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Context-sensitive strategies for effective intercultural communication in English Medium Instruction

Abstract: There is an undeniable need to know more about how those engaged in international teaching-learning academic activities employ English in their daily practices. Particularly, the growing use of English language for university purposes (i.e., to teach, learn and research) together with the international mobility of people and the homogenizing progression in global HE have given rise to a greater contact and interconnectedness among people at the university, often with very different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Björkman 2008). Hence, this paper reports on a study of English-medium instruction practices at the University of Zaragoza (Spain), focusing on the pragmatic strategies participants use to facilitate understanding. These linguistic practices were analyzed under the scope of English as a lingua franca in academic settings. Results derive from the analysis of a corpus of 12 EMI lectures recorded in two different programs. A Discourse-Pragmatic approach was used to analyze these data sets. The results of the study show that 13 different pragmatic strategies were used by the lecturers in order to fulfil communicative functions such as enhancing explicitness.

1 Introduction

This paper analyses the complexity of lectures' discourse using English medium instruction (EMI) in a primarily monolingual university (i.e. the University of Zaragoza, Spain). It reports the results of a study that explored the pragmatic strategies used for communicative purposes employing English as a lingua franca (ELF) in lectures taking place in a context where Spanish is the first language of the majority and, thus, the language generally used in academic and non-academic daily life. The research questions the reported investigation intended to answer are as follows:

– RQ1. What pragmatic strategies do participants in EMI lectures at the University of Zaragoza use, and how do these impact communication within intercultural settings?
– RQ2. What factors or motivations are involved in these participants' use of a particular set of pragmatic strategies during oral communication in EMI lectures?

The study looks at the micro level of the pragmatic choices lecturers make during their EMI discourse, the functions they perform in communication and how social meaning is generated in those academic interactions. Most precisely, this study analyses the role played by specific pragmatic strategies used by different Spanish lecturers and international students to prevent and solve breakdowns in communication and to negotiate meaning successfully during EMI lessons.

The ELF perspective is presented here as helpful and insightful research on EMI tertiary education. The study takes a post-normative approach in which lecturers and students are viewed as users of ELF, i.e. communicators within their disciplinary domains, rather than as 'deficient native speakers' who use the language to engage in English-mediated academic practices, which involve people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This is the reason why the concept of 'English in a lingua franca language scenario' (Mortensen 2013) is considered to best characterise the contexts that have been analysed. It is an ELF scenario in which there is total overlap in the language that they choose to use as a lingua franca, but there is also a partial overlap in the speakers' first language (L1; the lecturers and most of the students are Spanish speakers).

The results of the study are reported with the purpose of contributing to understanding how EMI lecturers regulate their use of English in lecturing interaction and monologue and the way(s) they negotiate their linguistic differences arising from their diverse L1 backgrounds and varying levels of proficiency. In other words, the study aims to promote lecturers' awareness of their ELF discursive features to contribute to reducing the gap between how teachers perceive language and communication and how real communication in international English-medium tertiary education currently takes place.

The remainder of the paper is divided into five sections. Section 2 draws attention to the current function of English in allowing academia actors to participate in academic activities, such as EMI lectures; thus, it builds bridges between EMI and ELF paradigms. Section 3 presents the EMI teaching and learning scenarios analyzed in the study. Section 4 describes the corpus collected and the methodology used to analyze EMI discourse. Section 5 presents the results obtained by establishing a data-driven taxonomy of pragmatic strategies used by the participants in this specific research scenario, which shed light on the main pragmatic behaviors of the participating lecturers. Finally, this paper concludes by summarizing the most relevant findings and pedagogical implications for EMI practitioners.

2 English in higher education lectures: An existing overlap between ELF and EMI research agendas

Over the last decade, the use of English has been especially noticeable in higher education (HE) contexts as part of the globalization process and the internationalization policies that it has brought. Particularly, the growing use of the English language for university purposes (i.e. to teach, learn and research), together with the international mobility of people and the homogenizing progression in global HE, has given rise to greater contact and interconnectedness among people at the university, often with very different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Björkman 2008). In regard to teaching, English is increasingly used as a means of instruction in European HE (European Commission 2003, 2005). The implementation of EMI programs has thus brought new linguistic and communicative challenges that are undeniably faced by means of using ELF for the needs of communication within the international academic community (Mauranen 2006c). ELF can be defined as 'the use of English amongst multilingual interlocutors whose common language is English and who [usually] communicate in a country or area in which English is not used in daily life' (Smit 2005: 67). Therefore, English is currently the dominant language in many domains, and academia or tertiary education is one of the most prominent ones.

EMI programs are quite recent in most countries worldwide, and there is limited experience and understanding of the implications of teaching through English (Ball and Lindsay 2013; Dearden 2016; Doiz et al. 2013; Fenton-Smith et al. 2017; Macaro 2018; Moore et al. 2018; Murata 2018). Even today, many studies reflect teachers' dissatisfaction with the quality of support their HE institutions offer when faced with the many challenges that EMI poses in terms of the lack of specific training programs for bilingual education (Aguilar 2017) or the lack of guidelines for teaching EMI (Dearden 2016). One such challenge is the EMI teacher's role regarding language issues. This is a crucial matter, as the vast majority of EMI lecturers in Europe are non-native speakers of English and specialists in their field, as opposed to being language experts. In academia, English is used as a vehicular language by which target groups of international students and lecturers can be attracted and can engage in the educational discourse.

Therefore, research should acknowledge the current function of English in allowing academia actors to participate in academic activities, such as EMI lectures and seminars. Despite the current amount of investigation (Dafouz and Smit 2016; Macaro 2018), more theoretical frameworks, practical implications and recommendations to be implemented in the English-medium classroom are still

needed. In line with this, few studies have been carried out on the topic of teaching via English from the perspective of ELF to date. Some researchers have resolved this issue by focusing on English under the scope of English as a lingua franca in academic settings (Mauranen 2012). Most of these investigations have been primarily conducted in Swedish, Finnish or Norwegian universities (Björkman 2010; Mauranen 2007, 2010, 2012; Seidlhofer 2004), and they have provided important empirical descriptions of ELF usage.

Particularly in Spanish HE institutions, EMI is currently being adopted for academic activities, as English is considered a fundamental skill, crucial for mobility and employability, and not simply a foreign language (Alcón 2011; Ministerio de Educación Cultura y Deporte 2014). At the university level, the increase in the provision of courses in English is largely considered essential if Spanish universities are to compete for international students. EMI is meant to be one of the main tools for internationalizing Spanish universities, as it fosters student and staff mobility, exchanges intercultural values, and enhances a multilingual and multicultural approach to European/global citizenship in the long run. Therefore, HE is a sphere where oral communication, in general, and academic discussion and teaching, in particular, demand sophisticated verbal skills, which are even more worth exploring when English is not the native language but the lingua franca and the medium of instruction. Consequently, there is an undeniable need to know much more about how those engaged in international HE teaching/learning activities employ English for academic practices. Hence, there is an existing overlap between ELF and EMI research agendas.

Nonetheless, there is a relative lack of empirical research on Spanish ELF academic communication compared to European academic ELF use. The two research undertakings into English-medium education and ELF have developed more or less independently from each other (Smit 2010). Particularly in Spanish HE, the amount of research on EMI intertwined with the ELF paradigm is reduced. Most studies in this respect have been conducted within the scope of content and language-integrated learning or most amply under the integrating content and language in higher education umbrella, analyzing it from the perspective of the language demands and support for EMI in HE Spanish institutions, most often with an interest in the interface between content and language (Aguilar 2017; Arnó-Macià and Mancho-Barés 2015; Ruiz de Zarobe and Lyster 2018). As Querol-Julián and Camiciottoli (2019: 17) argue as a result of their study, '[c]ontrary to EMI instructors' reluctance to consider language as part of their duties, it seems that researchers [. . .] advocate for the need to "integrate" content and language learning in higher education'. Nevertheless, EMI has been described as 'an umbrella term for academic subjects taught through English' because it makes 'no direct reference

to the aim of improving students' English' (Dearden and Macaro 2016: 456); in other words, '[it] focuses on content learning only' (Smit and Dafouz 2012: 4).

3 EMI lectures at the University of Zaragoza (Spain)

The research reported in this paper provides empirical data for ELF and EMI studies focusing on their convergence—ELF communication in HE at the University of Zaragoza. The study serves descriptive interests in the use of pragmatic strategies in HE teaching practices during English-mediated lectures. By combining analyses of authentic ELF use with analyses of participants' EMI teaching experiences, this study takes a close-up view of the language practices in use to uncover and confront the challenges faced by the lecturers in their day-to-day academic communicative labor and their pragmatic resources.

The University of Zaragoza, located in the north-east of Spain, is a typically monolingual and monocultural research and teaching university. Domestic undergraduate students make up most of the student population. Only 4% of them are international students coming from Erasmus and Latin America exchange programs (Vázquez et al. 2019). However, it is currently driving an internationalization agenda 'at home' (Foskett 2010), as it is providing services to support international students' arrival and promoting local students' global mindset reflected in its programs' academic curriculum and the numerous international exchanges. Teaching is mainly conducted in Spanish, the national language, with the exception of courses taught in departments of languages. Yet, outside those departments, EMI is a reality in selected bachelor's and master's courses and for PhD dissertation programs at this university. EMI is, therefore, quite an innovative approach at this Spanish tertiary education institution.

The EMI teaching and learning scenarios analyzed in the study are considered ELF settings. Previous research on ELF pragmatics has demonstrated that successful interactions among ELF speakers appear to be characterized by the use of pragmatic strategies to achieve communicative alignment, adaptation, local accommodation, and attunement (Firth 2009). Yet, these studies have also shown that the accommodative processes vary in their local realizations (Pölzl and Seidlhofer 2006) and are shaped by different situation-specific conventions and needs. Therefore, it has been observed that some types of strategies seem to be used more frequently than others in different ELF settings. The use of these strategies involves issues of identity, community, and culture, all of which have also been concerns of ELF researchers (Jenkins 2007, 2014). Therefore, the study is

based on the assumption that in order to carry out academic activities using English in a non-English medium culture, as is the case of the University of Zaragoza, some specific pragmatic strategies are needed to ensure communicative effectiveness and participant engagement.

4 Methodology

The particular EMI lectures analyzed in the study belong to two teaching programs of different disciplinary areas. Particularly, the study deals with the Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Management (BAM) in English offered at the Economics Faculty and the Master's Degree in Nanostructured Materials for Nanotechnology Applications offered at the Science Faculty in this university, which are both completely English-mediated courses.

The corpus used for the purpose of this research consisted of digital recordings of 12 lectures (see Table 1). A total of 13h 25' 09'' was recorded, and 102,681 words were transcribed and analyzed. The differentiating factors of both programs, including different disciplines with varying participants and goals in the teaching–learning process, motivated the diversification of data to be collected in more than one faculty. Therefore, the data collected to study EMI lectures taking place at the University of Zaragoza comprised six Spanish-L1 lecturers (one per class) and around 30 Spanish and international students per group. In the BAM group, international students amounted to approximately 13% of the students in total, while in the master's degree in Nanostructured Materials group, international students amounted to 16% of the total number of students attending the lessons. More hours were recorded in the BAM degree (9h 46'26'') than in the master's degree in Nanostructured Materials (3h 38' 43'') due to the previously mentioned problems of availability (see Table 1).

In order to better understand the distribution of the occurrences of the pragmatic strategies found in the present corpus, Table 2 displays the total number of words transcribed, the length of each lecture and the number of occurrences of the strategies found in each of the lectures analysed. Additionally, given that the number of words in each lecture was different, data were normalised per 1,000 words.

As Table 2 shows, more lectures were recorded in the BAM degree (eight lectures) than in the master's degree (four lectures). No two lectures were equal in length. Table 2 reveals a higher incidence of strategies in the BAM degree (590) than in the master's degree in Nanostructured Materials (146). However, the normalized data show that although some pragmatic strategies were used more fre-

Table 1: Corpus of lectures.

Programmes	Lectures	Lecturers	Length	Participants' L1	Students per class	Words
BSc Degree in Business Administration	8	Lecturer 1 Lecturer 2 Lecturer 3	9:46:26	Spanish French Finish German	32	83,333
MSc in Nanostructured Materials for Nanotechnology Applications	4	Lecturer 4 Lecturer 5 Lecturer 6	3:38:43	Spanish Italian Portuguese German Turkish English Indonesian	25	19,348
Total	12	6	13:25:09	9 L1s		102,681

Table 2: Corpus description.

Lectures	Lecturers	Words	Mins/h	Occurrences	Strategies/1,000 words
Lecture 1 BAM	Lec.1	13,153	1:35:09	100	7.60
Lecture 2 BAM	Lec.1	10,560	1:29:03	97	9.18
Lecture 3 BAM	Lec.1	7,250	1:46:00	60	8.27
Lecture 4 BAM	Lec.2	10,058	1:35:11	84	8.35
Lecture 5 BAM	Lec. 2	5,446	45:11	45	8.26
Lecture 6 BAM	Lec. 2	11,617	1:28:02	76	6.54
Lecture 7 BAM	Lec. 2	13,336	1:42:01	71	5.32
Lecture 8 BAM	Lec. 3	8,943	1:23:46	57	6.37
Eight lectures	Three lecturers	80,363	9:46:26	590	7.34
Lecture 9 Nano	Lec. 4	8,598	59:23	51	5.93
Lecture 10 Nano	Lec. 5	6,621	51:33	46	6.94
Lecture 11 Nano	Lec. 6	4,129	49:53	16	3.87
Lecture 12 Nano	Lec. 6	5,562	57:21	33	5.93
4	3	24,910	3:38:43	146	5.86
12	6	105,273	13:38:43	736	

quently by the lecturers in the BAM degree than by those in the master's degree, the difference was not so significant (7.34 occurrences per 1,000 words in the bachelor's degree vs 5.86 occurrences per 1,000 words in the master's degree).

The methodology involved a discourse-pragmatic approach, which, as explained by Nikula (2005), integrates insights from pragmatics, discourse analysis and socio-cultural research on learning. This means that speech acts are analyzed

not only on the basis of completely transcribed lectures but also in relation to classroom discourse as a whole, analyzing the contextual and situational factors that influence the produced discourse, such as the following: 1) it involves participants who have different lingua-cultural backgrounds and who use ELF for instruction in a Spanish-monolingual university; 2) these participants have different commands of the English language; 3) the lectures recorded reflect different types of lecturer–student interactions that take place in the different degrees where data were collected; and 4) there are differences among the lecturers' perspectives towards teaching EMI.

5 Results and discussion

The qualitative and quantitative analyses carried out in the study presented here revealed 13 different strategies used by the participants in these EMI courses to fulfil different purposes needed to achieve communication effectiveness. As illustrated in Table 3, they can be grouped into five categories: 1) explicitness strategies, 2) repairing strategies, 3) multilingual resources, 4) clarification strategies and 5) focus on form.

The use of these pragmatic strategies in the lectures recorded for the study could only be understood in light of the role played by discursively developing conventions of EMI lecturing as well as by the characteristics of the participants in these EMI lectures and the contexts where they took place. As Pölzl and Seidlhofer (2006) suggest, the setting where ELF is used has an impact on the participants' interactional behavior. In other words, local interactional norms have an impact on the communication established and, therefore, on the pragmatic strategies used to do so. These facts explain the high use of pragmatic strategies by the lecturers to facilitate the achievement of the teaching/learning objectives of the courses.

The lecturers using the strategies covered in Table 3 showed their willingness to make adjustments in their speech and accommodations towards their audiences in order to favor mutual intelligibility and successful linguistic communication. All the lecturers demonstrated their eagerness to ensure learning opportunities and use pragmatic strategies to ease the referential understanding, emphasizing clarity and, therefore, most frequently pre-empting problems of understanding. A high degree of explicitness was found in the lecturers' choices of pragmatic strategies, as the Clarity and Explicitness category accounted for almost half of the instances (45.6%) of the total pragmatic strategies coded. The results showed that lecturers use strategies such as *reformulation*, *defining*, *self-repetition* and *other-repetition*

Table 3: Macro-categories of pragmatic strategies.

Macro-categories	Pragmatic strategies	Definition	Occurrences	%
Explicitness strategies	Reformulation	Using a different string of words to explain something that has been already explained but is considered unclear	350	47.5%
	Defining	Exemplifying, illustrating or describing the properties of the target object or action		
	Self-repetition	Repeating a word or a string of words immediately after they were said		
	Other-repetition	Repeating a word or a string of words that someone else has uttered in conversation immediately after they were said		
Repairing strategies	Self-repair	Making self-initiated corrections in one's own speech	230	31.25%
	Other-repair	Correcting something in the interlocutor's speech		
Multilingual resources	Code switching	Including stretches of discourse ranging from single words to whole chunks and even complete turns in the speaker's L1	79	10.7%
	Literal translation	Translating literally a lexical item, an idiom or a structure from the vehicular language to the L1 and vice versa		
Clarification strategies	Comprehension check	Asking questions to check that the interlocutor can follow the speaker's message	56	7.6%
	Asking for repetition	Requesting repetition when not hearing or understanding something properly		
	Appeal for help	Turning to the interlocutor for assistance by asking an explicit question concerning a gap in one's knowledge/speech		
	Clarification request	Requesting an explanation of an unfamiliar meaning upon nonunderstanding or misunderstanding.		
Focus on form	Focus on form	Metalinguistic appreciation of something the interlocutor has formerly said in reference to specific terms or the language used in the speech	21	2.9%

very frequently in order to simplify the message to the students following the communicational guideline coined by Smit (2010: 303) 'saying what you mean and meaning what you say'. All the lecturers in this study tried to ease the referential understanding by eliminating vagueness and dense discourse and using grammatical simplicity with the aim of increasing their chances of getting their contributions understood as intended, thus clarifying critical notions. Most of the time, these strategies serve to clarify and emphasize specialized subject-related contents and, most precisely, specific terminology. These results are consistent with the kind of pragmatic communicative behavior that was expected in an ELF language scenario in which, despite a highly shared Spanish linguistic background, participants with different L1s and English proficiency levels were present.

This is the case in Excerpt 1, in which the speaker combines the aforementioned methods to explain a target concept (exemplifying or describing the properties of the target object) in the same turn. In this case, a marketing lecturer explains the different types of interviews and questionnaires students can find to get the customers' opinions; more precisely, they explain the concept of 'self-administered interviews'. To do so, the lecturer first mentions the disciplinary-related term; then, for purposes of clarification of meaning, they provide an example ('the spinning class questionnaire'), which could be a good illustration for the students; finally, the lecturer describes the term in a more explicit and accessible way ('each one fills in the answers to the questions').

(1) *L1: But there is one option that is the best (.) It's in group self-administered interviews, OK? When it's at the end of the session, we have a spinning class, and at the end of the class, I hand out the questionnaires for the people to answer the questionnaire, OK? It's a small group, and it's self-administered; each one fills in the answers to the questions, OK? And there is one person there that can help to solve doubts or whatever questions may raise, OK?*

The second characterising feature of the lecturers' pragmatic choices is the acceptable usage of the language and a noticeable readiness to negotiate meaning. This study supports Gotti's (2014) argument that general awareness of not being native speakers characterises these academic ELF encounters, which leads lecturers to be more motivated to adopt supportive pragmatic moves to favour successful outcomes than it is commonly noticed in settings only involving native speakers (Kaur 2009; Mauranen 2006b). Lecturers tend to use pragmatic strategies, such as *self-repair* or *reformulation*, to gain accuracy in the language used and are often conscious of their minor inficilities. Lecturers value 'correct' or 'standard' use of English, as reflected in the fact that they want to 'model' the correct use of the language, and they allow opportunities for incidental language

learning, although language learning is not an explicitly stated learning outcome of either of the programs, and acting as language teachers is not the goal of the lecturers.

Most of the *self-repairs* are repairs of linguistic aspects related to content and vocabulary. According to Hynninen (2011), this type of *self-repair* facilitates understanding, discourse organization and socialization **(**Hynninen 2011). Excerpt 2 is an example of *self-repair* as replacing lexical choice. Particularly, Excerpt 2 shows how the lecturer replaces what seems an incorrect term with the correct one ('the manipulation of the experiment' is replaced by 'manipulation of the treatment'). It is a referential repair in terms of the specific subject-related terminology of marketing.

(2)   *L1: So, in every case, this sub-index may have a different meaning but usually means one manipulation of the experiment. The video is a manipulation of the treatment, sorry, one manipulation of the treatment.*

The wide variety of pragmatic strategies used to enhance and make terminology accessible to the students is in agreement with the academic and disciplinary characters of the analysed EMI lectures. In fact, there are strategies that seem to be very frequently used in academic encounters, such as *focus on form* (see Björkman 2011a, 2013, under the name of 'Comment on terms and concepts') and even *other-repair*, to assist the interlocutor(s) in gaining accuracy in the language used. This has to do with the participants' roles and the academic goals that need to be achieved for the task at hand. The goal of the speakers in such interactions is not necessarily 'interactional' socialization but 'transactional achievement of a shared goal' (Shaw 2011: 74)—that of teaching and learning content. Therefore, the knowledge-providing role of the lecturers in regard to subject-related language is combined with the nature of lingua franca speakers when it comes to facilitating understanding to their interlocutors.

Particularly, focus on form is primarily an EFL lecturers 'strategy intended to help students meet native speakers' language norms. However, in the current corpus, the lecturer did not adopt the role of language teacher. Instead, the results emphasized the attitude of the lecturers as 'contributing' to improving students' disciplinary language and academic linguistic repertoires. This strategic behavior can be categorized both as pre-emptive, intended to avoid shortcomings in the linguistic formulation of the student's contributions (Basturkmen and Shackleford 2015; Costa 2012) but also as a means to show their shared status of non-native status, which, in turn, contributes to the acceptance by both lecturers and students of all the resources to communicate and make meaning. As Cogo (2010: 303)

explains, participants in the analyzed EMI lectures 'are all on the same boat [. . .] are all foreigners', as they are non-native speakers of the English language.

A clear *focus on form* episode in the BAM degree lecturers is illustrated in Excerpt 3, in which the lecturer explains the correct pronunciation of the term 'questionnaire', correcting the pronunciation mistakes that students made when pronouncing this word, as well as his own pronunciation infelicities. This could be considered a pre-emptive episode initiated by the lecturer, presumably anticipating that some students may not be familiar with the correct pronunciation, and the lecturer seemingly attempts to help students with the technical language of marketing.

(3)　*L2: Two key points before going on, mmm, in case you have (. . .) you are familiarised with phonetics. Hmm, this is the correct way of saying these words, OK? We have 'survey'; it is a noun, and 'to survey' is a verb, but the most important thing is /ˌkwɛstʃəˈneə/, OK? It's not /ˈkwɛstʃənaɪre/, it's not /ˌkwɛstʃəˈnarɪ/ and it's not /ˌkwɛstʃəˈnɪrɪ/, OK? So, this is the word, OK? Last year, I had lots of /ˌˈkwɛstʃənarɪ/ and /ˈkwɛstʃənare/ (.) So, you have this information; you can look it up in Wordreference or in other platforms, /ˌkwɛstʃəˈneə/, OK? I'm sorry because probably, I will say another word; I will probably say /ˌˈkwɛstʃəneə/ because I am used to saying /ˈkwɛstʃənare/, but the correct way is /ˌkwɛstʃəˈneə/, OK?*

The use of different languages, mainly by means of *code-switching* and *translating* from English to Spanish and vice versa, also reveals how lecturers make use of all the resources available to convey meaning. Communication has proved to rely sometimes on partially or completely shared Spanish-cultural and linguistic awareness to succeed in understanding certain notions and/or referents. In the settings where the EMI lectures were recorded, where the majority of speakers have the same lingua-cultural background (i.e. all the lecturers and a high number of students were Spanish, especially in the BAM degree) and the interaction is carried out in their home territory, it was expected that the shared linguistic and cultural background affected the speakers' use of the English language (Blommaert et al. 2005).

This strategic use of the languages and the background shared among the participants signal the participants' membership to the same lingua-cultural community of speakers and local-contextual in-group solidarity (Cogo 2011: 119). This cultural impact is more noticeable in this study than in similar studies in other universities in which English is a dominant official language (see Björkman 2011a; Smit 2010). The use of the Spanish language in the written classroom handouts may lead the lecturers to verbalize those contents in Spanish even if English is the vehicular language for instruction. That is, the language in the materials that

AU: The reference "Cogo 2011" is cited in the text but is not listed in the references list. Please either delete intext citation or provide full reference details.

support the lecturing practice has an impact on the lecturing language used. This mainly happens when the lecturer reads something written in Spanish when providing examples or presenting exercises. As can be observed in Excerpt 4, the lecturer does not translate the written content into English after reading it in Spanish, but they just read the content in the language in which it is written before moving back to English.

(4) *L2: Control questions: There are also control questions, Questions 2 and 3, <L1sp> ¿Cuáles cuáles son las razones principales por las que compra en KIABI? </L1sp> and <L1sp> ¿Cuál es la razón principal por la que ha venido a comprar hoy? </L1sp>, so they are giving us reasons for coming to the establishment, and then in Question 18, (2) are you satisfied? No, sorry, I am not. (3) 8 sorry Question 8, I wa:s <L1sp> valore de 1 a 5 siendo 1 la peor nota y 5 la mejor la siguientes facetas respecto al estrablecimiento </L1sp>.*

Nevertheless, the considerable use of the participants' L1 in the BAM degree showed differences with the scarce use of the lecturers' LI in the master's degree. These results could mirror an already embraced use of ELF in the master's degree, where little use of the Spanish language is made, while a less naturalized use of the English language is made in the BAM degree at this university, where more use of the lecturers' L1 is made to ensure comprehensibility and fluency. This is related to several facts. First, the objectives of each program are different. Indeed, the English-medium program of the BAM degree is part of institutions' ongoing efforts to drive an internationalization agenda 'at home'; this is helping the students (most of them local) to become part of an international labor market once they finish their studies. It might thus be inferred that the goal of EMI in this faculty is to empower Spanish students linguistically to compete in the global market. Meanwhile, the master's degree in Nanostructured Materials is already an example of the achievement of the university's efforts to drive an internationalization agenda 'abroad', as a considerable number of international students become part of this program, and the English language is 'taken for granted' by all the participants in the lectures, including the lecturers themselves. Second, the higher use of code-switching and literal translation into Spanish in the BAM degree is also due to the higher number of local students present in those lectures when compared to the master's degree sessions, i.e. there were more interlocutors sharing the lecturers' cultural and linguistic background.

Finally, an important finding that supports earlier descriptions of ELF interactions (Cogo 2010) as cooperative is the use of *clarification strategies* in the search for an alignment component among lecturers and students and to open opportunities for negotiation of meaning. Strategies such as *appeal for help* or

clarification request resulted in some communicative interaction, which, despite not being a common feature in all the lectures, suggests that some lecturers sought collaboration within the class, which is deemed particularly important for the successful progress of the course, as other studies have proved (Dearden 2016). The dialogic nature of these strategies is related to the fact that all of them imply questions to be answered in order to keep the flow of the speech. In most of the occurrences of these strategies, the lecturer asks questions of different types to the audience (the students), although there are also instances of students asking questions to the lecturer.

In Excerpt 5, the lecturer uses the *clarification request* strategy ('the music is?') to guide the student's disciplinary discourse in order to help the student re-cast and verbalize the correct information. It seems that the lecturer requires clarification not to gain an understanding for his benefit but to prompt the student to clarify the meaning for himself and his classmates.

AU: Linguistic numbers are unorderly received. Please check and confirm.

(4) *(1) L1: OK (.) What is the cause–effect relation that we can conclude from this video? What is the cause? What is the effect?*
S13: The music
L1: The music is?
S13: e:h the cause
S13: and the age
L1: The cause?
L1: The age is? The effect

The BAM degree is clearly more dialogic than the master's degree, the latter mainly adopting a 'lecture' format with a dominant lecturer-led style—a description which substantiates previous study accounts of EMI courses (Costa and Coleman 2012; Dafouz 2011). Lectures in the BAM degree tended to be more interactive and practical at times. In turn, the students in the BAM degree also showed a greater willingness to cooperate with their lecturers to accomplish the communicative purpose of the interactions in which they were involved compared to the students in the Master's Degree in Nanostructured Materials. The participants in the BAM degree, therefore, succeeded in making their lectures more dialogic, creating opportunities for the negotiation of meaning and clarification, most frequently using intrinsically dyadic pragmatic strategies, such as *clarification request, comprehension check, asking for repetition, appeal for help* or *other-repetition.* These strategies fulfil extremely necessary functions, such as inserting interactivity in the explanation, providing the floor to the students and even co-constructing meaning among the interlocutors upon communicative shortcomings.

6 Conclusions

The research found that in the lectures analyzed, participants used mainly 13 pragmatic strategies. The main finding that emerged from this analysis is a clear distinction among five categories of strategies: explicitness strategies, repairing strategies, clarification strategies, multilingual resources and focus on form. Yet, since the corpus consisted of a set of lectures recorded in two different disciplines, some differences were observed among them. These differences seem to be due to several factors concerning the contextual variables that characterize the lectures in each sub-corpus, such as the type of study (bachelor's degree vs master's degree), the reason for the use of English in both degrees, the type of participants in each group or the teacher's attitude. The results of this research showed that different lecturers have varying conceptualizations of EMI lectures; therefore, different experiences were highlighted in the various programs in which data were collected.

In regard to the factors or reasons why participants use this particular set of pragmatic strategies, results showed that it has to do with context-dependent features, such as the difficulties encountered when using a language different from the participants' L1 in high-stake academic programmes with the aim of teaching and learning contents, the participants' orientations towards English-native models, the different level of language knowledge by students and the lecturers' different attitudes towards the use of English in their lectures, the academic institution's regulations and practices towards languages in each sub-corpus (bachelor's degree vs master's degree), and the fact that a high number of students share their L1 (Spanish) with the lecturers.

The difficulties in using a vehicular language different from the participants' L1 to teach and learn highly intellectually demanding concepts give rise to the frequent use of strategies mainly by the lecturers. These EMI lectures took place in a Spanish university with Spanish lecturers and both Spanish and international students with different mother tongues. Therefore, there was partial overlap in the speakers' L1 and complete overlap in the language that they chose to use as a lingua franca—English (Mortensen 2013: 36). In general terms, pragmatic strategies in this study were used to support smooth communicative discourse and prevent misunderstanding. This means most usually to pre-empt communicative breakdowns and negotiate and clarify meaning. Yet, participants also approach pragmatic strategies to remedy production problems and co-construct an understanding of signaling solidarity.

The strategies found in this study differ from those in similar studies in other universities, mostly in other European countries (Björkman 2011b; Hynninen 2011; Lesznyák 2002; Mauranen 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2012; Smit 2010), which reveals

AU: The reference "Björkman 2011b" is cited in the text but is not listed in the references list. Please either delete in-text citation or provide full reference details.

that pragmatic strategies are highly contextual and used in 'situated and strategic interaction' (Cogo 2010: 298). This means that what may seem strategically useful in some ELF contexts may not be so in others. The main distinctive feature of this context is the use of the lecturers' own L1. Although there have been lecturers who did not make use of their mother tongue, the results showed that there are lecturers who consider it useful in the task of scaffolding in order to ensure interlocutors' understanding. This context seems to be a win-win strategy by which the lecturers are not only efficiently conveying and scaffolding the meaning but also providing an alignment component, as a high number of the students present in the class shared the Spanish-L1 with the lecturers.

In conclusion, the results of this study demonstrated that ELF speakers use various pragmatic strategies to support smooth interaction and contribute to the building of considerate and mutually supportive communicative behavior, even in academic interactions, such as academic content lecturers, where the lecturers and the students have different status or interactive positions. As Morell (2007) points out, lecturers are concerned with not only the ideational aspects, i.e., the informational content, but also the interpersonal aspects and everything that plays a role in establishing a relationship between the lecturer and the students.

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