of the winning Spanish songs, and in the following lines many backchannels are performed while S1 (from Great Britain), S3, S4, S5, and S6 discuss about fame connected to the Eurovision Song Contest. In addition to the co-use of several communication strategies, the extract shows how meaning is collaborative achieved in ELF communication and how all the participants take part in the communicative process.

4.3.2.3 VOICE-LEcon548: Conversation between family and visiting student before going out with friends

LEcon548 is a conversation between a Maltese family (S1, S2, and S4) and a visiting friend (S3, from Serbia) that takes place in Malta, both in the car and at home. The communicative act lasts about 45 minutes and several topics are discussed, for example places to visit in the island or the meaning of some words in Maltese (one extract has been discussed above, see Example 44). Figure 16

shows that the strategic turns cover 24.39% of the whole communicative act, a percentage that is similar to Lecon8 and LEcon545, discussed above. Figure 17 shows that there is a high occurrence of backchannels, overt multilingual resources, reformulations and repetitions, signalling a diversified use of the selected communication strategies.
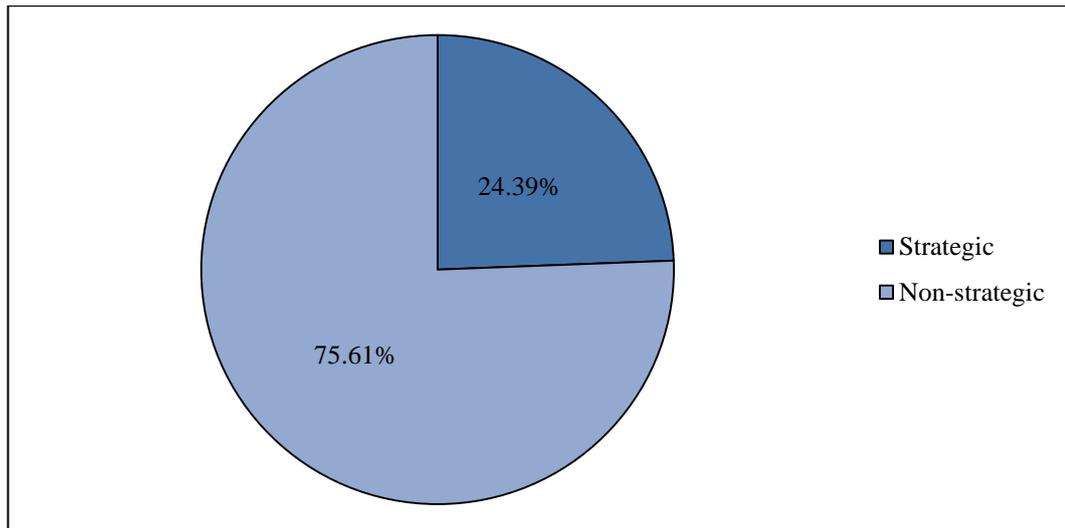

**Figure 16**: Strategic and non-strategic turns in LEcon548.
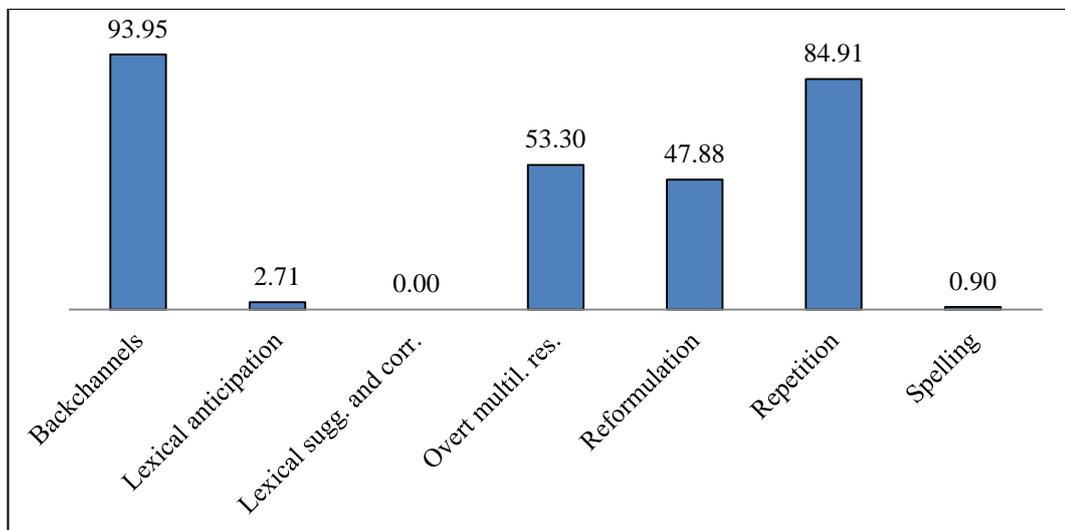
Figure 17: Average occurrences every 1000 turns of the single communication strategies in LEcon548.

As can be noticed in Figure 18, the strategic turns result equally distributed during the conversation, displaying a structure similar to the one of the extracts analysed above. Example 44, presented in §4.2.7a, offers a sequence between turns 421 and 427, showing an example of spelling to clarify an overt multilingual resource. The participants to LEcon548 often use Maltese words to describe and discuss Maltese places or linguistic uses, which accounts for the frequent use of overt multilingual resources, reformulations and repetitions, as can be seen in Figure 17. In turn, as in LEcon8, Figure 18 shows some gaps where there seems to be no use of communication strategies. The longer sequences in which there seems to be an absence of strategic turns appear to be in the following turns: 184 - 206, 600 - 623, 693 - 716, 774 - 805, 993 - 1014, and 1023 - 1044.
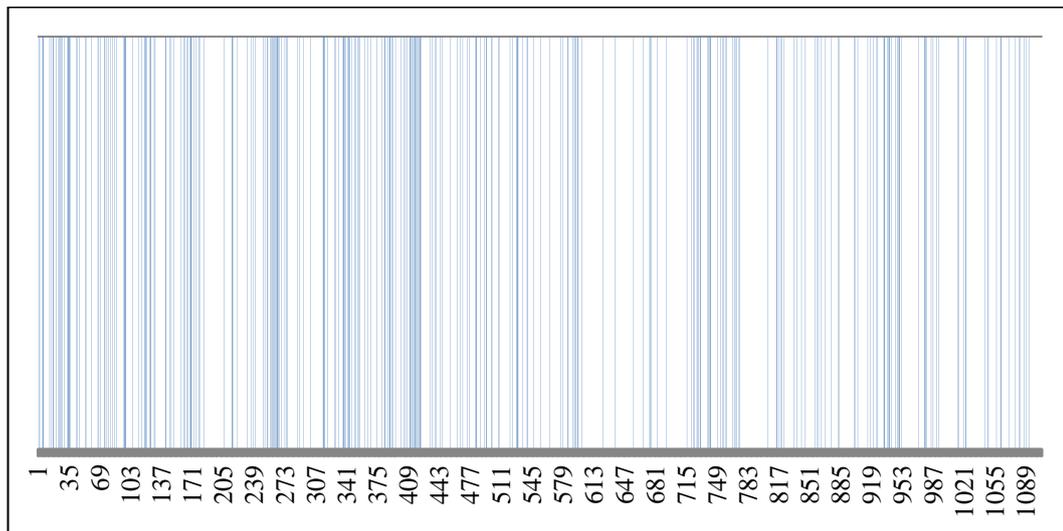
Figure 18: Strategic turns in LEcon548.

Example 48 below includes the three longer sequences in these turns, so that possible reasons why communication strategies do not appear in the aforementioned sequences can be investigated.

Example 48: LEcon548 – longer sequences of absence of strategic turns.
(Speakers: S1 – female, Malta; S2 – male, Malta; S3 – female, Serbia)
a)

    600 S2: it doesn't matter (1) doesn't make a difference really (1) <un> xxx </un><1><un> xxx </un></1>

601 S1: <1> i'm sorry?</1><un> xx </un><2><un> xx </un></2>

602 S2: <2> whether we would </2> have preferred a the questionnaire in maltese (.) or not

603 S4: <3><un> xxxxx </un></3> questionnaire (.)

604 S3: <3><un> xxx xxx </un></3>

605 S2: english comes naturally to us (.) so <7> we don't care in english </7>

606 S3: <7> yes yes </7>

607 S4: <un> xx xx xx xx </un> (4) {music and voices from ads on tv can be heard}

608 S2: @@

609 S3: all right?

610 S4: yes:

611 S3: take your time @@ i really (.) <1> enjoy it here </1>

612 S4: <1> i just need to get the </1> questionnaires

613 S3: yeah =

614 S4: = <un> xxx </un> for the questionnaires (.)

615 S2: you <2> forgot </2> your questionnaires again?

616 S4: <2> yes </2>

617 S3: yes

618 S3: no no: (.) i mean (.) i'm staying here for two weeks so (.) don't worry (2) i have time (.) the more i am here (.) in malta (.) the more i like it

619 S2: we are pleased thank you

620 S3: at the beginning it was really complicated i told you (.) all

621 S2: guess then you got used to the <3><un> xx x x </un></3>

622 S3: <3> upside down </3> and i i'm getting used to things (.) <4> now</4>

623 S2: <4> yes </4> (1)

b)

693 S1: we'll do (1) {S1 and S3 kiss goodbye}<1> nice </1> meeting you erm once again

694 S3: <1> see you </1>

695 S3: nice meeting you too (2) {microphone is moved around in bag} sorry I can't er try your pizza

696 S1: <2> oow </2> how sweet <un> xx </un> (.)

697 S4: <2> oow </2>

698 S1: maybe one day we'll try it

699 S3: @@@ (6) {speakers walk to the car}

700 S3: thanks

701 S1: okay (2) {car door is opened}

702 S3: oh <3> (we heard) <un> x xx </un></3>

703 S2: <3> that's it @@ </3> @@@@

704 S3: okay okay =

705 S2: = it's <4> been nice meeting you </4> hope to see you again <5> everybody leave </5> (.)

706 S3: <4> nice meeting you </4>

707 S3: <5><un> xx </un> yes definitely </5>

708 S2: okay

709 S3: i'll leave it to you at least before i leave (.)

710 S2: <4> thank you </4>

711 S1: <4> good </4>

712 S3: bye (.)

713 S1: bye (1)

714 S3: enjoy eurovision (1)

715 S4: i stuffed my shoes here (2) now [S5] doesn't live far away (.) <5> so we'll be there </5>

716 S3: <5> your shoes </5> (.)

c)

774 S3: <5> yeah </5>

775 S4: of course and that we are going to <un> x xx </un> (.) [S5] {S4 sounds the horn} (1) {music from radio can be heard}

776 S3: and you know [first name2] told me (.) i told him (.) you know e:r [S4] invited me to to go with her friends?

777 S4: @@@

778 S3: and he was like <imitating> erm? erm choose yourself <@> i don't now what to tell you </@></imitating> (.) and i wanted to tell <6> him you know i'm i'm leaving with them </6>

779 S4: <6> @@@@ </6> @@@ <17> @@@ </17>

780 S3: <17> and he was </17> like (.) <imitating> oh you have to make er your decision (.) i don't know if you want to come with er with us (.) <7> come with us?</7></imitating>

781 S4: <7> how sweet </7> @@@ <8> @@@ </8>

782 S3: <8> okay </8> (.) <1> but i already decided </1>

783 S4: <1> @@@ </1> @@@@ <10> thank you @@@ </10>

784 S3: <10> i prefer really </10> (.) going with you.

785 S4: where is <2> she </2>

786 S3: <2> because </2> i i think er there will all be guys =

787 S4: = there she is (.) <to S5> i have a surprise for you guess who's here </to S5> (1)

788 S3: not [first name2] @@ (.)

789 S4: [S3]

790 S3: hi?

791 S5: hi

792 S4: @@

793 S5: <un> xx xx x xx </un>

794 S4: o:h how pretty you're looking

795 S5: <un> xx </un> i look like <L1mlt> xx </L1mlt>

796 S4: <un> xxx x x </un> you look like a <3><un> x </un></3>

797 S3: <3> hi </3> hi i'm [S3] {S5 gets in the car}

798 S5: [S5] {car doors are closed}

799 S3: hi nice meeting <4> you </4>

800 S4: <4> she's </4> the one i was telling you <5> about she's [first name2]'s </5> friend

801 S5: <5> o:h <un> xx x </un></5>

802 S4: @@@

803 S3: @@

804 S4: @@ (.) hh cos i told her <6> i told her (not like this) </6> (.)

805 S5: <6> yes </6>

In Example 48a, it can be observed that several turns are incomprehensible: it is thus not possible to identify any communication strategy use. In Example 48b, there is a long sequence of greetings, since S1 and S2 are leaving and S3 and S4 are meeting some friends, and S3, the guest, is thanking her hosts. Finally,

Example 48c displays a dialogue, with many comments and laughter as a response to S3's account of an invitation she received from a guy and that she refused. In the last part of the extract several turns appear incomprehensible, thus impeding a detailed analysis. As discussed for LEcon8, Example 48 provides evidence that the absence of strategic turns is related to the specific characteristics of these sequences: several turns are incomprehensible or include strategies (such as laughter) or communicative moves (such as greetings), that are excluded from the present analysis.

To sum up, the examples from VOICE-Leisure display similarities in the presence and use of communication strategies, both as to the percentage of strategic turns and of their distribution, showing how strategic and non-strategic communication regularly intertwine in interaction. As already pointed out, a combined perspective of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis can further support the findings of the present study: communication strategies are effective tools that are pro-actively performed by speakers in order to negotiate mutual understanding in situ. Moreover, they often co-occur, demonstrating that it is important to be able to appropriately and effectively use them to be competent ELF speakers. In the following sections, three examples from ViMELF will be discussed, in order to compare and analyse whether findings are similar or differ from the examples from VOICE-Leisure.

4.3.2.4 ViMELF_02SB80HE06

ViMELF_02SB80HE06 is a dialogue between two students, one from Germany and the other one from Finland, that lasts about 40 minutes. The conversation starts with the prompted topic of 'life as a university student'[44], thus the participants mostly talk about what they are studying and how their universities are structured; they also cover other subjects, such as trips they went to while studying. As shown in Figure 19, the strategic turns cover 30.03% of the

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[44]   https://www.umwelt-campus.de/en/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/indi/en/applied-research/translate-to-englisch-case-project/data-description-and-samples (last accessed 26/10/2021).

communicative act, showing a relevant role, similarly to the examples taken from VOICE-Leisure. As in Figure 20, it can be noted that the participants only use three of the strategies analysed: backchannels, reformulations and repetitions. As can also be seen in Figure 8, backchannels have a general high frequency in ViMELF, probably because of the dialogic nature of the conversations; Figure 20 confirms a significant role of the use of backchannels to signal active listenership and engagement. As already observed, reformulations and repetitions are often used to negotiate meaning to reach shared understanding, in this case with an occurrence of 79.89 every 1000 turns for the former, and of 56.47 for the latter. Consequently, as discussed for the similar results in the examples from VOICE-Leisure, Figures 19 and 20 confirm that communication strategies play an important role in this conversation and that they occupy a relevant part of the interaction, as will be further discussed below.
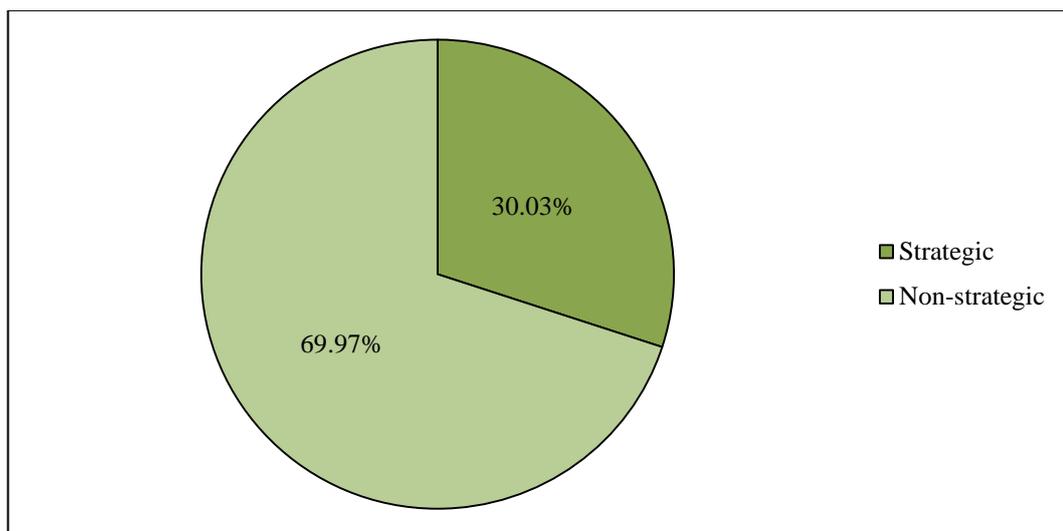

Figure 19: Strategic and non-strategic turns in ViMELF_02SB80HE06.
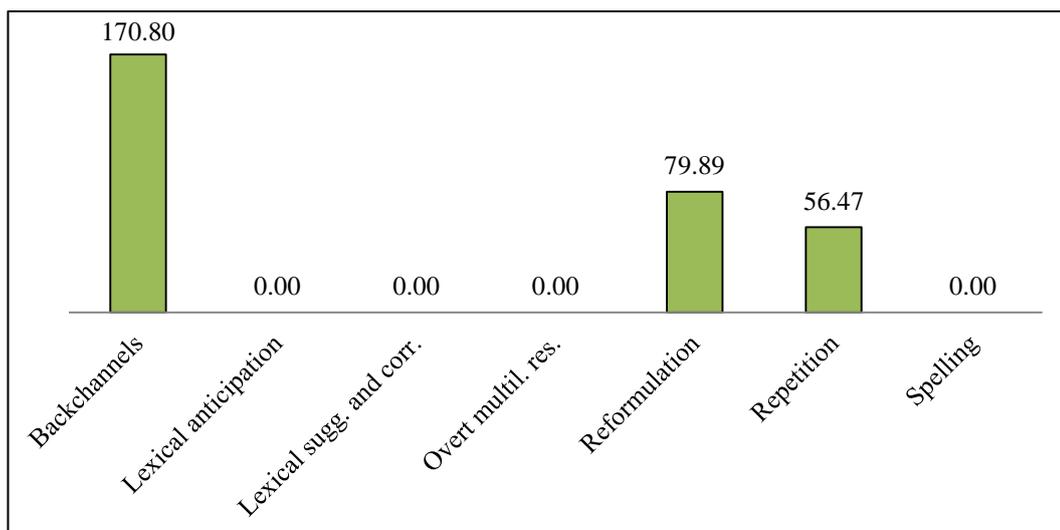
Figure 20: Average occurrences every 1000 turns of the single communication strategies in ViMELF_02SB80HE06.

In the whole data set, there was a low or no occurrence of lexical anticipation, lexical suggestion and correction, and spelling, but the use of overt multilingual resources has proved to be quite frequent (see §4.3). As discussed in §4.2.3, overt multilingual resources are indeed commonly used to signal cultural identity and to express cultural concepts; the fact that there is no occurrence in ViMELF_02SB80HE06 – as shown in Figure 20 – is therefore uncommon. A closer examination of the transcription seems to pride no suggestion of the reason(s) why this is the case; the absence of other languages cannot be restricted to the fact that the speakers share only English as a common linguistic resource, since other conversations have shown that a shared multilingual repertoire is not a necessary requirement to perform instances of overt multilingual resources. Even though there seems to be no clear explanation, it has to be mentioned that this absence of overt multilingual resources occurs only in 3 conversations in the ViMELF corpus, hence a minority when compared to the 28 conversations analysed. As seen in §1.2.2.3.1, ELF communication does not require nor favour the use of languages other than English, but it conceives them as a possible resources that is always available to the speakers if needed or considered appropriate in the specific context of interaction. In this perspective, the non-appearance of any overt multilingual resource can be seen as pointing to the

diversity that can be found in ELF Transcultural Communication, depending on the context and the speakers.

Figure 21 allows us to examine how the observed communication strategies appear in the conversation and how they intertwine with non-strategic communication.
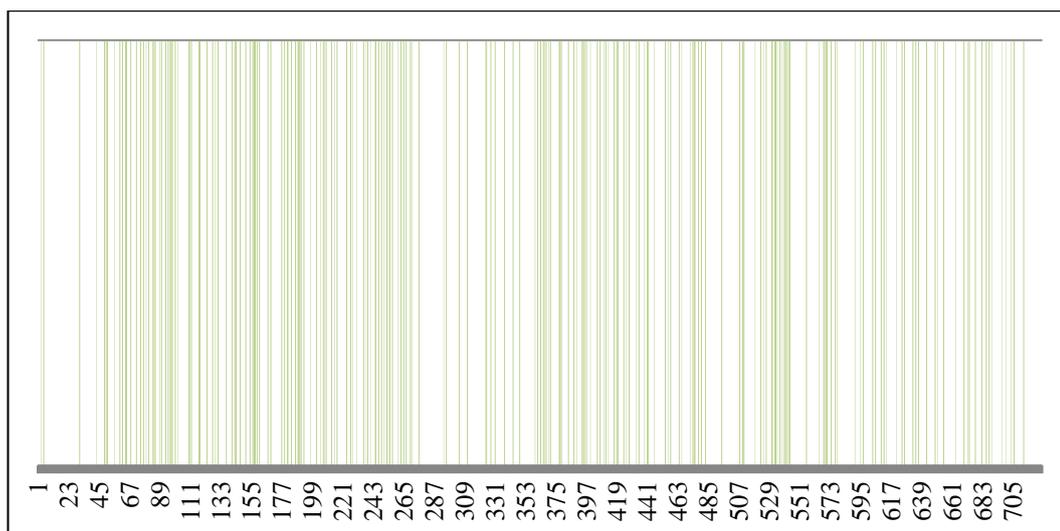
Figure 21: Strategic turns in ViMELF_02SB80HE06.

It can be observed that the presence of strategic turns is regular, displaying a pattern similar to that of the previous examples. Nonetheless, there seem to be two moments where the use of communication strategies requires clarification. At the beginning and in the middle of the conversation there are two significant gaps in the presence of strategic turns: even though this could be ascribable to turns that are excluded from the analysis, as in the preceding examples, a more detailed analysis is needed.

The first gap appears between turn 5 and 43, with a single strategic turn in-between. If the transcribed text is analysed, this sequence relates to the speakers checking that their devices and their recording app is working and deciding on the topic to start with. Turn 31 is a backchannel, and the gap that follows refers to HE06's introduction. The subject of this initial sequence justifies in part the absence of communication strategies, since the participants are organising their talk and checking their technological devices, asking one another whether

everything is working. The second gap starts after turn 276 and lasts until turn 293. This sequence includes a non-participant (that is, an external subject who is not part of the project but interacts with the participants) talking in German to SB80 and SB80 reporting in English what was said to HE06. This is the most likely reason why there is no occurrence of communication strategies, since turns with non-participants are excluded from the analysis and reporting is not conceived here as a communication strategy.

In turn, as shown in Figure 21, between turn 519 and 544, there is a dense occurrence of strategic turns, as shown by three thicker lines. This sequence seems to signal a high occurrence of strategic turns. Example 49 below displays the negotiation sequence occurring between turn 519 and 544, where the two participants talk about travelling.

Example 49: ViMELF_02SB80HE06 – sequence of negotiation (turns 519-544).
(Speakers: SB80 – male, Germany; HE06 – female, Finland)

    1 HE06: [**yeah**].

    2 SB80: .. there's a national park <close to: u:h> Doncaster,　　>it's actually< between,

    3 HE06: {nods}

    4 SB80: .. Sheffield and Manchester. .h u:hm,=

    5 HE06: =**yeah**.=

    6 SB80: =it's called the Peak District.

    7 HE06: ... **oKAY**.

    8 SB80: .. I think it's not that far away from .. from Liverpool either.

    9 HE06: ... **okay**.

    10 SB80: (1.1) but .. that's pretty nice.

    11 HE06: {nods}

    12 SB80: (1.3) u:hm, ... yeah .h [actually] I TRIED to go to to Wales,

    13 HE06: [**yeah**]. ... [**yeah**].

    14 SB80: [bu:t]_u:hm, #00:28:30-6# it was REALly **really** difficult .. <to: u:hm>. .. well. (1.0) there were trains going to to Wales but they were_u:h expensive.

    15 HE06: ... **yeah**.

16 SB80: .. °yeah°. (1.0) and .. °**yeah**°. ... °they were the big problem actually°. ((heh))

17 HE06: ... **yeah**.

18 SB80: (1.8) would you recommand .. **recommend** going there?

19 HE06: (1.4) **Wales**.

20 SB80: **Wales** [°yeah°].

21 HE06: [you mean]. ... YEAH I think- they had some really great kind of landscape and scenery so:, #00:28:59-6# .. yeah I I think that my my boss's husband she-   u:h kind of used to:, .. ride .. his bicycle there, {points to side} because they have this u:hm. {imitates hills by lifting and lowering hand; fingers extended and palm facing down} .t hills re- really °uh° steep and kind of yeah.

22 SB80: .. **mhm**. {nods}

23 HE06: **good hills** .. so:, ... because he did some °mh°, >I don't know< min- moun- mountain b-biking <is that even> a thing, {squints} but yeah, {nods}

24 SB80: **mountain biking** yeah, {nods & smiles}

25 HE06: .. yeah .. **yeah**.

26 SB80:   ... °**okay** [**yeah**]°.

HE06 (from Finland) and SB80 (from Germany) are talking about the places SB80 visited, and SB80 is describing the main destinations he went to. HE06 is using several backchannels to support the main speaker and to show attention, and some reformulations and repetitions can be observed, aimed at securing mutual understanding. In line 2, SB80 states that he went to a national park near Doncaster and while he is explaining the exact location, HE06 performs both verbal and non-verbal backchannels (lines 3, 5, 7, and 9). In line 12, SB80 continues by describing his attempt to go to Wales, addressing how expensive trains are and thus difficult to take. In line 18, SB80 asks HE06 whether she would recommend going to Wales, and in line 19, HE06 performs a reformulation to request confirmation of understanding. SB80 thus repeats 'Wales' (line 20) and exclaims 'yeah' to signal confirmation, prompting HE06's comment on Wales. She reports how her boss's husband went mountain biking there and how steep the hills are, using a reformulation to remark the idea (line 23). SB80 provides backchannels and performs a repetition (line 24) to signal confirmation and

listenership. As the examples previously discussed, this conversation provides further evidence on the co-use of communication strategies to reach successful communication. creating and negotiating meaning in order to build a common frame of reference. Moreover, the collaborative nature of ELF is displayed here as well, showing the importance of cooperative behaviour (such as the use of backchannels) in co-constructing a positive relationship and building mutual understanding.

4.3.2.5 ViMELF_07SB50FL34

ViMELF_07SB50FL34 is a conversation between two students from Germany and Italy that lasts around 40 minutes. The prompted topic is food, thus the participants talk about beer, wine, and coffee, but they also go beyond their task and discuss stereotypes, Erasmus, Oktoberfest, school, what they study, and so on. This conversation thus includes a great variety of informal topics and the use of strategic turns is much higher than the average, as shown in Figure 22, where the strategic turns cover 47.44% of the interaction.
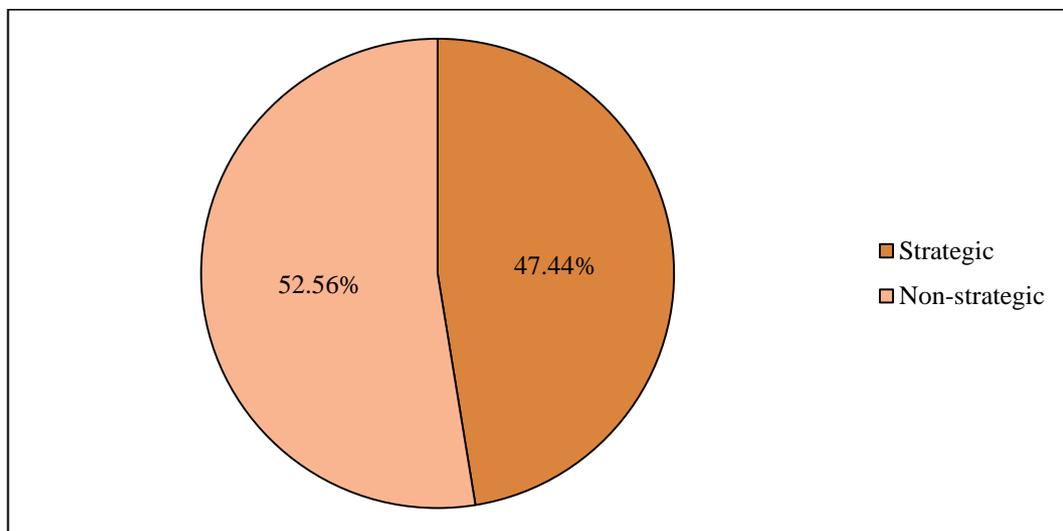
Figure 22: Strategic and non-strategic turns in ViMELF_07SB50FL34.
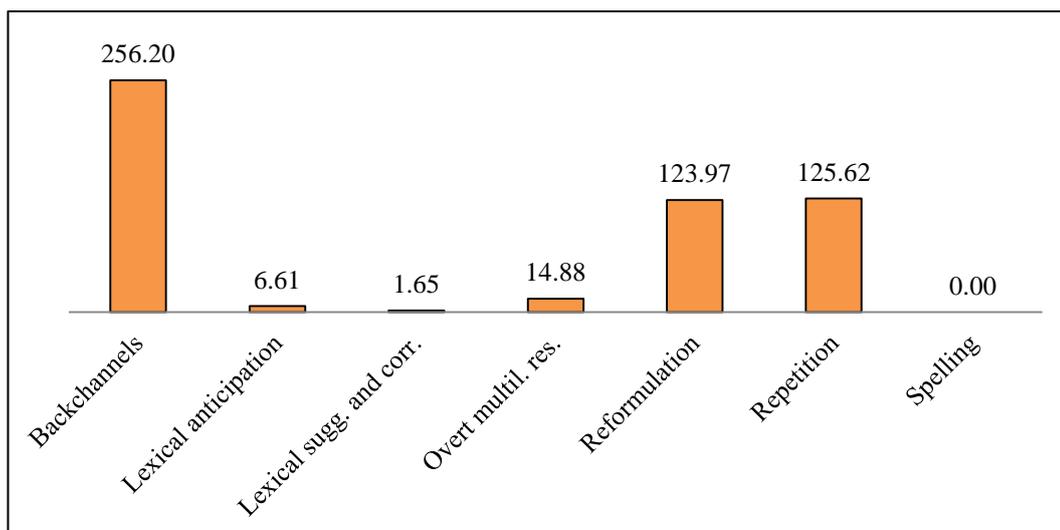
Figure 23: Average occurrences every 1000 turns of the single communication strategies in ViMELF_07SB50FL34.

Almost half of the conversation includes strategic language, where strategic turns regularly intertwine with non-strategic turns. This can be further observed in Figure 23 and in Figure 24. In the former, all communication strategies except spelling are included. This suggests that the process of co-construction of mutual understanding and meaning negotiation is based on a greatly diversified range of communication strategies; in addition, the high use of backchannels indicates that the conversation is highly cooperative, in line with the fact that ELF speakers tend to collaboratively co-construct mutual understanding. In Figure 24 it can be observed that the conversation displays a regular and frequent use of communication strategies, with a more frequent occurrence in comparison to the previous examples discussed. Moreover, the strategic turns seem to be much denser, suggesting that the negotiation process is particularly active and substantial for the communicative act.
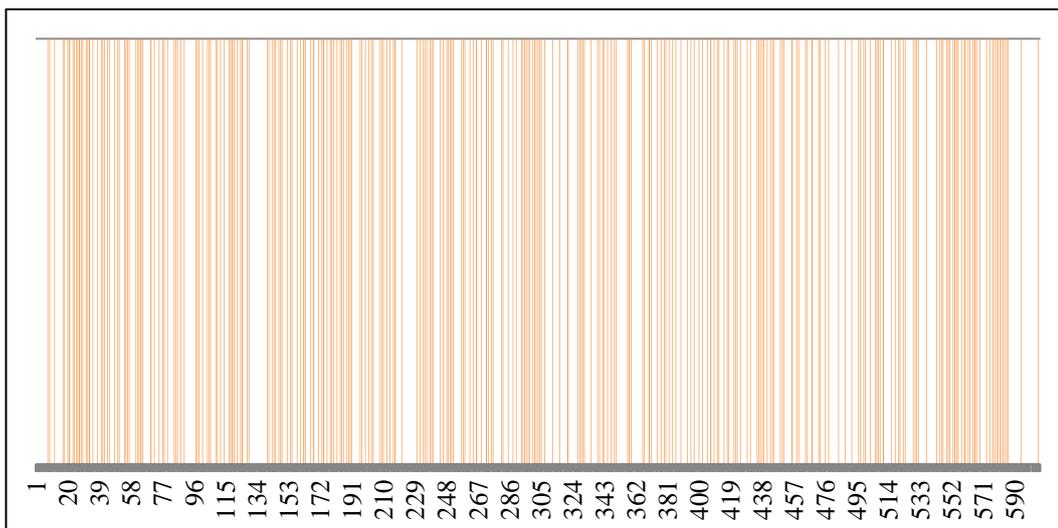
Figure 24: Strategic turns in ViMELF_07SB50FL34.

In order to further examine this aspect, three sequences where strategic turns are more densely represented (after turn 17, 291, and 546) will be investigated more in detail below. Examples 50, 51, and 52 show the negotiation sequences where the lines in Figure 24 are thicker, thus pointing to a significant use of communication strategies.

Example 50: ViMELF_07SB50FL34 – negotiation sequence (turns 17-35).
(Speakers: SB50 – male, Germany; FL34 – male, Italy)

    1 FL34: (1.2) u:hm .. what kind of foo:d do you eat in Ge:rmany, ... apart from ... **Würstels** ((German (0.6))), {turns left & -right}   #00:01:00-0# .. that ... the only thing I know. {smiles}

    2 SB50: yeah, .. (real-) the, .. **the**: .. typical food, .. **is not like the, the used to typical food like we: eat just eat sauerkraut and sausages** but, ... uhm.

    3 FL34: {sits up}

    4 SB50: we s- we still eat a lot of stuff of them so ((chuckling)), so we like the, .. th- the hu:ge, ...u:h .. roasts, {opens hand} ... **like BEEF roasts**, .. something like that,

    5 FL34: **mhm**, {nods}

    6 SB50: [uhm],

    7 FL34: [(**cooked**) **meat**], {tilts head}

8 SB50: YEAH? yeah. .. mostly **meat** and and a- u:h, .. and u:h, .. and .. yeah, #00:01:30-2# veggies on the side, {moves head to side} and u:hm, .. and potatoes. that- [that's] uh that's the typical:,

9 FL34: [**m:hm**], {nods}

10 SB50: ... uhm:, I- I'd- I don't wanna say old people, .. uh .. food but uh, it's i- in Germany it's a typical, .. **typical** food for, **for people**, .. **not in our age**. {opens hand}

11 FL34: ... [**ah okay**], {nods} {smiles}

12 SB50: [**in OUR AGE**] most- most of them just eat, {shakes head & makes beat gesture} just eat, .. you know, fast food? .. and uh, .. and pizza .. a:nd,

13 FL34: **YEAH** ((chuckling)), {nods} ((laughs)) [**yeah yeah**],

14 SB50: [all that stuff that comes] from, {shakes head} from other countries {shrugs} except our [own] so- ((chuckling)), ((laughs))

15 FL34: [O:kay ((chuckling))] , {leans forwards} ((chuckles))   okay ((chuckling)). {sits up} (but) you still drink beer from Germany [yeah],

16 SB50: [Oh] >yeah yeah<, >THAT- THAT- that< thing we still do. {raises eyebrows & nods & lifts index finger} >**yeah yeah**< ((chuckling)),

17 FL34: <**okay**> ((chuckling)). {nods}

18 SB50: our beer is the best {shakes head} and uh u- we still drink, we still drink our own beer. yeah, .h ((swallows))

19 FL34: ((laughs)) **good**. {nods} [good].

In Example 50, FL34 (from Italy) asks SB50 (from Germany) about German food, stating that he only knows about *Würstels*, using an overt multilingual resource (line 1) in his partner's first language. In the following turns, while FL34 performs regular verbal and non-verbal backchannels, SB50 starts to explain typical German food using several communication strategies. First, he uses a repetition to gain time ('typical food', line 2), then he reformulates to explain and clarify what typical German food is. SB50 refers to 'beef roasts' (line 4) and FL34 reformulates it in a more general 'cooked meat' (line 7) to signal confirmation and this prompt SB50 to clarify what he means (line 8, 10, and 12). FL34 continues to show active listenership by providing numerous backchannels, signalling attention and involvement. SB50 goes on talking about food and habits in Germany, making a distinction between age differences (lines 12 and 14). At this point FL34

laughs (line 15) and makes a humorous remark on German people drinking German beer and SB50 answers chuckling and repeating 'yeah' several times to give prominence to the fact that German beer is the best (lines 16 and 18). The extract also provides evidence of the fact that communication strategies are often co-used and successfully and naturally performed to reach mutual understanding. The negotiation is collaborative and both participants actively take part in the process, through backchannels and through cooperative turns. Laughing also suggests a positive relationship and attitude among the speakers.

Example 51: ViMELF_07SB50FL34 – negotiation sequence (turns 291-309).
(Speakers: SB50 – male, Germany; FL34 – male, Italy)

  1 FL34: if you go to university, .. you END UP, ... with <NON>, ((snuffles)) (1.0) like non-local people.

  2 SB50: {nods}

  3 FL34: .. **I mean local people**, .. **they already have friends and stuff so**- .. **they're not interest**- **interested**, #00:18:00-4#

  4 SB50: [°**yeah**°]. {nods}

  5 FL34: [**in like**] **u:h**, **making** {opens hand} **friends with**- .. **Erasmus** [people].

  6 SB50: [°**mhm**°].

  7 FL34: **so you end up**, .. **with** {shakes head} .. **people from other COUNtries** {shrugs}. I I went to SPAIN, ... and I think my English improved mo:re, than my Spanish,

  8 SB50: [**mhm**]. {nods}

  9 FL34: [cause] I had_u:h, .. American roommates a:nd .. American friends {moves head to side} and stuff?

  10 SB50: (**yeah**) **okay**.

  11 FL34: uh but like .. Spanish peopl:e, .. b- {looks to upper corner} ... I only had ONE {nods} Spanish friend **like**, **REAL friend** {makes beat gesture} the other guys yeah you met them, .. in cla:ss, and ta:lk to > °them a little bit but .h°<, {tilts head & shrugs} #00:18:30-3# .. it wasn't very like, ... (DEEP), .. but like with these Americans >and (other) people actually< u:h, {tilts- & scratches head} a German gu:y, .. I'm very:, we made frien:ds,

  12 SB50: [**mhm**]. {nods & bites thumb}

13 FL34: [cause he] was, (1.2) he was not actually, ((chuckles)) .h the ... "typical" .. German I would expe:ct. .. cause you know **we have this stereoty:pe** {makes box gesture} **of the**, .. **.h very u:h**, {lifts- & lowers hands in front of chest} ... **.t uhm**, ... **.t u:hm, I don't know how to say**- {looks to side} **dutyful** [**maybe**], [{thumping sound}] .. **German**, .. **like very** .. **u:h**, ((ehh)) **and he was kind of**, {moves head from side to side} (1.2) {clapping sound} #00:19:00-5# ... **he went OUT of this stereotype** but, {raises eyebrows & shrugs}

14 SB50: [**okay**].

15 FL34: [**it's just**] **stereotypes**.

16 SB50: .. sure yeah, {makes beat gesture} like like every county, country ha has his owns and-

17 FL34: **yeah**, {smiles & nods}

18 SB50: yeah. {moves hand towards mouth}

19 FL34: ((hehe))

In Example 51, FL34 and SB50 talk about making friends when in Erasmus. FL34 talks about his experience and uses several reformulations to clarify what he means. The first one is in lines 3, 5, and 7, when he is explaining why he states that local people do not usually have close relationships with Erasmus students, while the second occurs in line 13, where he describes why his friend was not 'a typical German'. SB50 continuously shows active listenership by providing backchannels, that signal his support and attention to the conversation.

Example 52: ViMELF_07SB50FL34 – negotiation sequence (turns 546-571).
(Speakers: SB50 – male, Germany; FL34 – male, Italy)

1 SB50: do y- do you wanna be a translator or?

2 FL34: H {looks to side & touches chin} (1.5) A:h .. I don't know cause like, .. .t after my:- .. after I get my degree which {frowns} .. should be in October {raises eyebrows &rolls eyes}, .. **next October**,

3 SB50: {nods}

4 FL34: .. u:h .. I- {touches cheek} I can ha:ve {looks to side}, #00:35:31-1# .. .t you know there's a .. masters degree- **there's TWO different** .. **masters degrees**, .. they're ... Translation {turns head} and Mediation {turns head}.

5 SB50: [**mhm**]. {nods}

6 FL34: [.h] a:nd .. but you have a:, ... you [know], [{thumping sound}] .. they have a: .. very strict {scratches cheek} admission test. I mean it's like **ve:ry strict** like,

7 SB50: {nods}

8 FL34: .. I had .. to take an [**admission**] **test**? [{thumping sound}] .. to get into my university, for the .. first .. three years, .h .t a:nd .. it was like .. one- {looks up & frowns & winks} hundred and eighty {grimaces} .. u:h .. places {shakes head}, I don't know how to call them,

9 SB50: **mhm**? {raises eyebrows & lifts head}

10 FL34: (1.1) .t a:nd, #00:36:00-3# .h:, ... the like? (1.0) Interpreting is like thirty-four PLAces? .. and Translation is sixty-four. .. **so it's like** .. **HA:LF** {imitates half by waving hand to one side repeatedly} .. the people, that GET inside- {leans forwards} ... [the: .. u:h],

11 SB50: [**oh okay**].

12 FL34: .. first degree.

13 SB50: **mh**[**m**].

14 FL34: [and] you do- you have to count people from outside, {tilts head} from other universitie:s, {thumping sound}

15 SB50: {nods} .. and **you have to** [**count people** who didn't], [{thumping sounds}] .. uh .. PASS {lifts fist} .. the TESTS, .. the: .. years before {moves hand in circle}, and they_are (try-) so it's- {shakes head} (1.0) a:h fucked up, it's S:O F:Ucking difficult. .. [to get] in THERE, #00:36:30-2#

16 SB50: [mh],

17 FL34: (1.0) **it's**: {shakes head} .. >**really really**< **difficult**. and I don't know- .. I will- .. try .. both: .. tests? .. and I don't know: .. what I would choose, maybe translation? {looks up} .. I don't feel like_I'm .. that good at in:terpreting. [NOT] .. I'm not that good at- {closes eyes & shakes head}

18 SB50: [**mhm**].{nods}

19 FL34: u:h .. translation either, .h bu:t .. I think I'm better. {leans to side}

20 SB50: [**mhm**].

21 FL34: [.h and] if I don't pass {shakes head} ... those tests, .. I don't know. ... I could, (1.2) **I don't know**. {looks down} I could just .. translate, {pouts} ... **start** {shrugs} **translating**_and-

22 SB50: [**mhm**].

23 FL34: .. [actually] you don't NEED a degree to trans[late].

24 SB50: [yeah]. you just have to- {lifts hand} #00:37:00-1# [to have to] .. find the right the right .. **the right** work and,

25 FL34: [cau-] (1.7) ye:ah but- .. like, .. I mean, in- in I:taly:, .. people do not ca:re, about .. you know you have a degree or not cause, {clapping sound} .. there's not like, .h .. the u:h, (1.3) .t JO:B, ... of the translate- .. of the translator is not recognised (((/fri/cognised)). .. by the government.

26 SB50: {nods}

Finally, in Example 52, FL34 and SB50 are talking about the profession of being a translator, since FL34 is studying to become one. In line 1, SB50 asks FL34 whether he wants to become a translator and FL34 answers by explaining how difficult it is to become a translator in Italy. FL34 uses many reformulations and repetitions to clarify meaning, specify information and give prominence to what he is saying. In line 2, for example, 'next October' is a reformulation of 'in October' to secure recipient understanding and remark the precise time he will get his degree. Then, in line 4, another reformulation is used to clarify the process needed to become a translator; in the next two turns FL34 performs some repetitions to remark how the admission test is necessary and strict. While FL34 is talking, SB50 provides several backchannels, suggesting attention and listenership, signalling that he is following the conversation.

As for the examples discussed in the previous sections, the extracts presented here show a successful, relevant and frequent use of communication strategies in interaction. Both speakers are actively performing a wide range of negotiation moves that are aimed at co-constructing a shared frame of reference and a common ground. The co-occurrence of the different communication strategies analysed is thus paramount in meaning negotiation, and strategic language is indeed relevant and widespread in the whole conversation, as also shown in Figure 22. Moreover, the high frequency of backchannels showcases that the participants are collaboratively supporting one another and that the process of co-construction of mutual understanding is a joint achievement.

4.3.2.6 ViMELF_07SB51ST01

ViMELF_07SB51ST01 is a conversation between a German and a Spanish student, who talk about several topics, for instance food, names, educational systems, and Christmas. The interaction lasts about 32 minutes and, as presented in Figure 25, it has a high occurrence of strategic turns, that cover 41,73% of the interaction, similarly to ViMELF_07SB50FL34.
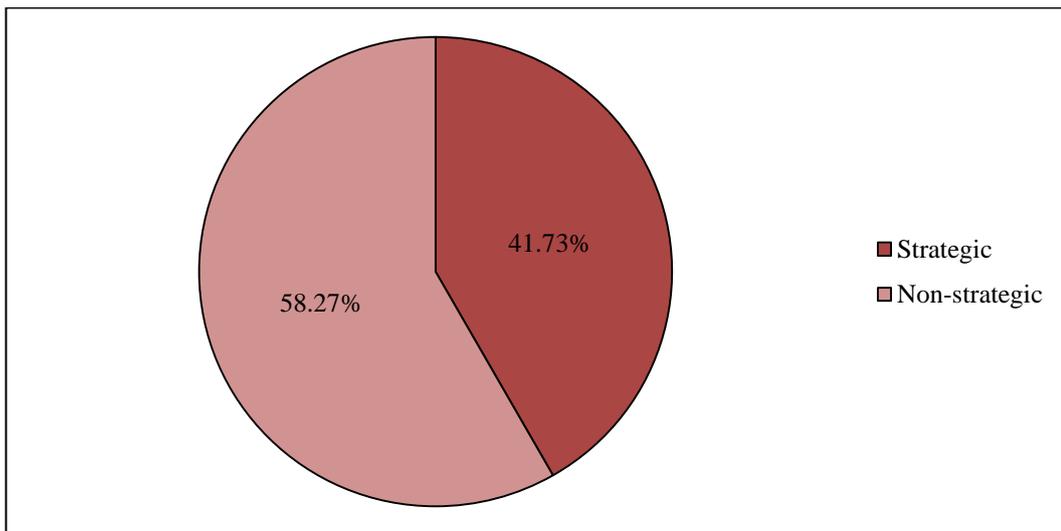
Figure 25: Strategic vs non-strategic turns in ViMELF_07SB51ST01.

The use of communication strategies in this conversation presents a high occurrence not only of backchannels, but especially of repetitions, differing in this respect from the previous examples. Indeed, Figure 26 shows that the average use of repetition surpasses that of backchannels with 167.25 occurrences every 1000 turns.
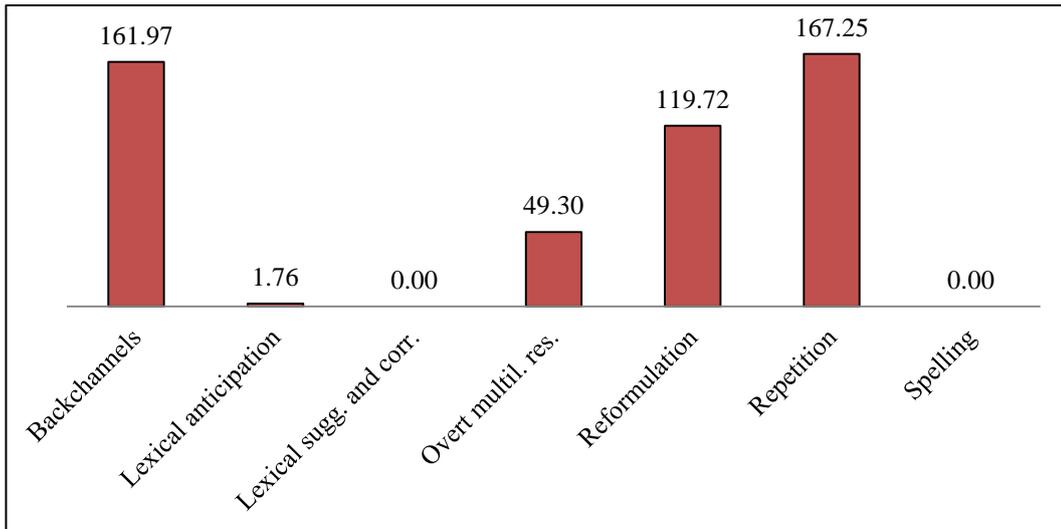
Figure 26: Average occurrences every 1000 turns of the single communication strategies in ViMELF_07SB51ST01.
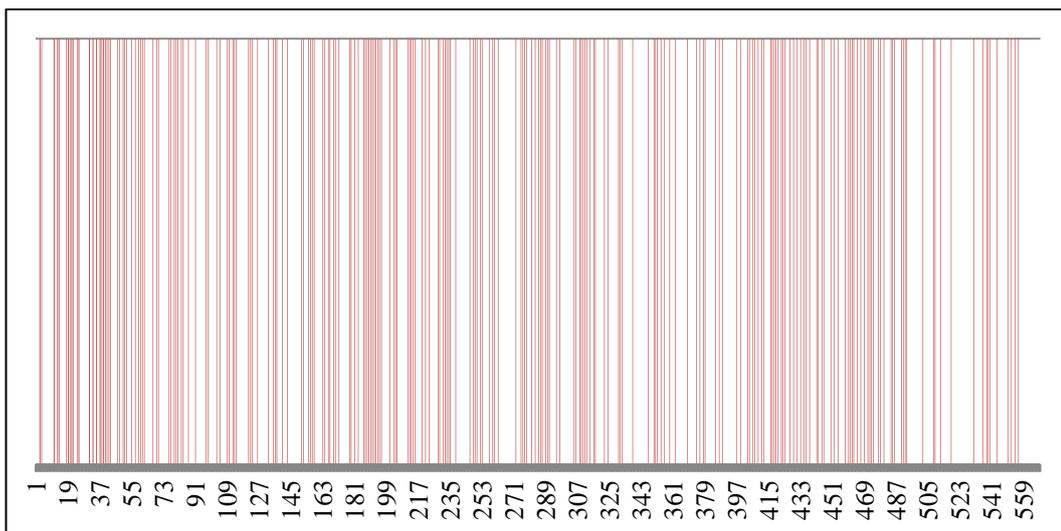
Figure 27: Strategic turns in ViMELF_07SB51ST01.

If Figure 27 is taken into consideration, strategic turns appear to be regularly present and intertwining in the communicative act. The high occurrence of backchannels confirms that the conversation is collaborative, and the high frequency of overt multilingual resources, reformulations, and repetitions indicate that negotiation moves are quite significant in the communicative process. As discussed in §4.2, backchannels are mainly used to signal engagement and active listenership, while repetitions and reformulations can serve different functions in

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the communicative process. Another significant aspect that Figure 25 highlights is that over multilingual resources are frequently performed in this case. As described in §4.2.4, overt multilingual resources are often performed to expressed specific cultural concepts, and the high occurrence could in this case be ascribable to the topics discussed, since the speakers often use German and Spanish words to identify food (for example *Filloas*, a Spanish kind of crêpes) and cultural traditions (such as the one regarding *Nikolaus* coming on the 5th of December to bring gifts in Germany).

To conclude, the conversations analysed in this chapter, and particularly the ones in the last section, showcase that a combined perspective of a qualitative and quantitative approach can be particularly useful to provide insights in investigating the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts. On the one hand, the quantitative analysis of the data under examination has underscored the high frequency of use of communication strategies and the importance and regular distribution of strategic turns in communication. On the other hand, a qualitative method has allowed to understand how communication strategies are used in the meaning negotiation process and which functions they serve. Even though the analysis of VOICE-Leisure and of ViMELF presents some differences, as discussed in §4.3.1, they both confirm the great significance that the collaborative and combined use of communication strategies has in ELF Transcultural Communication. In the following chapter, the findings will be further discussed in relation to the main conceptualisations presented in this dissertation, and the pedagogical implications of the study will be explored.

4.4 Chapter summary

In Chapter 4 the extensive use of the communication strategies that have been identified for the analysis has been discussed, underscoring their fundamental role in ELF Transcultural Communication. Backchannels, lexical anticipation, lexical suggestion and correction, overt multilingual resources, reformulation and repetition were examined in 29 conversations taken from the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and from the ViMELF corpus. A combined analysis based on a qualitative

and a quantitative approach was carried out in order to provide insights on the use and functions of these communication strategies in ELF transcultural communication.

This perspective has shown that communication strategies are frequently used to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding: they usually co-occur and serve more than one function, proving to be an effective tool to reach successful communication. The analysis has also demonstrated how important it is for speakers to be able to manage the strategic dimension of language in ELF Transcultural Communication, since meaning making processes are a fundamental part of the interactional process(es) to reach common ground in ELF transcultural contexts.

After a detailed qualitative description of findings as to the several functions performed through the use of the communication strategies analysed, results from the quantitative analysis were illustrated, with findings further underscoring the importance they play in the communicative process. Finally, a combined analysis of six conversations selected as a representative sample of the data has further confirmed that the strategic dimension in language use is intrinsically intertwined with non-strategic communication and that a competent use of communication strategies can positively and effectively help in the co-construction of mutual understanding and in the meaning negotiation process.

In the following chapter, the discussion of findings and the pedagogical implications of the present study will be presented, remarking the importance of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication and their important role in ELF Transcultural Competence. The core elements of an ELF-aware pedagogy will be outlined and some activities will be suggested to include the use of communication strategies in classroom practices.

CHAPTER 5 –
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

After presenting the results of the study in Chapter 4, I will now discuss them in relation to ELF Transcultural Communication and ELF Transcultural Competence, which were amply discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. The data has shown how meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding are fundamental processes underlying ELF, and the use of communication strategies has been demonstrated to be highly relevant in defining how to strategically manage interaction in ELF transcultural contexts. This is also highly significant from a pedagogical point of view, since it has been proved that ELF users need to be able to use strategic moves in interaction to reach successful communication. In the following sections, I will first further discuss the findings of the study and the use of communication strategies in ELF transcultural contexts; secondly, I will outline some theoretical principles of an ELF-aware pedagogy aimed at the inclusion of a more integrated perspective between ELF Transcultural Communication and English Language Teaching (ELT), both in Teacher Education and in classroom practices. I will also focus on how ELF Transcultural Competence could be integrated in ELT adopting an ELF-aware pedagogy, suggesting some activities to foster its development. Finally, I will outline some activities that would be useful in developing the ability to negotiate and co-construct meaning through the use of communication strategies.

5.1 The use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication: discussion of findings and further considerations

English has become an important means of communication in today's world. Its use is not only related to its role as an official national language, but also to its function as a lingua franca. In ELF transcultural contexts, speakers cannot refer to pre-established and fixed linguistic and cultural norms, since they do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds; consequently, the negotiation of appropriate communicative norms and of a common frame of reference becomes

paramount in order to reach successful communication. Against this backdrop, communication strategies have proved to be productive tools to appropriately and effectively negotiate meaning and establish common ground between the interlocutors. The present dissertation has aimed at investigating how communication strategies are used in negotiating meaning and in co-constructing mutual understanding in ELF Transcultural Communication and which functions they perform in such interactions. In the following sections, the findings from my study will be discussed in relation to the conceptualisations presented in Chapters 1 and 2: the concept of ELF Transcultural Communication will be further elaborated in relation to meaning negotiation, then ELF Transcultural Competence and the strategic dimension of ELF transcultural contexts will be analysed. Finally, the use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication will be examined in more detail to showcase their relevance in communication.

5.1.1 ELF Transcultural Communication and meaning negotiation

In the previous chapters, I have discussed how ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies should be combined in order to further analyse and understand the processes underlying ELF. I have suggested the conceptualisation of ELF Transcultural Communication (see §1.4) to explicitly refer to the use of English, together with other multilingual resources, as a common means of interaction between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and thus need to negotiate shared linguistic and cultural norms in situ. According to this perspective, speakers use English by creatively and diversely shaping it in interaction; English in its lingua franca function constitutes thus the bridge between the interlocutors, and the speakers' different multilingual resources, as well as transcultural practices, considerably influence and shape the communicative act.

What characterises ELF Transcultural Communication is a great variability and inherent diversity, that come into contact in the interactional act; ELF speakers need to continuously negotiate both linguistic and cultural norms since they cannot take for granted that their practices and behaviours are shared between the interactants (Baker, 2015b). In this way, ELF transcultural contexts tend to be

constantly evolving, crossing the traditional conceptions of language and culture as fixed and predetermined entities, that are intrinsically correlated to a single nation. No community can be defined as homogeneous and no language or culture as immutable (Canagarajah, 2013: 57); from this standpoint, it becomes paramount to focus on the prefix *trans-* and to investigate how language and culture intertwine in communication and how linguistic and cultural practices can show the dynamics of the processes underlying ELF transcultural contexts.

As discussed in §1.2.2.3.1 and in §1.4, ELF Transcultural Communication incorporates two complementary perspectives: one in which language is viewed as a separate and clearly identifiable system *and* one in which language is conceived as a complex and permeable entity. On the one hand, the speaker's own standpoint on language has to be respected and taken into account; therefore, he/she may consider languages as separate and fixed codes, and this conceptualisation should be taken into consideration when analysing his/her interactions, since it will affect communication and how he/she speaks and acts. As seen in Example 4 in the data analysis in §4.2.2, for instance, the speakers talk about different languages and their grammatical rules perceiving them as separate and stable systems. On the other hand, as discussed in Chapter 1, language is a complex and emergent system that is continuously shaped, evolves and changes through the speakers' linguistic practices in actual communication (Baird et al., 2014; Baker, 2015b; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Larsen-Freeman, 2018). Accordingly, ELF Transcultural Communication needs to include these different perspectives and to bring them together when analysing communication in ELF transcultural contexts.

Similarly, in the present dissertation, culture is not regarded as a list of nation-based characteristics, but as emergent practices that continue to evolve and that come into being in interaction (Baker, 2015b; Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019; Cogo, 2018). Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that the speakers involved in the communicative act have their own understanding of the concept of culture and this will affect how they speak and act in interaction. As a matter of fact, several conversations in the data set are focused on generalised characterisations of cultural identities, cultural national traditions and stereotypes; therefore, being

aware that speakers can differently interpret what 'culture' is, this standpoint needs to be taken into account too in analysing the data, to understand how the interlocutors involved negotiate and co-construct meaning in interaction, and to ensure that no conceptualisation is rejected.

In ELF Transcultural Communication, what is central is how meaning can be negotiated and co-constructed to reach common ground and mutual understanding, taking into account the diverse and multifaceted variability inherent in these contexts. By building a shared frame of reference in situ, there cannot be common and reproducible features that could be seen to characterise ELF as a system, but only common and shared processes and tools that are enacted in situ. Indeed, the early attempts in ELF research to categorise common grammatical and phonological features (e.g. Jenkins, 2007 and Seidlhofer, 2004) have been questioned since it has been recognised that ELF is a process, not a stable system (Cogo & Dewey, 2012). Several studies have proven the importance to analyse how and why ELF speakers interact as they do in actual communication rather than which lexical or grammatical features are commonly shared by ELF interactants around the world (Baker, 2015b; Cogo, 2009, 2011, 2018; Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2009, 2011). It is from this perspective that the investigation of the processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication and of the tools available to speakers is paramount, since processes and tools can be (and are) creatively reproducible and adaptable to diverse ELF transcultural contexts. Consequently, the present study has focused on the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication and on how speakers can co-construct mutual understanding in interaction through the use of communication strategies. As the data analysis has shown, ELF speakers adopt similar strategic moves in different communicative contexts in order to reach successful communication: even if with different frequencies, the seven communication strategies analysed in the present study have been performed in many different interactions to create and negotiate meaning in situ.

It is also important to underscore that in order to reach successful communication it is not only desirable to be effective, but it is also important to negotiate what is appropriate for the participants involved in the communicative context in which

the interaction takes place (Chen, 2017; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006). In ELF Transcultural Communication, it is indeed necessary to take into account the inherent linguistic and cultural diversity of, as well as the variable conceptions of, appropriateness for the speakers. Successful communication is defined here as a communicative act in which the participants' communicative goal(s) and mutual understanding are achieved effectively and appropriately according to what has been established and negotiated in the interaction.

As will be discussed in the following section, ELF Transcultural Competence is the novel framework suggested in the present dissertation to comprise the fundamental skills that are necessary to be competent speakers in ELF Transcultural Communication. This model takes into account the multiple perspectives that come in contact in ELF transcultural contexts and it also considers how effectiveness and appropriateness are to be negotiated and defined in the ongoing interaction by the participants involved. It is important to underscore that Standard English and the 'native speaker' model, as well as (Intercultural) Communicative Competence, are deemed to be no longer suitable reference points which ELF speakers should aspire to, but they are still included in the pedagogical implications of ELF Transcultural Competence, since they are seen as one manifestation of the global use of English (as will be seen in §5.2).

5.1.2 ELF Transcultural Competence as a new framework

As the results presented in Chapter 4 have demonstrated, the strategic dimension of ELF Transcultural Communication is fundamental: it is vital for ELF speakers to be able to co-construct and negotiate mutual understanding in order to build a common frame of reference and reach their communicative goal(s); to do so, they need to learn about and be able to use strategic moves that can help them manage such processes. In addition to the ability to strategically manage the interaction, they are also required to be able to adopt and adapt their linguistic resources according to the context and interlocutors of the interaction, and they also need to be aware of the diversity and variability (both linguistic and cultural) that are inherent in ELF Transcultural Communication. I have thus suggested ELF Transcultural Competence as a reference model for the skills that are required to

be successful speakers in ELF transcultural contexts (see §2.4). This framework combines Kohn's (2016b) ELF Competence and Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness and takes into consideration the translingual and transcultural dimensions of ELF. ELF Transcultural Competence is divided into four interrelated dimensions, that are inter-dependent and have fundamental roles in building the necessary skills to be a successful speaker in ELF Transcultural Communication.

The first dimension is Translingual and Transcultural Awareness. It refers to the awareness that ELF Transcultural Communication comprises speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and that practices, norms, values, and behaviours can be very diverse and variable in such contexts. For this reason, it is important that ELF speakers become aware of the need to negotiate what is appropriate in situ according to the participants involved. In addition, it is essential to raise awareness of the fact that linguistic and cultural practices are complex, emergent and constructed in communication. From this perspective, this dimension is fundamental in shaping the speakers' critical conceptualisations on language and culture and on their relationship in communication. Translingual and Transcultural Awareness is divided into three sub-dimensions: Basic Linguistic and Cultural Awareness, Advanced Multilingual and Intercultural Awareness, and Critical Translingual and Transcultural Awareness. These levels are conceptualised in order to form a progressing development of the speaker's awareness on the aspects outlined above and to incorporate the different interpretations attributed to language and culture. In the data, such dimension could not be directly investigated, because it would have required access to meta-comments by the participants involved (see §3.1 and §3.2); nevertheless, the use of overt multilingual resources and the cultural concepts addressed in the conversations analysed certainly show that it is important to go beyond traditional notions of language and culture as fixed and pre-established concepts, since they continuously intermingle and emerge in communication most often not referring only to a nation-based characterisation of values and behaviours. For example, in one of the conversations of the data set, ViMELF_06SB73ST14, the topic of bull fighting in Spain is discussed; while some Spanish people are still fond of this

kind of event and consider it part of their Spanish identity and culture, the Spanish student involved in the interaction (ST14) does not recognise it as part of her Spanish culture and identity, since she disapproves such practice and rejects it, as shown in Example 53.

Example 53[45]: ViMELF_06SB73ST14 – cultural concept.
(Speakers: SB73 – female, Germany; ST14 – female, Spain)

> ST14: (0.8) ((smacks lips)) well. {nods} (1.4) {squints & raises eyebrows} okay. ... u:hm, ... <Spain is: a very: diverse country>. {raises eyebrows & opens eyes wide} ... and it might not {thumps on desk with pen} look like so, ((clears throat)) {covers mouth} ... because it's not very big, {imitates size by holding up hands} ... but it has a lot of cultures. {makes beat gesture & squints} ... VERY different cultures. #00:21:31-8# ... and where I am from? {points at herself} we <don't> bull fight. {shakes head} #interruption of recording (4.5)# (or bull race ... ever). (it's just not .. what we do)? ((hehe)) .. that's, #interruption of recording (2.5)# in the south of Spain? ... or towards the uhm, .. east. of Spain. and_uhm, personally I think it should be banned, {raises eyebrows & squints} ... I don't like it? and >many people DOn't like it<, #00:21:59-6# but, {shrugs} ... sadly it's still going on in some places in Spain, {nods & shrugs}

ST14 is aware that bull fighting is part of the 'national identity' linked to Spain, but she also remarks her distance towards such practice. Cultural practices cannot hence be judged and valued on the basis of national stereotypes, but need to be conceived of as personal and emergent in communication.

The second dimension is Comprehension and Production Skills and refers to the ability to understand, produce and effectively and appropriately use the linguistic resources available. The speaker's linguistic repertoire in ELF Transcultural Communication does not refer to Standard English as the model of linguistic correctness, but it also does not reject it completely. Indeed, this dimension is based on the development of Kohn's (2011, 2015, 2018) idea of the MY English construct and on the creative use of multilingual resources. Each speaker should

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[45] For the whole extract of the conversation regarding bull fighting see Appendix C.

learn and practice whichever form and variety of English that he/she desires, and in communication there should not be a priori rejection of the multilingual resources available, since only the participants to the communicative act can decide (or better negotiate) what is appropriate, accepted, and mutually comprehensible. As the data analysis has demonstrated, English can refer to Standard English or to other varieties of English, but it is never limited only to those; as a matter of fact, speakers use creative linguistic forms, multilingual practices, as well as canonical linguistic choices ascribable to Standard English. What is central in this dimension is to be able to understand diverse manifestations of the English language and to be able to perform and use linguistic practices effectively and appropriately to reach the communicative goal. Moreover, it is important to be aware that there is no such rule as 'English only', but that the multilingual repertoire of a speaker is a fruitful and productive resource to be used in interaction, as the numerous overt multilingual resources performed in the data have shown, too.

The third dimension is Strategic Communicative Interaction Management and refers to the ability to use one's linguistic repertoire and cultural knowledge in order to negotiate meaning, co-construct mutual understanding and manage the interaction. This dimension concerns the ability to make use of all the resources available to the speaker to reach his/her communicative goal(s): a competent speaker in ELF Transcultural Communication should be able to adopt and adapt all the linguistic and non-linguistic practices he/she has at his/her disposal and to strategically use them in interaction. Cultural norms should also be appropriately negotiated, and what emerges in the communicative act should respect the speakers' expectations and requirements (that is, their perception of successful communication, and their sense of satisfaction for the linguistic performance – see §2.2.4.3 and §3.2.4.3). As a matter of fact, the strategic management of the conversation does not only concern the ability to strategically use linguistic and cultural practices, but also the ability to understand the boundaries and requirements that exist between the interlocutors in order to avoid face-threatening acts towards the other speakers. The present dissertation has focused on one core aspect of this dimension, that is, the ability to perform communication

strategies to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding. Indeed, in ELF transcultural contexts, communication strategies are not only used to solve and pre-empt potential communicative problems, but they are primarily performed to create and shape meaning in interaction. As the data has shown, and will be further discussed in the following section, communication strategies are fundamental to reach successful communication and mutual understanding, and they indeed serve several chief functions in the meaning negotiation processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication.

The last dimension is Creativity and it concerns the ability to creatively adopt and adapt the linguistic resources available to achieve and convey the intended meaning. This dimension is important to make the speakers aware that they should use their repertoire in interaction as they deem fit and that Standard English norms are no longer suitable as the overarching reference model. Creativity is fundamental in developing the speaker's sense of ownership of his/her linguistic practices, since it provides the power to act in ELF Transcultural Communication without aspiring to mimic a 'native speaker' or to follow this model as an exonormative authority. The data analysed has shown the diverse manifestations of English that emerge in ELF transcultural contexts, as well as the speakers' multilingual repertoires. For example, what in VOICE is tagged as 'pvc' refers to unconventional forms of English that move away from Standard English (e.g. 'temperaturewise' or 'combinated' in LEcon562), but these forms, when understood by the interlocutors involved, should be conceived of as creative manifestations of the resources available and not as 'incorrect English'. They can indeed be comprehensible to the other interactants since they are based upon the virtual language (as discussed in §2.2.4.1) and thus make use of the potential forms inherent in the English language; it is therefore of primary importance for ELF speakers to acknowledge the creative force they could make use of when interacting in ELF transcultural contexts.

In the following section, the direct focus of the present dissertation, that is, the use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication will be further discussed. As discussed in Chapter 4, they have been proven to be essential tools

in the meaning negotiation processes underlying ELF transcultural contexts in the data, and to perform several functions in co-constructing mutual understanding.

5.1.3 ELF Transcultural Communication and the use of communication strategies

As discussed in this dissertation, the strategic management of meaning negotiation and of the co-construction of mutual understanding is paramount in ELF Transcultural Communication. The ability to make use of the resources available to reach the intended communicative goal(s) is essential in contexts where a shared frame of reference needs to be negotiated in situ between the participants involved. When linguistic and cultural backgrounds are not shared, indeed, it becomes really important to be able to create and negotiate common ground to achieve successful communication. From this perspective, the use of communication strategies is greatly significant in developing ELF Transcultural Competence.

As seen in Chapter 2, in the present dissertation, communication strategies refer to all those strategic moves, both linguistic and non-linguistic, that are used in interaction to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding, as well as to pre-empt and solve communicative problems that may arise. The focus is thus on the interactional work done by the participants in reaching mutual understanding, and communication strategies are conceived of as tools that actively help in creating actual meaning. ELF research on the subject has extensively focused on how communication strategies are used to pre-empt and solve communicative problems, often referring to a point in which miscommunication could occur, or has occurred, and to the ways in which it was avoided or solved (e.g. Björkman, 2014; Cogo & Dewey, 2012). The present dissertation has paid attention to the ways in which communication strategies are performed to actively shape meaning in interaction and how they can serve in the strategic management of the communicative act, focusing on all interactional sites – understanding, non-understanding, and misunderstanding (see §3.2.1.1.3).

As seen in Chapter 4, the present study has examined a selection of seven verbal communication strategies in the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF

corpus. The focus has been on informal contexts, since this area has still not been analysed in depth and needs to be further investigated. The data ELF comprises 28 conversations that were analysed with a mixed method approach. In the first phase, a qualitative analysis based on Conversation Analysis was carried out in order to identify the selected communication strategies and their functions following the analytical scheme developed for the study (see §3.2.1.1). In the second phase, a quantitative approach based on descriptive statistics was applied to the qualitative results in order to analyse the frequency of use and the distribution of the communication strategies in the data set.

The combined approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis has shown that backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings are indeed important strategies in the meaning negotiation processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication – even though with different frequencies. The conversations investigated have shown that ELF transcultural speakers are cooperative in co-constructing shared comprehension and that they principally aim at reaching successful communication. They do not focus on grammatical correctness or on correcting unconventional uses of the English language, but rather they actively collaborate to build common ground and to achieve mutual comprehension.

In the data, backchannels are the most frequently used communication strategy among those analysed. They are primarily performed to support the main speaker in his/her turns, by displaying verbal and non-verbal feedback. ELF speakers have proven to be cooperative and supportive in regularly displaying active listenership and attention during the interaction, which points to how mutual understanding and successful communication are jointly achieved. Lexical anticipation is another strategy that has been identified as collaborative in the data. Indeed, it shows engagement in the communicative act since the speakers showcase collaboration by completing the other speaker's utterance. In the data it was not frequently performed, but nonetheless it demonstrates the highly collaborative nature of ELF Transcultural Communication. Lexical suggestion and correction is one of the least used communication strategies among the ones analysed in this study. Its

functions relate to successful communication in helping the other interlocutors by providing or correcting a lexical item, and it is usually performed with a collaborative attitude. Nonetheless, the fact that it is not frequently performed can point to the fact that the focus lays on mutual understanding and not on lexical correctness or Standard English norms. The lexical choices of a speaker directly refer to his/her own creativity and use of the language and, if not openly requested, providing help in selecting a more 'correct' word or suggesting a lexical item is rarely performed, since lexical correctness – i.e. Standard English correctness – is not a primary aim for ELF speakers and mutual comprehension is achieved in several other ways. In turn, over multilingual resources are highly productive in the data in discussing aspects related to the speakers' cultural backgrounds and identity. In ELF Transcultural Communication, this strategy is used to underline group membership and identity, and more frequently performed to use a *mot juste* or to express a particular cultural concept. In the data, the use of languages other than English has proved to be unproblematic and well-received by the participants involved. It often creates rapport in sharing one's multilingual repertoire and culture(s), proving that ELF speakers perceive the use of multilingual practices as integral part of the resources available in communication. Even when the interlocutors do not share similar multilingual repertoires and the overt multilingual resource is not understood, it does not raise a communicative problem since meaning negotiation processes aimed at clarifying the expression used and at building common ground are naturally enacted. As will be further discussed in the following section, this strategy is of particular interest in ELF Transcultural Communication for its relation to the negotiation of cultural concepts. Reformulations have been observed to have a high frequency in the data. They are fundamental resources to negotiate meaning and to co-construct mutual understanding: by rephrasing, using synonyms and exemplification, ELF speakers build common ground, ensuring successful communication. In the data, reformulations are performed to clarify meaning, to signal importance, and to ensure comprehension, showcasing the fundamental role that this strategy has in communication. Indeed, it has been observed that in the data under examination ELF speakers engage in numerous sequences of

reformulation in combination with other strategies, e.g. repetitions and backchannels, confirming that meaning negotiation is a process that is jointly performed by all the participants involved. This strategy is also relevant to make the communicative act as clear as possible, showcasing another important aim in ELF Transcultural Communication, that is, explicitness in communication. Repetition has also been observed to play a relevant role in the meaning negotiation processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication. Indeed, it is frequently performed in the data with the main functions to signal confirmation, keep the floor and ensure comprehension. It is hence a productive strategy that requires no modification of what has already been said, helping to achieve mutual comprehension with a minimum effort; moreover, it is also frequently used in co-occurrence with other strategies to jointly achieve shared comprehension. Last, spelling is not present in the data, possibly indicating that mutual comprehension is preferably achieved through other strategies. All in all, the results show that successful communication is jointly achieved through the use of several and diversified resources available to the speakers; even if not specifically included in the present study (see §3.1 and §4.1), multimodal elements and non-verbal language also seem to have a relevant role in communication and in meaning negotiation.

The quantitative analysis has further demonstrated the importance of communication strategies to reach mutual understanding, not only through their frequency in the data, but also through their distribution in the communicative acts analysed, further testifying that communication strategies and strategic language are a fundamental part of ELF Transcultural Communication. As will be outlined in the next section, data analysis has also highlighted that the negotiation of cultural concepts is one of the processes in which the role of communication strategies is most evident, since in these cases speakers do not always share the same cultural background and practices and thus they need to negotiate and establish a common frame of reference to reach mutual understanding.

5.1.4 Negotiating language and culture: cultural concepts in interaction

As discussed in Chapter 1, language and culture are complex and emergent systems that are shaped in communication. This continuous and evolving process of negotiation is inherent in ELF Transcultural Communication, emerging through the linguistic and cultural practices of the speakers involved in (a specific) interaction. Not only the speakers' repertoires, but also their practices thus intermingle in the communicative act and are creatively used to build common ground and mutual understanding. As a matter of fact, ELF users actively negotiate what is appropriate in interaction and continuously co-build common ground and a shared frame of reference (Baker, 2018a, 2018b). This 'sharedness' does not only refer to what is negotiated as appropriate in the conversation, or to common sharing of linguistic and multilingual resources; it also concerns the cultural practices that emerge in interaction and the cultural concepts that are negotiated in situ. Indeed, cultural concepts are one of the most evident issues where frames of reference are often not shared and need a co-construction of common ground.

As discussed in Chapter 4, overt multilingual resources particularly showcase the multi-/trans-lingual nature of ELF Transcultural Communication and they are useful in identifying cultural concepts expressed through the use of a language other than English; nonetheless, cultural aspects are not only negotiated when other languages are used, since their emergent nature intermingles in the whole communicative act. Cultural concepts then can be said to refer to all the macro and micro elements that are ascribable to the cultural background of a speaker; they can be overt, that is, explicit, or covert, that is, underlying the communicative process. Due to the nature of the data analysed, it is not possible to investigate what lies beneath the communicative act (see §3.1 and §3.2), thus only overt cultural concepts could be observed in the data. Such concepts concern, for example, religion, politics, school systems and education, food, traditions or events, and they are usually described and explained by using several communication strategies together. For instance, Example 11 (discussed in §4.2.4) displays not only an overt multilingual resource, but also the use of several other

strategies in a negotiation sequence regarding coffee. Similarly, Example 26 (§4.2.5) showcases another cultural concept – *Plätzchen*, biscuits – that is part of a particular German tradition endorsed by the speaker, who performs several communication strategies to explain this concept. As the data analysis has shown, in these cases it is important to be able to clarify and shape meaning to co-build a shared frame of reference, not only to establish common ground among the interlocutors to reach successful communication, but also to negotiate linguistic norms and cultural practices in a context where they cannot be taken for granted.

As we have seen, ELF Transcultural Communication is a greatly diversified and dynamic phenomenon involving complexity both in language and culture. In order to prepare ELF users to successfully communicate in these contexts, it is important for them to develop their ELF Transcultural Competence and to be able to appropriately and effectively perform strategic moves in interaction. In the following sections, the pedagogical implications of the study will be outlined, describing how the core concepts of the present dissertation – namely ELF Transcultural Communication, ELF Transcultural Competence, and the use of communication strategies – can be included in an ELF-aware ELT pedagogy.

5.2 Implications for an ELF-aware pedagogy: the inclusion of ELF Transcultural Competence and communication strategies in ELT

As discussed in Chapter 1, Standard English has for long been adopted as the reference point of correctness and appropriateness for English speakers around the world, and this model has also been highly influential in ELT (Baker, 2015b; Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003). ELF scholars have however questioned the validity of such reference point: "ELF research […] clearly shows that successful communication in English does not necessarily require SE [Standard English] correctness", emphasising that a monolithic perspective on English in its 'native speaker' model does no longer represent today's use of the English language (Kohn, 2016a: 88-89). Even though Standard English is no longer deemed as an appropriate model of reference for all the contexts in which English is used, it still represents a fundamental part of ELT practices. For this reason, it is necessary to understand how ELT and an ELF-aware pedagogy can co-exist and how ELF and

ELT can be understood as complementary perspectives. As discussed in §2.2.4.3, the MY English construct suggests a view according to which a speaker develops his/her own version of English, assimilating both from Standard English and ELF communication, depending on the context and his/her communication needs. As seen in Chapter 2, the requirements that are needed for a competent speaker in ELF Transcultural Communication, though, go beyond the linguistic dimension and relate to a wider and more fluid set of competencies for communication, that is, the ones related to ELF Transcultural Competence (see §2.4).

In the following sections, the relationship between ELT and ELF will be briefly discussed outlining the main principles of an ELF-aware pedagogy in the ELT classroom that have been identified in relevant literature. The inclusion of the MY English construct will be further discussed in its co-existence with Standard English and ELT. ELF Transcultural Competence will be examined from a didactic perspective, providing some suggestions on how it could be included as a new model of reference in ELT. Finally, the inclusion of communication strategies in classroom practices as a fundamental tool for meaning negotiation will be discussed and practical activities to be used will be described.

5.2.1 ELF-aware pedagogy: implications of ELF research for ELT and Teacher Education

Baker (2016) states that ELF research, Intercultural Communication studies and ELT have mainly focused on how successful communication is achieved and on the 'competence' that is needed to do so. As the scholar remarks, these fields of research have not reached a common agreement on the requirements that are necessary to be a 'competent speaker of English': while ELT has considered Communicative Competence as the pinnacle of language learning and use – and Intercultural Communication studies Intercultural (Communicative) Competence – ELF research has questioned the appropriateness of such models, suggesting that mimicking an ideal 'native speaker' or relating one language to one unvarying culture does not provide the tools to be successful speakers in using English in real, outside the classroom contexts (Baker, 2015b).

ELF scholars have long called for a re-evaluation of what should count as an appropriate and suitable model of reference in ELT, suggesting the need to take into consideration the variability of uses and contexts, along with the diverse manifestations of the English language today (e.g. Cogo, 2015; Lopriore & Vettorel, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011; Vettorel, 2013a, 2013b; Widdowson, 2003). ELF research has strongly underscored the importance of a re-examination of the Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence models, criticising them for their partial and static representation of language and culture, and for the adoption of an ideal 'native speaker' as a point of reference (Baker, 2015b; Leung, 2005; Vettorel, 2013a, 2013b; see also §2.2 and §2.3). This change of perspective does not only apply to the linguistic dimension, but to the cultural one as well, since ELF speakers do not always share common linguistic and cultural norms and practices (Baker, 2015b; Vettorel, 2013). This entails the need to shift from a focus on formal correctness to the promotion and development of communicative skills related to negotiation and intelligibility, aimed at reaching effective and appropriate communication (Baker, 2015b; Vettorel, 2010, 2013a, 2013b).

Relating these issues to ELT practices requires renewed pedagogical perspectives and objectives that distance themselves from the 'native speaker' model: what has been advocated in research oriented at investigating the implications of ELF findings in ELT is an ELF-aware pedagogy that accounts for the multifaceted and diversified uses and practices of English in its lingua franca function (Cavalheiro, 2018; Lopriore & Vettorel, 2015; Sifakis, 2007, 2018; Vettorel, 2013a, 2013b). As several ELF scholars have emphasised, this changed perspective in ELT needs to start from Teacher Education (Cavalheiro, 2018; Cogo, 2015; Vettorel, 2017):

> the first step is to raise the awareness of teachers that there is an alternative way
> of thinking about the subject they teach, based on an understanding of English as
> a lingua franca (Widdowson, 2012: 24);

> before teachers can be asked to include ELF perspectives in teaching, they must
> first be exposed to those perspectives (Kiczkowiak & Lowe, 2018: 110);

providing examples of resources and involving teachers in designing WE- and ELF-aware classroom (localized) activities represents a fundamental moment to raise awareness of a WE- and ELF-informed approach, first of all since it can contribute to bridge the gap between theory and practice – that has often been identified as one of the main drawbacks for teachers in implementing a plurilithic pedagogical approach to WE and ELF (Vettorel, 2017: 240-241);

the role of language teacher education programs is crucial to prepare pre-service teachers to create an environment in which an English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)-aware pedagogy is applied, since it is the pre-service language teacher education programs which can primarily inform the teacher candidates about the linguistic creativity and diversity across cultures, and give them opportunities to experiment with ELF integration in the first steps of their professional career (Kemaloglu-Er & Bayyurt, 2018: 47).

Teacher Education is hence a fundamental step to familiarise teachers with the diversity in WE and the complexity of ELF, and to promote critical reflection on how to include them in ELT practices (Vettorel, 2017: 242); it is indeed the teachers' knowledge and awareness of such issues that can help them develop an ELF-aware pedagogical approach. Teacher Education can raise teachers' awareness and understanding of how they can go beyond 'traditional' ELT practices based on Standard English and the 'native speaker' model to include the diversity and complexity of ELF communication.

An example of a new framework that aims at helping in developing some proposals to be included in Teacher Education is Global Englishes for Language Teaching (GELT), suggested by Rose and Galloway (2019), taking a Global Englishes perspective. Reviewing Galloway's (2011) work, the authors highlight the importance of six aspects: to increase World English and ELF exposure in language curricula, to emphasise respect for multilingual practices in ELT, to raise awareness of Global Englishes in ELT, to raise awareness of ELF strategies, to emphasise respect for different cultures and identities in ELT, and to change English teacher-hiring practices in the ELT industry (Rose & Galloway, 2019: 16). This framework conceives language and culture as fluid systems, highlighting

the fact that there are different and flexible linguistic forms and cultural practices that interconnect in communication. The model also entails a positive conceptualisation of multilingualism and transcultural practices, since they are seen as an important resource for speakers.

Another outstanding view in relation to ELF, Teacher Education and ELT is the one proposed by Sifakis and Bayyurt (2018: 459), who suggest ELF awareness as

> the process of engaging with ELF research and developing one's own understanding of the ways in which it can be integrated in one's classroom context, through a continuous process of critical reflection, design, implementation and evaluation of instructional activities that reflect and localize one's interpretation of the ELF construct.

This process is aimed at adopting an ELF perspective towards communication in English, standardness and ELT practices (Sifakis, 2018). Sifakis (2019) further explains the three core elements of ELF awareness as awareness of language and language use, awareness of instructional practice, and awareness of learning. The scholar indeed suggests that learners should become aware of how ELF manifests itself in communication between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background and of its "syntactic, morphological, lexical, phonological, pragmatic, and sociocultural features" (2019: 291). Through sensitivity and noticing, critical reflection and practice, learners can build their awareness on the processes underlying ELF: they need to become aware of how meaning negotiation is structured in interaction, of how multilingual resources can be used in the communicative act, of how language and culture intermingle in communication, and of how norms and appropriateness are established in situ. This acknowledgement requires teachers to consider, in their pedagogical approaches, the relativity of language normativity and appropriateness, the resources available to their students, the variable forms of English in ELF contexts and the partial image that instructional materials offer on the English language, showcasing the need to conceive language and culture as more fluid and varied systems.

In the following section, an alternative approach to ELT and ELF will be suggested: it stems from Kohn's (2015, 2018) MY English construct and it fosters a co-existence between Standard English and ELF in ELT practices. This will lay the foundations for the inclusion of ELF Transcultural Competence in classroom practices, as will be further discussed afterwards.

5.2.2 ELT, ELF and the MY English construct

While it is important to shape a framework in ELT that would allow for a more dynamic and flexible interpretation of the English language and of its global use, it should be pointed out that including ELF-awareness in ELT does not entail 'teaching ELF' or substituting ELT with ELF, but it implies instead a co-existence between the two paradigms. As seen in §2.2.4.3, Kohn (2015, 2018) suggests the MY English construct as a solution to the apparent incompatibility between Standard English and ELF in the classroom. He remarks that "the solution lies in a re-conceptualization of the SE issue suitable for providing a viable common ground. A social constructivist understanding of communication, language acquisition, and ownership offers a framework for such re-conceptualization" (2015: 54-55). As a matter of fact, the MY English construct could also provide the space for teachers to combine their personal experience as ELF users with their ELT practices, and thus their reconciliation of Standard English norms in classroom practice with the creative and diverse realisations that are part of ELF; in turn, learners would not feel estranged facing the diverse manifestations of English inside and outside the classroom, since they would be aware of and prepared to deal with both Standard English norms and communication in ELF contexts. The MY English construct would thus become the constitutive element for an ELF-aware pedagogy that encourages users of English to experiment and interact in diverse, multilingual and multicultural contexts and to take ownership on the language they use.

The MY English construct allows indeed for a well-matched co-existence of Standard English and ELF in building a framework in which they each have a role: they indeed complement and complete each other in representing a global perspective on English. As already discussed, Standard English is still a

predominant model of reference for what concerns educational standards and requirements, and it constitutes indeed the foundation of ELT (Kohn, 2011, 2015, 2016a, 2018). As a consequence, many learners strive for a Communicative Competence that emulates an ideal 'native speaker' and they comply to such norms because these are required in 'traditional' ELT assessment (Kohn, 2016a). Nonetheless, in the MY English view these requirements can co-exist with ELF and its diverse manifestations, since each user develops his/her own personal version of English depending on his/her experience and of his/her communicative requirements, not only in the classroom, but also with the people he/she communicates with (Kohn, 2016a, 2016b). As Kohn (2015: 55) underscores,

> your ownership of a language is established through such a process of individual construction, influenced and shaped by what you are exposed to, where you come from, and where you want to go; and all this in social collaboration with the people you (want to) communicate and interact with.

Indeed, through the development of the MY English construct, a speaker takes ownership of the English language by adopting and adapting it to his/her requirements and by creatively shaping it in interaction. Communication in English is no longer restricted to Standard English (as a model in the classroom), but it includes and incorporates all the manifestations and practices which users come across in their lives. Ownership hence should not concern an ideal 'native speaker' that has custody of the English language, but it should pertain all the speakers who use English in interaction (Widdowson, 1994, 2003). It is precisely from this standpoint that Standard English and ELF can become part of the same framework, because they both inform and shape a speaker's MY English construct depending on the interactions and requirements he/she has in his/her life, without rejecting any form of English.

The variability and flexibility of use that underlie the MY English construct goes beyond the adherence to Standard English correctness and to a fixed and stable linguistic (and cultural) model, and as a consequence are no longer bridled in a speaker (Intercultural) Communicative Competence. As suggested in the present dissertation, a user of English in its lingua franca function needs to develop ELF

Transcultural Competence to appropriately and effectively reach successful communication. As will be further illustrated in the following section, the MY English construct can be seen as fundamental in developing the speakers' ELF repertoire, together with strategic management of the interaction and translingual and transcultural awareness, which are other central aspects to be a competent speaker in ELF Transcultural Communication.

5.2.3 ELF-aware pedagogy and ELF Transcultural Competence

As discussed at length in Chapter 2, ELF Transcultural Competence comprises four dimensions that relate to the awareness of translingual and transcultural variability in ELF transcultural contexts (Translingual and Transcultural Awareness), the ability to comprehend and produce flexible and adaptable forms and manifestations of English (Comprehension and Production Skills), the ability to strategically manage the interaction in order to effectively and appropriately reach successful communication (Strategic Communicative Interaction Management), and the ability to creatively adapt language to the context of use (Creativity – see §2.4).

In order to develop ELF Transcultural Competence in ELT practices, an ELF-aware pedagogy should include the following:

- Awareness-rising activities related to linguistic variability;
- Awareness-rising activities related to cultural variability;
- Awareness-rising activities related to the relationship between language and culture in communication;
- Production and comprehension skills related to Standard English, World Englishes and ELF;
- Awareness-rising activities related to normativity and appropriateness;
- Development of the MY English construct;
- Awareness-rising activities related to the processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication – meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding;
- Development of the use of communication strategies in interaction;

- Awareness-rising activities related to non-verbal language and strategic communication;
- Awareness-rising activities related to the creative use of English.

This is not an exhaustive list, but it provides some broad areas of what could be useful in developing ELF Transcultural Competence. These aspects are closely related and interdependent, since each offers a partial trait of what an ELF competent speaker should be able to do. Awareness-rising activities related to linguistic variability, to cultural variability, and to the relationship between language and culture in communication promote the developing of Translingual and Transcultural Awareness. Learners should be guided to understand how language and culture can be differently realised and acted though communication and how they are closely related. Production and comprehension skills related to Standard English, World Englishes and ELF, awareness-rising activities related to normativity and appropriateness, and the development of the MY English construct would play a fundamental part in developing the speakers' linguistic repertoire and to build their critical thinking in relation to normativity and appropriateness according to different communicative contexts. Awareness-rising activities related to the processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication, the development of the use of communication strategies in interaction, and awareness-rising activities related to non-verbal language and strategic communication represent essential aspects the Strategic Communicative Interaction Management dimension, and speakers should be prepared to act and interact in ELF Transcultural Communication by using the strategic moves at their disposal. Finally, awareness-rising activities related to the creative use of English contribute in building the speakers' ownership of their linguistic resources by making them aware of the diverse ways in which meaning can be conveyed. In the following sections, each dimension of ELF Transcultural Competence will be separately outlined, discussing what kind of activities would be useful for its development in the learner, providing some practical examples.

5.2.3.1 Translingual and Transcultural Awareness

In order to develop Translingual and Transcultural Awareness, it is fundamental for the learner to be aware that language and culture are complex and emergent systems, that have greatly diversified and flexible manifestations and play an important role in shaping communication, particularly in ELF transcultural contexts. Learners should hence be made aware that variability and non-conformity to standard norms are not principles to be rejected, but are natural in communication in transcultural contexts; it is important to make the learner aware of the diversified and multilingual forms and repertoires available, as well as the fact that culture has diverse realisations and manifestations in communication and that it is not a fixed and stable characterisation of a specific community. Teachers should integrate culture and its relation to language in their classroom practices, helping learners to develop their own understanding of these entities; directly addressing how culture is a varied and dynamic system would contribute to make learners aware that their cultural knowledge should not be based on stereotypical characterisations of cultures, but instead on a more flexible and complex representation of it (Baker, 2012, 2015b). Similarly, awareness should be raised in relation to linguistic and cultural variability, on stereotypes and their connotations, and on how transcultural contexts are greatly diversified and dynamic.

Baker (2012: 68) advises for example to discover local cultures by "exploring the diversity and complexity of different local and national cultural groupings". I would also suggest the exploration of different regional and national languages present in the learners' environment, discussing the different roles they cover in society and their different connotations. Reflections on these aspects could help promote the idea that linguistic and cultural variability, and diverse manifestations of language and culture in communication, are partial representations and that critical thinking should guide them in understanding how language and culture are relevant in communication and how different practices should not be rejected because of their non-conformity to a person's own views. Baker (2012: 68) also remarks that a critical analysis of textbooks and ELT materials would be beneficial in understanding how what we read and watch can influence our

perception of culture, contrasting cultural stereotypes with more complex and flexible characterisations of cultural aspects[46].

Another important activity, that would be useful also to develop the other dimensions, is actual inter-/trans-cultural communication: both Baker (2012, 2015b) and Kohn (2015, 2018, 2020) focus on exchanges between students in different classrooms and countries, especially through telecollaboration, to provide authentic transcultural contexts in which learners could experiment and understand what intercultural communication is and how language and culture are intrinsically related and greatly diverse in communication. For example, Kohn (2020) amply illustrates the project TeCoLa[47], in which a virtual and safe space is offered to European teachers and learners to interact with each other and improve their skills in a foreign language and in intercultural communication. This virtual space is designed to provide structured pedagogical activities to learn a foreign language, as well as a space for exchanges and interactions between students, asynchronous or synchronous. Another similar project is eTwinning[48], a European online platform that allows teachers and learners to come into contact and collaborate in pedagogical projects. As Vettorel (2013b) highlights, this tool lets students from every grade from schools in Europe exchange emails, chat or prepare joint projects and presentations. This platform could be helpful not only in developing authentic intercultural communication, but also to develop and improve the use of multilingual resources and to raise awareness on diverse linguistic and cultural practices.

Another activity that could raise awareness on the diversified use of English is the investigation of linguistic landscapes. By having the students directly notice how English is used in their city/town or abroad (for example during class trips), they can become aware of the different roles English has in society and how it is used in different contexts. For example, Sayer (2010) suggests not only city landscapes,

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[46] ELF research has extensively focused on the analysis of English textbooks and ELT materials in order to pinpoint the necessary changes that an ELF-aware pedagogy would require. Some examples are Galloway (2018), Lopriore and Vettorel (2015, 2016, 2019), Vettorel (2013a, 2013b, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2021).

[47] www.tecola.eu (last accessed 26/10/2021).

[48] https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/index.htm (last accessed 26/10/2021).

but also writings on clothing, creative uses, or new loan words that can be present all around the person. Observing the space around them and the words that are used can be a fruitful way to make the learners aware of how diverse, flexible and dynamic English is today.

5.2.3.2 Comprehension and Production Skills

The dimension of Comprehension and Production Skills refers to the ability to understand and use diverse linguistic practices. In order to widen up the learners' repertoire it is important to raise their awareness on the variable manifestations of the English language, particularly in ELF Transcultural Communication, and hence of the relative perspective connected to standard norms and conformity. It is important to raise awareness on the different categorisations of English and on the definitions of Standard English, World Englishes and ELF, so that students can better comprehend how complex the spread and use of English is nowadays (Lopriore & Vettorel, 2015, 2016). Learners should be made aware that normativity and appropriateness depend on the context of use, thus promoting a more critical understanding of communicative contexts in transcultural communication.

This dimension directly relates to the MY English construct and thus it pertains the linguistic dimension of manifestations and practices in English. As already discussed, this focus on English does not reject nor limit itself to Standard English, but it incorporates it in addition to the different varieties of English around the world, as well as ELF, allowing the learners to understand and shape their own repertoire. As Baker (2016: 84) emphasises, "learners need to be able to manage the inherent variability in not only in both the form and function of English but also in the multitude of contexts and interlocutors that they will encounter". To do so, it is essential to promote activities that raise awareness and understanding of unfamiliar pronunciations and ways of expressions, of different varieties and manifestations of English, of speech acts and turn-taking (Kohn, 2015, 2018).

The development of this dimension can initially be based on 'traditional' ELT practices based on Standard English and focusing on a single English variety, but

it should go *beyond* such monolithic view of English, including and incorporating several and diversified examples of World Englishes and ELF-related practices. In doing so, teachers should raise awareness on the fact that the distinction between 'native' and 'non-native' speakers is biased, and that different practices relate to diverse contexts of use and not to 'better' or 'worse' speakers (Seidlhofer, 2011; Widdowson, 2003). It is important that learners acknowledge that the 'native speaker' is no longer an appropriate model of reference when English is used in multilingual and multicultural contexts and that ELF Transcultural Competence goes beyond the linguistic dimension or Standard English correctness (Baker, 2015b; Kohn, 2018; Widdowson, 2003).

When looking at pedagogic practices, Kiczkowiak and Lowe (2018) for example provide several lesson plans and activities aimed at raising awareness of the diversity intrinsic to English and at developing production and comprehension skills using English. For example, diversified listening activities can improve the learners' understanding of different pronunciations (as well as lexico-grammar), for a great variability of speakers from different backgrounds can raise familiarity with sounds and rhythms that come up in intercultural communication and are not always similar to the ones English learners are used to hear in class. The MY English construct is the result of the development of a personal version of the English language, and it should be nourished through exposure to different grammatical, lexical and pronunciation features that are part of World Englishes and ELF to provide learners with the tools that would allow them to successfully communicate with speakers of different varieties and of ELF.

5.2.3.3 Strategic Communicative Interaction Management

As discussed throughout the dissertation, the strategic management of the interaction and the processes of meaning negotiation and co-construction of mutual understanding are fundamental aspects in ELF Transcultural Communication. Consequently, the development of the dimension of Strategic Communicative Interaction Management is central to be a successful speaker in ELF transcultural contexts. Learners need to be made aware of the processes underlying ELF Transcultural Communication and of the use of English in actual

interaction, since it is by explicitly addressing these aspects that can be guided to understand how to effectively manage the communicative acts they take part in. After an awareness-rising phase, it is also important for learners to acquire and develop the use of communication strategies and other strategic moves that are essential in managing the interaction. In addition to linguistic practices, non-verbal language and behaviours that can affect communication and may be diverse according to the speakers involved should also be addressed (Abrams, 2020); indeed, learners should become aware that cultural behaviours can diverge among people in order to be able to deal with diversity in interactional styles and behaviours. It is fundamental that teachers make their students aware that normativity and appropriateness are negotiated in situ and that any linguistic and cultural practice should be taken for granted. The importance and the role of context should also be endorsed, by explicitly discussing how it affects communication and how it can be strategically managed through the use of several strategic moves. Additionally, teachers should make their students aware of their multilingual repertoire and of show it can become a fruitful resource to create rapport and meaning in interaction.

In order to develop the strategic ability of managing interaction several activities could be included in classroom practices. Teachers could first promote awareness on the tools and resources available to their learners and help them develop and use them in interaction. The focus should also be on how meaning is co-constructed and negotiated in interaction by explicitly addressing these processes and the use of strategic moves. Activities related to intercultural communication are thus one of the most relevant ways to develop the learners' ability to strategically manage communication, two examples being the TeCoLa project and the eTwinning platform discussed above, or other internationally-oriented projects. Other ways in which the dimension of Strategic Communicative Interaction Management can be acquired and developed could be pen pals and role plays (examples on how to include the use of communication strategies will be outlined in §5.2.2). Kiczkowiak and Lowe (2018: 89), for instance, provide websites and other resources to find other classes and start letters exchanges, while Bray and Iswanti (2013) suggest Facebook groups between classes as a

channel to take part in intercultural communication. In these projects, leaners interact with other speakers and exchange cultural knowledge and information, developing their abilities in actual communication and its management. As the ViMELF corpus well exemplifies, Skype or other video-mediated calls can also offer an authentic opportunity to practice and interact in ELF transcultural contexts. When authentic intercultural communication is not attainable, role plays could also be a useful way to understand the dynamics of ELF Transcultural Communication and put into practice what learners have learnt about strategic communication management. As Dimoski (2018) remarks, role plays can be highly involving activities where learners learn and have fun, also creating rapport with other classmates. Students could invent their own (intercultural) identity and role and they could be randomly paired up and given each a communicative goal to achieve in the interaction. These kinds of activities are guided and the teacher, as well as the other students, could offer critical insights on positive and negative aspects of the communicative act, discussing how and why some strategic moves were made and their outcome. Other kinds of role play could include debates and interviews, in which not only meaning negotiation and strategic moves can be practiced, but mediation and politeness are endorsed as well. During these activities, however, it is important that diversity and variability are emphasised, since in order to learn to interact in ELF Transcultural Communication it is fundamental to take into consideration transcultural identities, multilingual speakers, and negotiated forms of appropriateness.

5.2.3.4 Creativity

The dimension of creativity is important to build the learners' sense of appropriation and ownership of English. Teachers should raise awareness on the creative use of English and show that the distinction between 'native' and 'non-native' creativity is biased, since language is a flexible and malleable means and the final aim is to be able to convey the desired meaning in a comprehensible manner for the interlocutor. This awareness needs to be acknowledged and reinforced not only through actual communication, but also with activities aimed at promoting creative uses of the language.

Pitzl's (2012, 2017, 2018) work on creativity could help in raising awareness of what creativity in ELF is and how it actually works. Actual examples from her studies can become activities to reflect on language use, normativity, and the flexible and diversified manifestations of English in transcultural contexts. The use and translation of idioms in different languages and in English and a critical analysis of the meaning behind the words – that is, a critical reflection of how the meaning is conveyed differently in another language – can help student be aware of how their multilingual repertoire can be effectively and appropriately used in interaction in order to create meaning. It is important to point out that normativity and standard norms can co-exist with creative uses of the language, acknowledging the active creative force speakers have in ELF Transcultural Communication. ELF speakers need to be aware that creativity is a resource in communication and not a departure from Standard English or other more traditional requirements they could have.

5.2.4 Activities aimed at including awareness of communication strategies in ELT classroom practices

As discussed, the use of communication strategies is fundamental in ELF Transcultural Communication. Chapter 4 has amply shown the importance of their role in ELF transcultural contexts, thus their inclusion in ELT classroom practices is essential in developing the learners' Strategic Communicative Interaction Management. Work both on explicit explanation of how communication strategies can be used in interaction and on the actual practice of these strategic moves should be part of ELT classroom practices.

First, it is important to make the learners aware that communication strategies are useful tools to actively create and negotiate meaning, and of the functions they can perform and of their important role in pre-empting or solving communicative problems. Showing extracts of actual interactions, as for example the ones illustrated in Chapter 4, and reflecting on the use and functions performed and on the meaning negotiation processes in the communicative act can help to raise awareness of their fundamental role in effective communication. For example, teachers could focus on one strategy at a time, showing different extracts to

describe the various functions each strategy performs. As discussed in §4.2, each example showcases a different use and function of each strategy analysed in the present study. Learners could first analyse the extract individually and then they could compare their observations with those of their classmates. Afterwards, extracts such as the ones analysed in §4.3 could be discussed in order to reflect on how communication strategies are often co-used and how meaning negotiation sequences are managed by the speakers involved. Moreover, reference to everyday communication could make learners reflect on how these strategic moves are commonly used in their first language communication. Instances of miscommunication and how communication strategies can be used to solve or pre-empt communicative problems should also be dealt with. In addition to written extracts (as the ones provided in Chapter 4), videos and TV series could be helpful in showcasing how communication strategies are used in interaction and their functions (Lopriore & Vettorel, 2015: 26). Kiczkowiak and Lowe (2018: 90), for example, suggest to show an extract in which a misunderstanding or a non-understanding occurs and to ask learners 'what is happening?, what was the source of the miscommunication?, how did the speakers react?' and other similar questions to raise awareness of what is going on in the interaction and how the participants resolve the communicative problem. Such activities would be useful to make the students understand the dynamics of ELF transcultural contexts and the ways in which communication strategies can be effectively used in interaction. Students should then practice what they have learnt from these awareness-raising activities. In addition to pen pals and role plays, discussed above, there are other activities that could help student develop their active use of communication strategies. For example, as Vettorel (2010: 18) outlines, students could try and describe an object in pairs, without using a list of pre-selected words, and the partner needs to guess what it is. This activity would require the use of several communication strategies and it would also make the learners practice his/her linguistic repertoire in their attempt to describe the object. Another activity to practice communication strategies and to raise awareness of the cultural dimension of ELF transcultural context could involve cultural concepts: learners could look for cultural concepts of different regions/countries or 'cultural groups'

and they could describe them to their peers. This would lead to an intercultural exchange in which students negotiate meaning and acquire information of diverse cultural practices, and could also be linked to the first dimension of ELF Transcultural Competence to showcase the diversity and flexibility of such manifestations, as well as to critically discuss how culture is a complex and emergent system that varies.

Other examples of activities can be found in Mariani (2010), who provides a comprehensive account of communication strategies and of how they can be taught in class. One example is the role play of the 'helpless customer' (2010: 73). After compiling a shopping list, learners take turns to ask to the shopping assistance the object they are looking for without saying the actual name. This activity could also include non-verbal language and other strategic moves that are important to practice.

5.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter, findings from the study have been further discussed, highlighting how ELF Transcultural Communication takes into account both the linguistic and the cultural dimensions of communication in English between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In these contexts, ELF Transcultural Competence is a necessary set of skills to effectively and appropriately reach successful communication, since it comprises the abilities required to deal with the translingual and transcultural nature of ELF. This renewed perspective should be taken into consideration in ELT as well, within an ELF-aware pedagogy approach. It was discussed how ELT and ELF are not to be seen as opposing forces, but need to be combined. Indeed, the MY English construct allows for a more flexible and diverse consideration of the combination and co-existence of Standard English and ELF in ELT practices. Finally, possible activities to develop ELF Transcultural Competence, and in particular the use of communication strategies, have been suggested, aimed at helping learners acquire and improve their ability in interacting in ELF Transcultural Communication.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has focused on the importance to combine ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies to adopt a more insightful perspective on the processes of meaning negotiation and of co-construction of mutual understanding that underlie contexts in which English, together with other multilingual resources, is used as a common means of communication between speakers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background. The conceptualisation of ELF Transcultural Communication has been suggested to refer to this combined perspective and the model of ELF Transcultural Competence has been proposed as the set of skills that are necessary to effectively and appropriately interact in ELF transcultural contexts. The study aimed in particular to investigate the use of communication strategies in ELF informal settings to negotiate meaning and cultural concepts, analysing data from two ELF corpora, the VOICE-Leisure sub-corpus and the ViMELF corpus. The data analysis has shown that communication strategies are indeed a fundamental tool to co-construct mutual understanding, and the methodology used, namely a mixed approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods, has further showcased the relevant role and frequent use of strategic moves in the interactions examined.

In Chapters 1 and 2, the theoretical background was described, outlining the cornerstones of ELF Transcultural Communication and ELF Transcultural Competence. These concepts represent the backdrop of the study, linking together ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies. It has been discussed how in ELF transcultural contexts linguistic and cultural practices cannot be taken for granted, but instead emerge in interaction; language and culture are indeed complex and emergent systems that evolve and cannot be represented by, or fixed into, stable characterisations. In order to effectively and appropriately reach successful communication in ELF transcultural contexts, a framework comprising a set of skills has been suggested, that is, ELF Transcultural Competence. This model merges Baker's (2015b) Intercultural Awareness and Kohn's (2016b) ELF Competence: the former conceptualises the importance to be able to understand and interpret language and culture as complex, variable and fluid systems that

emerge in intercultural communication through ELF and that can be manifested through different and variable practices; the latter comprises the skills that are needed to be successful ELF users, highlighting the importance to have knowledge of and understand the diversity of English manifestations, to be familiar with ELF communicative practices, as well as the fundamental role of negotiation and strategic language use in these contexts. By combining these two models and by adopting a translingual and transcultural approach, ELF Transcultural Competence aims at attempting to represent the fundamental abilities that are necessary to effectively and appropriately interact when speakers do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds, as in ELF transcultural contexts. This framework comprises four interrelated dimensions. First, Translingual and Transcultural Awareness refers to the importance of being aware of the inherent linguistic and cultural diversity and variability of ELF Transcultural Communication, with a reflection on the different linguistic and cultural practices that speakers can perform in interaction. Secondly, the Comprehension and Production Skills dimension remarks the necessary ability to use and understand diverse manifestations of English – hence not only Standard English, but also practices related to World Englishes and to ELF. Thirdly, Strategic Communicative Interaction Management, which represents one of the main backdrops of the present study, highlights the fundamental ability to strategically manage interactions and to be able to effectively and appropriately use strategic moves to negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding. Finally, Creativity refers to the power that language users have on the language and the possibility for them to adopt and adapt the linguistic resources at their disposal to shape the meaning they want to convey. Adopting an ELF transcultural perspective based on ELF Transcultural Competence, communication strategies are defined as those strategic moves, both linguistic and non-linguistic, that are used to negotiate meaning and to co-construct mutual understanding and a shared frame of reference; this standpoint no longer conceives communication strategies just as tools to pre-empt or solve communicative problems, but rather, and more importantly, as means to actively and jointly co-create and shape meaning in interaction.

In Chapter 3, the data and the methodological approach adopted in the study have been presented. The data set includes 28 conversations taken from the VOICE-Leisure and the ViMELF corpora. This selection was made in order to have a balanced sub-corpus of communicative acts with similar lengths, which would allow for a comparison between the two corpora analysed. Multimodal elements, when present, have not explicitly been dealt with in the analysis, but have been considered as contextual factors helpful in understanding the dynamics of the interactions. VOICE-Leisure and ViMELF were selected since they provide naturally occurring spoken ELF interactions in informal contexts: the use of communication strategies in ELF informal settings is still an understudied area, and this study could provide further insights into the meaning negotiation processes undergoing ELF interactions. The research questions addressed in the study were three: how backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings are used to co-construct mutual understanding and to negotiate meaning in the data; how these strategies are used to negotiate cultural concepts – that is, concepts related to the culture(s) of the speaker; and finally, what the pedagogical implications of the findings are and how it would be possible to foster awareness of the relevance of communication strategies in ELT classroom practices adopting an ELF-aware pedagogy. The seven communication strategies listed above were selected as the most relevant in existing ELF literature on the topic and they were analysed adopting a mixed method approach. First, a qualitative analysis was carried out in order to investigate how, and to which purposes, the selected communication strategies were used. Conversation Analysis was adopted to examine the data from a qualitative point of view and the categorisation of the results was structured following an analytical scheme that was developed ad hoc for the study. This taxonomy allowed an objective classification of the communication strategies examined according to the speaker who performed the move, the function it served and the interactional site in which it occurred (i.e. understanding, non-understanding or misunderstanding). Secondly, a quantitative analysis on the findings of the first phase was conducted, with the aim to examine the role and frequency of the selected communication strategies and their

distribution in the communicative acts examined. This approach allowed for a critical understanding of the relevance of the communication strategies analysed in relation to the whole data set and to the single interactions. Finally, a pilot study was carried out to verify the suitability of the methodology chosen, proving that a combined approach of qualitative and quantitative methods can bring significant insights on the use of communication strategies in ELF interactions.

In Chapter 4, I focused on the results of the analysis and findings showed that strategic moves are indeed frequent and significant in the communicative acts analysed. I first described the findings of the qualitative analysis, illustrating the different functions identified for each communication strategy analysed, and discussing in detail relevant examples of meaning negotiation from both corpora. The qualitative approach has shown that the selected communication strategies have an important role in the interactions analysed and that they are used to serve several functions. Backchannels are frequently used to signal attention and to show listenership, displaying a collaborative and attentive attitude among speakers. Overt multilingual resources are predominantly used to express overt cultural concepts (i.e. macro and micro elements that are ascribable to the cultural background of a speaker) and to talk about food, traditions, events, politics, religion, and other topics related to culture; they also frequently display identity and cultural affiliation. The data shows that they are well-received among the participants, that is, ELF speakers do not have a negative attitude towards the use of overt multilingual resources, not even when the language used is not part of their linguistic repertoire; on the contrary, it has been observed that speakers engage in meaning negotiation to reach common ground and sometimes they start to use the new linguistic item to display collaboration and involvement. Reformulation is another frequently used communication strategy, especially to clarify meaning, to secure recipient understanding or to signal importance. As observed in the data analysis, this strategy is useful to achieve explicitness and clarity, in order to ensure mutual understanding. Repetition is also often performed, proving to be a successful way to signal confirmation, to gain time, to secure recipient understanding or to signal importance. The qualitative analysis has showcased that several functions are performed through different strategies

and that strategic moves usually co-occur together with others. These observations suggest that meaning negotiation is a complex process that requires a great ability in using communication strategies and in manipulating meaning to reach common ground and a shared frame of reference. In the second phase of the analysis, the quantitative results have further confirmed that meaning negotiation and the co-construction of mutual understanding are processes that underlie all interactions examined. Strategic turns (i.e. turns in which at least one communication strategy occurs) are present for 38.42% of all the conversations analysed, and backchannels, reformulations and repetitions are observed to be the most frequently used strategies. Moreover, it has been shown that strategic language – that is, the use of at least one communication strategy – is present along the whole communicative act: this entails that ELF speakers are continuously engaged in meaning negotiation oriented at shaping common ground and a shared frame of reference. To investigate further evidence for this aspect, I applied a combined analysis to a selection of six interactions amongst the one analysed in the previous step. For each communicative act I investigated the functions performed by the strategies analysed, the frequency of use, the percentage of strategic and non-strategic language and the distribution of the strategic turns along the interaction. In the cases where the distribution showed unusual features, such as absence or a concentrated presence of strategic turns, I closely examined the turns in the conversations from a qualitative perspective to understand the possible causes of such discrepancies. This mixed analysis has suggested that the mixed method approach used in the study could be really helpful in investigating how communication strategies are used in ELF Transcultural Communication and the relevance of their role is for the co-construction of mutual understanding. A combined perspective could thus further clarify how meaning negotiation is achieved and managed in ELF transcultural contexts, displaying both the functions that communication strategies perform in interaction and their frequency and distribution in the communicative acts.

In Chapter 5, the discussion of findings and the pedagogical implications of the study were presented. The data analysis points to a great variability of both linguistic and cultural practices in ELF Transcultural Communication, showcasing

their diverse and flexible manifestations. When analysing such contexts, therefore, it is important to take into account not only language and culture as complex and emergent systems, as theorised in relation to ELF Transcultural Communication, but also the speakers' conceptualisations of language and culture, which may include the view of language and culture as stable and separate entities. Given the variability and flexibility of linguistic and cultural practices in ELF communicative contexts, the focus should be on the processes and tools that underlie ELF Transcultural Communication, as they emerge from the linguistic and cultural practices. Indeed, the data analysis has shown that meaning negotiation and the co-construction of mutual understanding are paramount processes in ELF transcultural contexts and that speakers try to build a shared frame of reference through similar processes and using analogous tools. The study has showcased that communication strategies are the most productive and powerful means to reach common ground and to achieve successful communication.

The findings of the investigation have suggested the need to consider these aspects also from a pedagogical perspective and to include them in ELT practices. In line with recent ELF research, the present dissertation calls into question the suitability of present and traditional models of reference in ELT practice (i.e. Standard English and the 'native speaker' model) and puts forward the proposal of a more relevant framework for ELF users, that is, ELF Transcultural Competence. Adopting an ELF-aware pedagogy, this dissertation attempts to set forward some proposals that should be included first in Teacher Education and then considered in ELT classroom practices to raise awareness and prepare future teachers and learners to interact among people who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background. By adopting ELF Transcultural Competence as the framework of reference, it is suggested that ELF users would be prepared to deal with the variability and flexibility that are inherent in ELF Transcultural Communication, being familiarised with the tools to successfully negotiate meaning and co-construct mutual understanding in such contexts; some activities and general directions are suggested in this direction. It is also argued that raising awareness of the linguistic and cultural variability inherent in ELF Transcultural

Communication is a fundamental aspect in building ELF Transcultural Competence, since it can help the learner to be equipped to interact in contexts where linguistic and cultural practices cannot be taken for granted, but need to be jointly negotiated. Another important element is the ability to understand and use different manifestations of English; this means that in the ELT classroom, Standard English should no longer be the sole model of reference; rather students should be made aware and knowledgeable about World Englishes varieties and ELF-related practices. As suggested by Kohn (2018), in this perspective the MY English construct, that is, the development of a personal version of English that each speaker deems appropriate to his/her needs, ought to be taken into account.

In light of this shift towards a more inclusive view in terms of Global Englishes, notions of normativity and appropriateness should be revised in light of what is suitable for each communicative act, not in relation to an exonormative and generalising ('native speaker') authority. The importance of being able to negotiate and co-construct a shared frame of reference should be given prominence in ELT, and the tools to effectively and appropriately build common ground should be taken into account in ELT practices in order to prepare and offer a repertoire of moves that could help reach successful communication in ELF transcultural contexts. Some activities have been suggested to promote this perspective within an ELF-aware approach, aimed at encouraging the development of appropriate communication tools for ELF Transcultural Communication. For example, an explicit analysis of ELF corpora extracts, displaying successful meaning negotiation sequences, can provide students with examples of how communication strategies can be fruitfully used in interaction. Other activities that could be included in classroom practice could be videos and TV series presenting different varieties of Englishes and ELF practices, as well as role plays and guessing games to practice strategic moves in controlled interaction. International school exchanges would also provide opportunities for authentic transcultural communication, where students would be enabled to experience (and practice) how to strategically manage the interaction, taking into account different cultural perspectives, too.

This dissertation has attempted to provide further insights on the understanding of the use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication by carrying out an extensive investigation on the functions and of the role of the selected strategies, that is, backchannels, lexical anticipations, lexical suggestions and corrections, overt multilingual resources, reformulations, repetitions, and spellings. The adoption of a mixed method approach has added a novel perspective in the examination of the frequency and distribution of the strategies analysed.

The dissertation has highlighted the importance to go beyond static and ideal representations of the English language and its speakers, remarking the necessity to take into account both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of ELF Transcultural Communication and the inherent diversity and malleability of practices in these contexts. I have also attempted to picture a more comprehensive perspective on ELF by combining ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies and by proposing a novel framework of reference – ELF Transcultural Competence – for the abilities that would be necessary to effectively and appropriately interact in ELF transcultural contexts. The study has showcased how strategic moves are fundamental, not only to solve miscommunication, but especially to co-create and shape meaning in interaction, highlighting the importance to include such views in ELT practice adopting an ELF-aware pedagogy. Some limitations of this study should also be mentioned. First of all, since the data analysed consists of corpora transcriptions of ELF conversations, an ethnographic perspective could not be included nor taken into account in the analysis. Secondly, for the analysis to be manageable, the strategic moves examined in the study are a selection of the linguistic moves and strategies that have been shown to be used in ELF transcultural contexts, thus providing only a section on the actual use of communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication.

Future research may investigate the role of multimodal elements, such as non-verbal language and laughter, in ELF Transcultural Communication, providing further insights on the importance of these elements in communication between ELF users and, exploring their relevance in the strategic management of

interaction and in meaning negotiation. Additionally, investigating the use of communication strategies adopting an ethnographic approach would provide additional understanding on the underlying processes of ELF Transcultural Communication and on how speakers co-construct a shared frame of reference. Another possible future research area could be related to the use of the newly-released VOICE 3.0 website and to the development of a more sophisticated corpus-based methodological approach: the analysis discussed here had to be carried out manually, with issues of time and data size, while the development of more automatic computer-based tools would allow for a more extensive examination of ELF data, both from a qualitative and a quantitative perspective.

It is hoped that the present dissertation has raised interest on the additional understanding that a combined perspective of ELF research and Intercultural Communication studies could bring to the analysis of ELF interactions and on the fruitfulness that a mixed method approach can offer for further research on communication strategies in ELF Transcultural Communication.

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Appendix A – VOICE transcription conventions – adapted overview

https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/documents/VOICE_mark-up_conventions_v2-1.pdf

1. SPEAKER IDS	
S1: S2: …	Speakers are generally numbered in the order they first speak. The speaker ID is given at the beginning of each turn.
SS:	Utterances assigned to more than one speaker (e.g. an audience), spoken either in unison or staggered, are marked with a collective speaker ID SS.
SX:	Utterances that cannot be assigned to a particular speaker are marked SX.
2. INTONATION	
Example: S1: that's what my next er slide? does	Words spoken with rising intonation are followed by a question mark "?" .
Example: S7: that's point two. absolutely yes.	Words spoken with falling intonation are followed by a full stop "." .
3. EMPHASIS	
Example: S7: er internationalization is a very IMPORTANT issue Example: S3: toMORrow we have to work on the presentation already	If a speaker gives a syllable, word or phrase particular prominence, this is written in capital letters.
4. PAUSES	
Example: SX-f: because they all give me different (.) different (.) points of view	Every brief pause in speech (up to a good half second) is marked with a full stop in parentheses.

Example: S1: aha (2) so finally arrival on monday evening is still valid	Longer pauses are timed to the nearest second and marked with the number of seconds in parentheses, e.g. (1) = 1 second, (3) = 3 seconds.
5. OVERLAPS	
Example: S1: it is your best <1> case </1> scenario (.) S2: <1> yeah </1> S1: okay	Whenever two or more utterances happen at the same time, the overlaps are marked with numbered tags: <1> </1>, <2> </2>,… Everything that is simultaneous gets the same number. All overlaps are marked in blue.
Example: S9: it it is (.) to identify some<1>thing </1> where (.) S3: <1> mhm </1>	All overlaps are approximate and words may be split up if appropriate. In this case, the tag is placed within the split-up word.
6. OTHER-CONTINUATION	
Example: S1: what up till (.) till twelve? S2: yes= S1: =really. so it's it's quite a lot of time.	Whenever a speaker continues, completes or supports another speaker's turn immediately (i.e. without a pause), this is marked by "=".
7. LENGTHENING	
Example: S1: you can run faster but they have much mo:re technique with the ball	Lengthened sounds are marked with a colon ":".
Example: S5: personally that's my opinion the: er::m	Exceptionally long sounds (i.e. approximating 2 seconds or more) are marked with a double colon "::".
8. REPETITION	
Example: S11: e:r i'd like to go t- t- to to this type of course	All repetitions of words and phrases (including self-interruptions and false starts) are transcribed.

9. WORD FRAGMENTS	
Example:	With word fragments, a hyphen marks
S6: with a minimum of (.) of participa-	where a part of the word is missing.
S1: mhm	
S6: -pation from french universities to	
say we have er (.) a joint doctorate or a	
joi- joint master	

10. LAUGHTER	
Example:	All laughter and laughter-like sounds are
S1: in denmark well who knows. @@	transcribed with the @ symbol,
S2: <@> yeah </@> @@ that's right	approximating syllable number (e.g. ha
	ha ha = @@@).
	Utterances spoken laughingly are put
	between
	<@> </@> tags.

11. PRONUNCIATION VARIATIONS & COINAGES	
Example:	Striking variations on the levels of
S4: i also: (.) e:r played (.) tennis e:r	phonology, morphology and lexis as
<pvc> bices </pvc> e:r we rent? went?	well as 'invented' words are marked
	<pvc> </pvc>.
Example:	What you hear is represented in spelling
S9: how you were controlling such a	according to general principles of
thing and how you <pvc> (avrivate)	English orthography. Uncertain
</pvc> (it)	transcription is put in parentheses ( ) .
Example:	If a corresponding existing word can be
S6: what we try to explain here is the	identified, this existing word is added
foreign direct investment growth (2) in	between curly brackets { }.
a certain industry (.) and a certain	
<pvc> compy {company} </pvc>	
Example:	Particularly when it comes to salient
S2: anyway i make you an a total (.)	variations on the level of phonology, e.g.
<pvc> summamary {summary} <ipa>	sound substitution or addition, a

sʌməˈmærɪ </ipa> </pvc> of destinations	phonetic representation should be added between <ipa> </ipa> tags.

12. NON-ENGLISH SPEECH	
Example: S5: <L1de> bei firmen </L1de> or wherever	Utterances in a participant's first language (L1) are put between tags indicating the speaker's L1.
Example: S7: er this is <LNde> die seite? (welche) </LNde> is	Utterances in languages which are neither English nor the speaker's first language are marked LN with the language indicated.
Example: S2: erm we want to go t- to <LNvi> xx xxx </LNvi> island first of all	Unintelligible utterances in a participant's L1, LN or in an LQ are represented by x's approximating syllable number.
Example: S4: and now we do the boat trip (1) <L1xx> xxxxx </L1xx> S3: mhm	Utterances in a language one cannot recognize are marked L1xx, LNxx or LQxx.

13. SPELLING OUT	
Example: S1: and they (3) created some (1) some er (2) JARGON. do you know? the word JARGON? (.) <spel> j a r- </spel> <spel> j a r g o n? </spel> jargon	The <spel> </spel> tag is used to mark words or abbreviations which are spelled out by the speaker, i.e. words whose constituents are pronounced as individual letters.

14. BREATH	
Example: S1: so it's always hh (.) going around (2) yeah	Noticeable breathing in or out is represented by two or three h's (hh = relatively short; hhh= relatively long).

15. SPEAKER NOISES	

<coughs> <clears throat> <sniffs> <sneezes> <snorts> <applauds> <smacks lips> <yawns> <whistles> <swallows>	Noises produced by the current speaker are always transcribed. Noises produced by other speakers are only transcribed if they seem relevant (e.g. because they make speech unintelligible or influence the interaction). The list of speaker noises is an open one.

16. NON-VERBAL FEEDBACK

<nods> <shakes head>	Whenever information about it is available, non- verbal feedback is transcribed as part of the running text and put between pointed brackets < >.
Example: S3: but i think if you structure corporate governance appropriately you can have everything (1) S7: <soft> mhm </soft> <nods (2)>	If it is deemed important to indicate the length of the non-verbal feedback, this is done by adding the number of seconds in parentheses.

17. CONTEXTUAL EVENTS

{mobile rings} {S7 enters room} {S2 points at S5} {S4 starts writing on blackboard} {S4 stops writing on blackboard} {S2 gets up and walks to blackboard (7)} {S3 pours coffee (3)} {SS reading quietly (30)} …	Contextual information is added between curly brackets { } only if it is relevant to the understanding of the interaction or to the interaction as such. If it is deemed important to indicate the length of the event, this can be done by adding the number of seconds in parentheses.

Example:	
S3: one dollar you get (.) (at) one euro you get one dollar twenty-seven. (.)	
S4: right. {S5 gets up to pour some drinks}	Explanation:
S3: right now at this time (3)	The pause in the conversation occurs because of the contextual event.
S1: er page five is the er (4) {S5 places some cups and glasses on the desk (4)}	
S1: i think is the descritip- e:r part of what i have just explained (.)	

18. UNINTELLIGIBLE SPEECH

Example:	Unintelligible speech is represented by
S4: we <un> xxx </un> for the <7> supreme (.) three </7> possibilities	x's approximating syllable number and placed between <un> </un> tags.
S1: <7> next yeah </7>	
Example:	If it is possible to make out some of the
S7: obviously the the PROCESS will <un> x <ipa> θeɪŋ </ipa> </un> (.) w- w- will (.) will take (.) at least de- decade	sounds uttered, a phonetic transcription of the x's is added between <ipa> </ipa> tags.

In addition to the regular mark-up, transcribers supplement the transcripts with Transcriber's Notes in which they provide additional contextual information and observations about other features of the interaction not accounted for in the transcript.

For a detailed discussion of specific aspects of the transcription conventions cf. Breiteneder, Pitzl, Majewski, Klimpfinger. (2006). "VOICE recording – Methodological challenges in the compilation of a corpus of spoken ELF". *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 5/2, 161-188.

Appendix B – CASE transcription conventions – Overview

https://www.umwelt-campus.de/campus/organisation/fachbereichuwur/sprache-kommunikation/case-project/transcription-conventions

.	Falling tone
?	Rising tone
,	Continuing intonation
-	Cut-off
CAPS	Heavy stress, loudness
° °	Spoken more softly
" "	Voice shift
.. / ... / (x.x)	Pause: < .5 seconds / > .5 seconds, timed (in secs.)
:	Lengthening
< >	Spoken more slowly
> <	Spoken more quickly
[ ]	Overlap
=	Latching (between different speakers)
H	Audible breath sounds
.h	Inhalation
h	Exhalation
( )	Transcription uncertain (with interpretation)
(( ))	Aspects of the utterance, e.g. incomprehensible whispers, coughing, laughter
((/ /))	Phonemic transcription
((German (x.x)))	Code-switching (with language and duration)
€€€	Echo
{ }	Nonverbal behaviour, e.g. gestures, movements and looks
_	Liaison

Detailed conventions: CASE transcription conventions (2017). Birkenfeld: Trier University of Applied Sciences. [umwelt-campus.de/case-conventions]

Appendix C – ViMELF_06SB73ST14 – cultural concept – bull fighting.

(Speakers: SB73 – female, Germany; ST14 – female, Spain)

SB73: (1.4) is uhm do you still celebrate this: uhm <bull racing>? #00:21:03-7# ... uhm,

ST14: .. OH the bull fighti:ng?

SB73: yeah, {nods}

ST14: yeah, (1.0) ((clears throat)) [well-]

SB73: I think it's celebration for you or, <isn't it>?

ST14: (0.8) ((smacks lips)) well. {nods} (1.4) {squints & raises eyebrows} okay. ... u:hm, ... <Spain is: a very: diverse country>. {raises eyebrows & opens eyes wide} ... and it might not {thumps on desk with pen} look like so, ((clears throat)) {covers mouth} ... because it's not very big, {imitates size by holding up hands} ... but it has a lot of cultures. {makes beat gesture & squints} ... VERY different cultures. #00:21:31-8# ... and where I am from? {points at herself} we <don't> bull fight. {shakes head} #interruption of recording (4.5)# (or bull race ... ever). (it's just not .. what we do)? ((hehe)) .. that's, #interruption of recording (2.5)# in the south of Spain? ... or towards the uhm, .. east.   of Spain. and_uhm, personally I think it should be banned, {raises eyebrows & squints} ... I don't like it? and >many people DOn't like it<, #00:21:59-6# but, {shrugs} ... sadly it's still going on in some places in Spain, {nods & shrugs}

SB73: {nods}

ST14: and uhm, {shrugs} ... yeah people do it, and >as a tradition<, {shrugs} but I think it's very sad. and cruel. [°and I don't like it°]. {shakes head}

SB73: [yeah I think so] too, (1.0) I've seen a lot of u:hm, {scratches forehead} ... .t uhm [things] about it in magazines and on [TV], {shakes head}

ST14: [yeah]. {nods} [((clears throat))]

SB73: and it's just cruel.

ST14: ... [yeah], {shakes head}

SB73: [°that's the point°] °yeah°,   (1.0) .h but .. yeah {tilts head & shrugs},   I think if it's a tradition? (1.2) yeah.

ST14: ... right but so was beating ((beat/n/)) your- .. WIFE, {frowns & looks up & shakes head} ... fifty years ago. #interruption of recording (6.4)# and I think it shouldn't be:, {opens hands} ... that way anymore.

SB73: (2.3) .t ... uhm.