English as a Lingua Franca among Erasmus Students at an Austrian University: An Analysis of Communication Strategies

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables and Figures .................................................................................................................. 6
List of Abbreviations ......................................................................................................... 7
1. Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 8

2. English as a Lingua Franca ......................................................................................... 12
   2.1 Introducing ELF ......................................................................................................... 12
   2.2 Defining ELF ............................................................................................................. 15
   2.3 ELF and World Englishes ......................................................................................... 22
   2.4 The ownership of English ......................................................................................... 24
   2.5 Communities of practice ......................................................................................... 26
   2.6 Summary .................................................................................................................. 28

3. ELF research ................................................................................................................. 29
   3.1 ELF research according to domain ......................................................................... 29
      3.1.1 Business ELF .................................................................................................... 30
      3.1.2 Academic ELF .................................................................................................. 31
   3.2 ELF research according to location ......................................................................... 33
   3.3 ELF research according to linguistic levels .............................................................. 35
      3.3.1 Phonology ......................................................................................................... 36
      3.3.2 Lexis/lexicogrammar ......................................................................................... 38
      3.3.3 Pragmatics ....................................................................................................... 41
   3.4 Summary .................................................................................................................. 43

4. Communication strategies ........................................................................................... 44
   4.1 Previous CS taxonomies .......................................................................................... 44
   4.2 Communication strategies in the Erasmus community ............................................. 54
      4.2.1 Self-initiated communicative strategies ............................................................. 54
      4.2.2 Other-initiated communicative strategies ......................................................... 55
      4.2.3 Repetition ......................................................................................................... 57
      4.2.4 Paraphrase ....................................................................................................... 59
4.2.5 Word replacement ........................................................................................................ 60
4.2.6 Comprehension checks .......................................................................................... 61
4.2.7 Confirmation checks ................................................................................................ 61
4.2.8 Clarification requests .............................................................................................. 62
4.2.9 Co-creating the message ....................................................................................... 63
4.3 Summary ....................................................................................................................... 64

5. The study: objectives, research questions, methodology, data .................................... 65
   5.1 The aim of the research, research questions and methodological approach .......... 65
   5.2 Data collection .......................................................................................................... 67
      5.2.1 Research method and design .............................................................................. 68
      5.2.2 Participants ......................................................................................................... 72
   5.3 Data analysis ............................................................................................................. 75
   5.4 Research ethics .......................................................................................................... 79
   5.5 Summary ................................................................................................................... 79

6. Findings .......................................................................................................................... 81
   6.1 Self-initiated communicative strategies ................................................................. 81
      6.1.1 Self-initiated repetition ..................................................................................... 82
      6.1.2 Self-initiated paraphrase ................................................................................... 91
      6.1.3 Self-initiated word replacement ....................................................................... 95
      6.1.4 Comprehension checks ................................................................................... 99
   6.2 Other-initiated communicative strategies ............................................................. 108
      6.2.1 Other-initiated repetition .................................................................................. 110
      6.2.2 Other-initiated paraphrase .............................................................................. 113
      6.2.3 Confirmation checks ......................................................................................... 114
      6.2.4 Clarification requests ....................................................................................... 119
      6.2.5 Co-creating the message .................................................................................. 126
   6.3 Summary ................................................................................................................... 132
7. Discussion .......................................................................................................................... 133
  7.1 Self-initiated communicative strategies ................................................................. 134
  7.2 Other-initiated communicative strategies ......................................................... 137
  7.3 Summary .................................................................................................................. 140
8. Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 141
  8.1 Summary .................................................................................................................. 141
  8.2 Limitations ................................................................................................................ 143
  8.3 Contribution and future research ......................................................................... 144
9. Bibliography .................................................................................................................. 146
10. Appendix ...................................................................................................................... 163
    A. Abstract .................................................................................................................. 163
        Abstrakt (German) ................................................................................................. 164
    B. Interview questions ............................................................................................... 165
    C. Transcription sample ............................................................................................ 166
TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: ELF and EFL ........................................................................................................... 20
Table 2: Various taxonomies of communication strategies ...................................................... 46
Table 3: Investigated strategies in ELF studies ....................................................................... 50
Table 4: Further reported ELF CSs research ......................................................................... 53
Table 5: Classification of repetition ....................................................................................... 58
Table 6: The country of origin and number of participants, including their gender ................. 73
Figure 1: Taxonomy of communicative strategies perceived in the study .............................. 56
Figure 2: Screenshot of VoiceScribe ...................................................................................... 76
Figure 3: Number of self-initiated communicative strategies ................................................ 81
Figure 4: Self-initiated repetitions according to time .............................................................. 83
Figure 5: Self-initiated repetition according to form ............................................................... 88
Figure 6: Self-initiated paraphrase according to time ............................................................ 92
Figure 7: Categories and frequency of self-initiated word replacement ................................. 96
Figure 8: Forms and frequency of comprehension checks .................................................... 100
Figure 9: Number of other-initiated communicative strategies ............................................. 109
Figure 10: Other-initiated repetition according to form ......................................................... 110
Figure 11: Forms and frequency of confirmation checks ......................................................... 115
Figure 12: Forms and frequency of clarification requests ....................................................... 120
Figure 13: Forms and frequency of co-creating the message ............................................... 127
Figure 14: Number of communicative strategies in the corpus ............................................ 133
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE.......................... Asian Corpus of English
BELF......................... Business English as a lingua franca
CA......................... Conversation Analysis
CS......................... Communication strategy
EFL ......................... English as a foreign language
EIL ......................... English as an International Language
ELF ......................... English as a lingua franca
ELFA....................... English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings
ENL ......................... English as a native language
ESN......................... Erasmus Student Network
L1 ......................... First language
L2 ......................... Second language
LFC ......................... Lingua Franca Core
LFE ......................... Lingua Franca English
NNS......................... Non-native speaker
NNSE ....................... Non-native speaker of English
NS ......................... Native speaker
NSE ......................... Native speaker of English
SLA ......................... Second language acquisition
VOICE ..................... Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English
WE ......................... World Englishes
1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been much interest in the phenomenon of globalisation and its impact on the English language. Nowadays, we can say with certainty that, due to globalization, English has spread worldwide extending its use cases along the way. As English has touched the sands of other language shores, it has undergone a change. Moreover, the situation becomes increasingly complicated as the number of speakers of English rises exponentially. This exceptional circumstance, which we witness today, demands different approaches and theoretical frameworks as far as the analysis of English is concerned.

The fact that English has been used as a lingua franca for centuries does not represent an astonishing discovery. However, its unique position today is that English is used on a global scale to an extent far surpassing its earlier reach. As a result, the last two decades have led to a rapid expansion in the field of linguistics exploring this particular state of affairs.

As a student and researcher of English linguistics, one is often surrounded by notions of English as a native language (ENL) or English as a foreign language (EFL), and one attempts to discover how these fit into an approach to language teaching. I previously approached teaching in a prescriptive manner, with the underlying assumption that learners of English should aspire to obtain near-native proficiency. The sociolinguistic term of English as a lingua franca (ELF) only entered my field of awareness in Graz around 2015.

At that time, I learned about the concept of lingua franca and experienced first-hand how English is used as such among Erasmus students. As an Erasmus student, studying abroad and using only English for communication purposes, I began to consider the misunderstandings that could arise in interactions. It is accepted knowledge that such misunderstandings occur in a
conversation between L2 speakers and native speakers of English. However, I could not help but wonder whether they are similarly to be expected in the interaction of non-native speakers of English (NNSE). If misunderstandings occur, what would explain their occurrence? How would the speakers respond to overcome those misunderstandings? Would there be a complete breakdown in communication or would speakers use strategies in order to overcome the misunderstanding? If the latter, what strategies would they employ? These potential strategies baffled me until I was able to trace them in the speech and behaviour of Erasmus students in Graz, but I similarly came to recognise them in my usage of English. In this way, I witnessed the full potential of ELF. As a teacher of English, it also helped me evaluate the differences between EFL and ELF; how a learner of English is different from a user; whether the classroom setting plays a significant role. My experience talking to other ELF speakers has driven this research. Throughout these conversations, I paid closer attention to the pragmatics of ELF. Discovering more about this area of study leads me to conclude that there is much yet to be explored. This thesis aims to reveal some of the contextual influences of ELF speakers and the strategies they use to secure understanding. As a member of the Erasmus network and an ELF speaker, I intended to investigate the usefulness and purpose of strategies in the Erasmus community, i.e. how and to what extent Erasmus students exploit ELF in order to achieve their desired aims.

A considerable body of research has been published on ELF. These studies have sought to determine the usage of ELF, ranging from pedagogical implications to linguistic analyses. Apart from Kalocsai (2014), there is a general lack of research in communicative strategies in the Erasmus community. Most of the data on communicative strategies pertains to particular strategies analysing them in greater detail. In contrast, this thesis will review the most frequently recurring strategies in an attempt to build a communicative strategies framework.
At this point, it is crucial to emphasise that it is beyond the scope of this study to analyse all communicative strategies mentioned and described in the existing body of literature. My approach follows Björkman's taxonomy (2014) and attempts to illuminate the choice of pragmatic strategies predominantly used by Erasmus students. Moreover, the purpose of this dissertation is not to report on each category extensively, but rather to rely on brief elucidations thereof in aid of the primary goal.

It should be highlighted that the way Erasmus exchange students communicate with each other represents the aspect that particularly interests me. I am of the opinion that the ELF framework provides the best approach from which valuable insights could be gained. The focus of this study is on the strategies that contribute to mutual understanding in ELF communication settings. This thesis seeks to examine the conversations by carrying out a qualitative analysis; however, in order to ascertain more about the frequency, some quantitative elements will be used. Furthermore, it also aims to look critically at the dynamics of ELF communication. Much research on ELF has established that fluidity represents one of its core features. Keeping this in mind, it will be interesting to discover how the Erasmus community fits into this framework and find the relevance of communicative strategies regularly used by this group.

This thesis aims to address the following research questions: What are the strategies Erasmus students use in order to prevent and overcome possible misunderstandings in a communication event? To what extent do Erasmus students use communicative strategies? What are the functions of communicative strategies? Along with the methodology and rationale for this study, these questions will be elaborated on in chapter five.
In this chapter, I have contextualised my interest in this topic alongside the basic information concerning the theoretical framework and the aims I set out to achieve. Furthermore, I have outlined the research questions framed for this study.

The remainder of the thesis proceeds as follows: chapter two introduces the theoretical framework behind the term English as a lingua franca and looks at how it is defined by comparing it to the notions of World Englishes, EFL, and ownership of English. The third chapter is concerned with the research carried out in the ELF paradigm. Chapter four focuses on communicative strategies in general and those employed by Erasmus students, in particular, while in chapter five, the data and methodology used for this study are presented. Chapter six analyses the data obtained during the interviews, while chapter seven includes a discussion of the findings. The final chapter concludes with a brief outline of the findings and their implication for future research, including the limitations of the study.
2. ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

This part of the thesis provides a brief theoretical overview of ELF, starting with its emergence and the origin of the term itself. It then goes on to the definitions of ELF, given by eminent scholars, observing whether between them there are any considerable differences. The next section describes in greater detail ELF and World Englishes, i.e. how these two paradigms relate to each other. Finally, the remaining parts of this chapter introduce the concept of communities of practice and discuss the ownership of English with regard to the native/non-native English speaker dichotomy.

2.1 Introducing ELF

The prominent role of English in the world can be ascribed to numerous factors that have led to it becoming a lingua franca. One of these factors is British colonisation during which English was introduced as an official language in several countries. Additionally, the influence of the United States has also contributed to the ubiquitous role of English in the world (Neuner, 2002, p. 7). Furthermore on this subject, Crystal (2001) attributes the overall influence of English to the development of technology, the Internet and mass media. Some linguists even cite the role of the formation of large multinational companies and export flows in an interconnected world. English is seen as the only language able to match particular conditions of such cross-border economic organisation (Truchot, 2002, p. 13). Whatever the reasons for the spread of English, the fact remains that they gave rise to the emergence of ELF.

Looking back in history, it has been argued that a certain number of languages served lingua franca functions, namely Latin, Greek, Arabic, etc. (Ostler, 2005). At this point, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by the term ‘lingua franca’. According to a definition provided
by Samarin (1987), “[I]t is on the basis of function alone that a language is considered to be a lingua franca, by which term is designated any lingual medium of communication between people of different mother tongues, for whom it is a second language” (p. 371). Furthermore, Samarin (ibid) goes on to say that numerous terms described this phenomenon, i.e. ‘contact language’, ‘contact vernacular’, ‘trade language’, etc.

With reference to the term, Knapp and Meierkord (2002) draw our attention to its very first mention, stating that it referred to an Italian-based pidgin, which included aspects of Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Persian, and was used for trading purposes in the south-eastern Mediterranean from the 15th to the 19th centuries (p. 9). Other authors mention another name that was used for this contact language, namely Sabir (Kahane & Kahane, 1976; Dakhlia, 2008). On the same note, House (2003) comments that the origin of the word could be traced to the Arabic word ‘lisan-al-farang’, which denoted “an intermediary language used by speakers of Arabic with travellers from Western Europe” (p. 557). To elaborate on this, it should be pointed out that this word literally meant ‘the language of the Franks’ whereby Franks referred to all Western Europeans. Afterwards, the term was translated into Latin as ‘lingua franca’.

Even though English performed a lingua franca function in parts of colonial Africa and South/Southeast Asia as early as in the 16th century (Crystal, 2003), the notion of ELF only gained acceptance in the 1980s (Hüllen, 1982; Knapp 1985, 1987). Nevertheless, empirical studies were not carried out since their concern, as Knapp (2002) later expounded on, was “mainly conceptual in nature, stressing the importance of ELF as an objective for English language teaching and also postulating the necessity of empirical studies that could identify formal or functional aspects to be taken account of in teaching” (p. 218).
During the late 1990s, a few scholars displayed some enthusiasm for the topic (e.g. Firth, 1996; Firth & Wagner, 1997; House, 1999; Jenkins, 1996a, 1996b, 1998) but failed to put forward a theoretical proposition that would explain the phenomenon (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 282). At the turn of the millennium, two detailed discussions and analyses of ELF emerged. One of these was Jenkins’ (2000) seminal work, dealing with the phonology of ELF (or English as an International language, as it was called back then). She claimed that native English pronunciation did not represent the benchmark against which we should measure mutual intelligibility in ELF communication contexts (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 282). The other was an article by Seidlhofer (2001) in which she mentioned the ‘conceptual gap’ and stated that due to “the most extensive contemporary use of English” society is in dire need of empirical research that would shed light on this phenomenon (p. 133).

Furthermore, Seidlhofer (2001) highlighted the compilation of the first ELF corpus, the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), launched by her team at the University of Vienna with a view to providing ELF descriptions. From 2003 to 2008, a one-million-word corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings (ELFA) was compiled at Tampere and partly Helsinki University under the supervision of Mauranen (Mauranen & Ranta, 2008). Apart from these two corpora, Andy Kirkpatrick (2010) described another project, namely the Asian Corpus of English (ACE), carried out in East and Southeast Asia with a view to comparing Asian and European ELF features.

As a direct response to Jenkins’ and Seidlhofer’s publications, a number of articles, journal issues and doctoral theses dealing with ELF have grown rapidly over the past two decades. Consequently, there has been the establishment of ELF conferences, held annually since 2008, and
the *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, which as of 2011 has focused on the most important developments in ELF (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 282).

Despite the fact that a plethora of research into ELF reveals new tendencies and practices in the use of English, this phenomenon is still regarded as controversial due to a great deal of debate it has generated among scholars in the past few decades. Having introduced the term lingua franca as well as ELF and the major publications, the next section of this chapter addresses ways of defining ELF.

### 2.2 Defining ELF

Since the notion of ELF appeared, there has been a degree of uncertainty around its conceptualisation. Doubtless, one of the first vexing questions has been whether native speakers of English (NSEs) should be participants in ELF conversations. In regard to this issue, Firth (1996) identified ELF as “a ‘contact language’ between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication” (p. 240). In the same vein, House (1999) notes that “ELF interactions are defined as interactions between members of two or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue” (p. 74).

What these definitions have in common is the perspective of excluding NSEs from ELF conversations for the reason of not being perceived as foreign speakers of English. Nevertheless, a majority of ELF researchers are of the view that NSEs should not be omitted from ELF’s definitions. Seidlhofer is a proponent of this perspective by proposing that conversation should not be limited only to non-native speakers of English in ELF contexts. Thus, she argues that ELF represents “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is
the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7). Moreover, she goes on to say that if we take into account that there are more NNSEs than NSEs in the world, we will come to the inescapable conclusion that native speakers would represent a minority in ELF conversations. By contrast, McKay (2009) proposes that the term ELF be employed for conversations between NNSEs, whereas English as an International Language (EIL) may include NSEs.

On the same note Jennifer Jenkins (2009b), one of the leading proponents of ELF, tried to elucidate the concept by outlining it in the following five statements:

1. It is used in contexts in which speakers with different L1s (mostly, but not exclusively from the Expanding Circle) need it as their means to communicate with each other.

2. ELF is an alternative to EFL rather than a replacement for it, and depends on the speaker’s (or learner’s) potential needs and preferences.

3. Linguistically ELF involves innovations that differ from ENL and which, in some cases, are shared by most ELF speakers.

4. Pragmatically, it involves the use of certain communication strategies, particularly accommodation and code-switching. This is because ELF forms depend crucially on the specific communication context rather than being an ‘all-purpose’ English.

5. Descriptions of ELF that may lead to codification are drawn from communication involving proficient ELF speakers. (pp. 143-145).

A different perspective has been adopted by Cogo and Dewey (2012), who identify ELF on three main levels, namely in terms of its settings, functions, and through the research paradigms. With
respect to the settings, they argue that ELF research should consider “any language contact setting in which English is spoken as the primary medium of communication” (Cogo & Dewey, 2012, p. 12), therefore including speakers from all of Kachru’s three circles. Turning to the question of functions, they perceive it as “any interaction where English is the preferred option for intercultural communication, where it is spoken predominantly (but by no means exclusively) among Expanding Circle speakers who usually do not share another language” (Cogo & Dewey, 2012, p. 12). The third characteristic that ELF portrays through numerous empirical studies, according to them, would be the creative instances of English usage found “in corpora of naturally occurring talk” (Cogo & Dewey, 2012, p. 12).

In addition to the definitions thereof, it is of paramount importance to mention the misunderstandings around ELF. One of them deals with the diverse nature ELF encompasses. In attempting to compile all data with the use of corpora, ELF researchers have tried to identify and describe different forms of English (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2004). However, some scholars advocate that ELF can be too diverse, meaning that everything is acceptable in ELF. As a consequence, proponents of this theory think that only speakers of Kachru’s inner circle speak ‘proper English’ and that any deviation from native speaker standard is perceived as an error. In fact, ELF promoters, in essence, try to prove the opposite and provide a different perspective in which a typical speaker of ELF would not aim at ENL norms and would not be judged according to native English use. Therefore, as one might have expected, recently there has been a significant amount of debate on whether ELF is a variety ‘sui generis’ (House, 1999, p. 74) that may have its own norms and be completely independent of native models (Seidlhofer, 2001, p. 15).
Moreover, Seidlhofer (2011) emphasises that there are a couple of misconceptions about the name itself that could turn out to be misleading (p. 76). One of them is the use of the term Lingua Franca English (LFE) often found in the literature (Canagarajah, 2007). On this note, she tries to compare it with varieties such as Indian English or Ghanaian English and explain that this type of analogy could “suggest that LFE should be categorized in formal terms as a distinct variety of the language in the World Englishes paradigm” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 77). In integrating these assumptions with ELF, she suggests that we would be spreading the idea that ELF could be defined as a ‘variety of’ and be on a par with other World Englishes. She concludes in stating that ELF in her own interpretation differs in function and form; hence it is not a variety of English but “English that functions as a lingua franca” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 77).

As regards the term lingua franca, it bears both negative and positive connotations. On the one hand, McArthur (2001) thinks it designates “low-level makeshift languages” and that the attachment and comparison to English is ill-conceived (p. 1). On the other hand, Seidlhofer (2011) lists all the positive associations; one of them being the connection with Latin, which was for a long time used for educational purposes. Additionally, she draws a line between lingua franca and its translation ‘free language’ from the Romance languages emphasising the ability of ELF not to be confined to countries and people, as is the case with other varieties.

Some researchers hold that ELF denotes a communication system that is “continuously being created by its users, not a language in an abstract sense so much as a set of processes” (Cook, 2013, p. 31), which in de Saussure's (2011) terms would translate to parole rather than langue. Furthermore, it should be noted that there is a pressing need to understand ELF as a phenomenon that goes through natural processes of variation and change. Therefore, the challenging mission
would be not merely to describe ELF features but to go beyond and uncover the reasons for their use and function.

Even though the significant share of research deals with pragmatics issues in ELF, the work that can be found on other linguistic levels should not be neglected. For example, Jenkins (2000), in her research on ELF phonology, points out that by describing its features, we are identifying the possible roots of unintelligibility in ELF interactions. Research into ELF has so far just scratched the surface as far as its features and functions are concerned.

Another notion important to mention is that ELF researchers try to place emphasis on function rather than form, meaning that the ELF studies describe ELF not for the purpose of codifying it as a variety but highlighting its flexibility and variability. However, the paradox and the dilemma that surrounds ELF lies in some researchers defining ELF as flexible and heterogeneous while other studies strive to analyse and codify ELF. To put it simply, ELF represents a novel phenomenon, which because of its transient and heterogenous nature cannot be codified and requires a new theoretical framework.

In order to fully clarify what ELF represents, the striking parallel with English as a foreign language needs to be drawn. Table 1 summarises the differences between the two paradigms according to Jenkins.
Table 1: ELF and EFL (adapted from Jenkins, 2013, p. 26)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELF</th>
<th>EFL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belongs with Global Englishes</td>
<td>Belongs with Foreign Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference perspective</td>
<td>Deficit perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its metaphors: contact and change</td>
<td>Its metaphors: interference and fossilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code-switching seen as bilingual resource</td>
<td>Code-switching seen as error resulting from gap in knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal: successful intercultural communication</td>
<td>Goal: successful communication with NSEs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To begin with, ELF acknowledges the fact that most English speakers are non-native and is associated with the Global Englishes model. On the other hand, the EFL perspective supports the ‘foreign language paradigm’, which implies that the primary reason to learn a foreign language is to enter into a conversation with native speakers of English (Jenkins, 2013, p. 26). What follows is that in ELF any difference from ENL is not identified as an error, which is the case in EFL. While the participants in ELF may find their intercultural skills to be of great value, in EFL they strive to imitate the speech of native speakers as much as possible.

Furthermore, ELF and EFL are different in terms of functions and should, therefore, be adopted for different goals. While EFL favours communication with native speakers, ELF adopts an approach in which a successful interaction is defined by the use of communication skills and strategies between mainly NNSEs who are seen as users and not learners.
Moreover, Jenkins (2013) observes that it is the metaphors used by the two approaches that also lead to division (p. 26). Thus, we can find metaphors of language change and contact in ELF while in EFL there are metaphors of fossilisation and interference. By way of illustration, she also highlights how code-switching in ELF is seen as something that could be of use so as to expand participants’ linguistic repertoire. Conversely, in EFL code-switching tends to be described as a lack of speakers’ ability to express themselves (Jenkins, 2013, p. 26).

When speaking about the non-standard use of tenses, Cogo and Dewey (2012) point out that the matter of error would be “the wrong kind of question to ask in the context of ELF” (p. 78). The primary reason might be the existence of two different paradigms with two different perspectives. Namely, EFL imposes NSEs norms and anything that differs slightly from these notions might be regarded as erroneous whereas ELF is “used in communication contexts where NSs are not the target interlocutors, and therefore where they do not have the right to regard themselves as the reference point against which correctness is judged” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 139).

On a similar note, Seidlhofer (2011) outlines the differences between ELF and EFL by maintaining that the linguacultural norms, which in the EFL paradigm are pre-existing or re-affirmed, in ELF are ad hoc and negotiated. The explanation behind this is that in the EFL concept if you want to “make a bid for membership of this NS community, you strive to abide by these norms and are judged by your success in doing so” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 17). In ELF, participants in a conversation need to cooperate on the spot in order to achieve a successful communication. What is more, this is a different type of community, comprising mainly but not necessarily NNSEs, in which using the kind of language typically associated with native speakers would be detrimental to the interaction (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 17).
Before moving on to the next section, I should emphasise that in this study, the participants are described as users and not learners, who make use of the English language and adapt it to their communicative goals. In view of this fact, it should be brought to a knowledge that by adopting this stance my study is in line with other scholars carrying out ELF research. Furthermore, my position on ELF would entail describing it as a naturally occurring phenomenon found in multilingual environments and used between speakers with different linguacultural backgrounds for whom English represents the only medium of communication employed with the purpose of securing comprehension.

So far, this section has focussed on ELF definitions and the differences between ELF and EFL. The following section will discuss another point of reference often connected to ELF.

**2.3 ELF and World Englishes**

This part will start by outlining the similarities and differences between World Englishes (WE) and ELF. Before proceeding with an examination thereof, it is necessary to define WE. In the literature, the term tends to be used to refer to the representation of ‘indigenized/ nativized’ varieties of English that are to be found in Kachru’s outer circle (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 78). A brief summary of Kachru’s three circles of English (1985) will serve the purpose of clarity. Starting with Kachru’s inner circle, English is used by native speakers and is thus referred to as ENL. Further, there is the outer circle, which comprises once colonised territories where English today plays the role of an official second language used mainly for the purposes of education, administration, etc. Finally, the third is the expanding circle encompassing the rest of the world where, according to Kachru, English is spoken as a foreign language.
As far as WE is concerned, the primary focus of research is on communities that are described in terms of geographical borders with the aim of establishing core characteristics of a particular variety. Therefore, we can today speak of Malaysian English, Indian English, Sri Lankan English, which linguistically are partly independent of ENL norms (Cogo & Dewey, 2012, p. 8).

Concerning communities in ELF, the situation is somewhat different. They are not as homogeneous as they seem to be in WE settings. There is a plethora of linguacultural backgrounds involved in a regular conversation that make the interaction hybrid and extremely fluid. Furthermore, ELF is not so clearly delineated even though it had “its primary focus on Kachru’s Expanding Circle, but obviously communication via ELF frequently happens in and across all three of Kachru’s circles” (Seidlhofer, 2009, p. 236). To reiterate, as Jenkins observes: “ELF research operates across national boundaries” and “is concerned with communication across nationalities” (Jenkins, 2013, p. 28). In contrast to this, WE tends to look into English varieties of post-colonial countries through a nationalistic perspective (Jenkins, 2013, p. 28).

In the case of communities, Seidlhofer (2011) thinks that certain definitions need to be reformulated due to the pervasive and globalising effect of the English language in the last couple of decades. She argues that the concepts of ‘community’ and ‘variety’ require further elaboration so that they could fit into the ELF paradigm. In her opinion, they depend too much on each other so that a variety cannot stabilise if a speech community is not identified. Thus, Seidlhofer (2011) proposes that the concept of ‘community of practice’ would be a better solution for ELF (p. 87). In the section to come, I will deal more with this issue.

Furthermore, Seidlhofer reports that ELF cannot be described in relation to Kachruvian circles and that it rather performs “a function of the transcultural exploitation of the communicative
resources of all three” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 81). Therefore, it comes as no surprise why ELF is seen today by its proponents as a means to encompass a range of communicative situations. So far, this section has focussed on the issues regarding the correlations between WE and ELF. The following section will focus on the ever-prevailing native speakers’ assumption that the English language is in essence their property.

2.4 The ownership of English

In order to illustrate the concept of the ownership of English, it would seem fit to quote famous sociolinguist Trudgill, who argues: “The true repository of the English language is its native speakers, and there are so many of them that they can afford to let non-natives do what they like with it so long as what they do is confined to a few words here and there” (Trudgill, 2002, p. 151). The logic behind this statement might suggest that Trudgill considers the number of speakers to be of vital importance. As early as in 1997, Graddol observed that even though native speakers of English think that the language is theirs, it will be non-natives that will shape its future. On this note, Crystal (2003) calculates that around 400 million speakers could be said to be native speakers of English. Moreover, he mentions that the number of L2 speakers is considered to be around roughly the same figure whereas the number of EFL speakers is around 750 million speakers. Even though these numbers may have changed today, the undeniable fact is that non-native speakers constitute a majority of English speakers (Graddol, 2006). Therefore, if the number of speakers is one of the criteria relevant for the discussion about the ownership of English, Seidlhofer (2011) observes that we can unequivocally state that non-native speakers represent the repository of the English language. In the same vein, Brumfit (2001) points out that it “rests with the people who
use it” suggesting that non-native speakers should be treated as users of English and not failed speakers (p. 116).

Some linguists (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1999) even think that an error, according to their native speaker standards, in a non-native’s speech may lead to the creation of “false and unintended impressions” (p. 29). Thus, they are implying that NNSEs might find themselves in an unfortunate situation not being able to express their thoughts. In her seminal work, Seidlhofer (2011) tries to oppose this normative attitude by stating that linguistic accuracy is not the most crucial factor as far as intelligibility is concerned. She supports her claim by mentioning Rubin’s experiment (Rubin, 1992). By drawing on the concept of attitudes, Rubin has been able to show that intelligibility problems may occur due to “perceptions of ethnic, racial, and linguacultural differences” rather than “the actual linguistic forms that speakers produce” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 35).

Furthermore, in recent years, there has been an increasing body of work reporting that non-native speakers are better at adjusting when it comes to intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2007; Sweeney & Zhu, 2010). Therefore, if this line of thought is to be pursued, Seidlhofer deduces (2011) that not having this type of skill might prove to be a disadvantage for native speakers.

Given all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that there are deeply entrenched attitudes which underpin a native speaker’s privilege of thinking that English belongs to them. Most ELF researchers, however, agree that these attitudes might seem somewhat outdated if we take the unprecedented global role of English into consideration (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Jenkins, 2013; Seidlhofer, 2011).
2.5 Communities of practice

As explained earlier, Seidlhofer (2011) strongly urged that the concepts of ‘variety’ and ‘community’ should be reconsidered due to the considerable change in the English language (p. 83). In the literature, there have been early attempts to define a speech community. In one of those definitions outlined by Hymes (1962), he depicts a speech community as “a local unit, characterized for its members by common locality and primary interaction” (p. 30). However, Seidlhofer (2011) argues that this could not apply today since the introduction of the Internet marked the onset of a new era in which face-to-face contact is not attached to the geographic location.

In stating that there “is an exponential increase in ‘dislocated’ interactions driven by needs and wants in specific domains of use”, Seidlhofer (2011) suggests that the long-used term ‘communities of practice’ should be reformulated in order to depict the sociolinguistic reality of ELF (p. 87). In the same vein, Dewey (2009) elaborates on the notion of a community of practice by stating that Wenger’s original conception of the terms community and practice is slightly conservative and that it needs to be further expanded so that it encompasses the true nature of ELF (p. 77). He concludes in saying that “by borrowing this term, and perhaps only slightly modifying its earlier definitions, we are able to detach descriptions of language variation and change from geographically defined locations” (Dewey, 2009, p. 77).

It is necessary at this point to explain what the term ‘community of practice’ is generally understood to mean. Lave and Wenger (1991) were apparently the first to use this notion; however, it was only later that it became defined by three criteria: ‘mutual engagement in shared practices’, ‘jointly negotiated enterprise’, and ‘shared repertoire’ (Wenger, 1998). ‘Mutual engagement’
would mean that the members of a community meet regularly, communicate with each other directly and form relationships. ‘Jointly negotiated enterprise’ implies a shared goal among the members, whereas the ‘shared repertoire’ would include speech styles or other social practices that the members have in common (Wenger, 1998).

Yet, in order to describe a language, the concept of community is often found to be of vital importance. Even if that “community looks potentially enormous, even amorphous”, as is the case with ELF (Mauranen, 2012, p. 18). Furthermore, Mauranen adds that even though we cannot single out any ELF community, “nearly the whole world uses ELF to a notable degree in their communicative activities” (Mauranen, 2012, p. 18).

This study perceives the Erasmus community as a community of practice that is observed through three dimensions. As mentioned before, jointly negotiated enterprise involves having a shared goal; however, in the study this criterion is not shaped by the mutual task that the participants might have at hand. In other words, it meant sharing similar experiences i.e. spending a certain amount of time abroad in order to foster international friendships, experience a new culture and language and further their education. Mutual engagement of Erasmus students is reflected through shared activities, which in Graz implied regular meetings in pubs, parties, international dinners and field trips organised by Erasmus Student Network (ESN). Finally, shared repertoire revolves around the practices, activities and beliefs of a typical Erasmus community. In this scenario, Erasmus students had the following patterns in common: meeting for pre-drinking before going to the clubs, playing drinking or other types of games, or being involved in a romantic relationship.
2.6 Summary

This chapter began by introducing the term lingua franca. It went on to describe ELF by providing the definitions proposed by its advocates. What followed was a comparison of World Englishes and ELF and the question of the ownership of English. The last part of this chapter was dedicated to communities of practice, which is the approach taken in this thesis. The next chapter outlines the research carried out in ELF.
3. ELF RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter is to outline some of the most prominent empirical research that has been carried out in the field of ELF and pinpoint the areas into which the research has branched alongside themes that still need to be tackled. It is divided into three main sections, each of which looks more closely at the criterion on which ELF research has been based. The first section deals with ELF research according to the domain criterion, placing emphasis on business and academic ELF. The following section takes into account the location criterion while the last one moves on to describe research on linguistics aspects on different levels.

3.1 ELF research according to domain

Over the past two decades, an increasing amount of literature on ELF has focused on domains such as business, tourism, the media, technology, school settings etc. (Jenkins, 2013, p. 29). However, two domains have represented the significant centres of language contact more than others, namely business and higher education. The reasons for the extensive research carried out in business settings could be explained by the fact that English plays a significant role in international business and is used worldwide as the main means of communication. As far as higher education is concerned, the growing interest in academic ELF was presumably sparked by the vast number of international students and researchers with different sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds and for whom English serves as a common language. Moreover, another reason for choosing to analyse ELF in academia could be explained by the fact that it is the most convenient field to research due to linguists’ direct involvement and in which the participants investigated are proficient enough to converse in discussions. Correspondingly, they belong to a community of
practice in which processes of adaptation and accommodation could point to interesting conclusions.

3.1.1 Business ELF

There is no doubt that English has secured its place in international business settings and consequently gained the status of a lingua franca (Charles, 2007; Piekkari, 2009; Rogerson-Revell, 2007). Business English as a lingua franca (BELF) has been a prominent field of ELF research that brought to light some interesting observations ever since the term was introduced in 2005 (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005). One of them is that the communication between participants is rather content-oriented, involving specific knowledge relating to business, while the form itself like mastering of NSE’s grammar and pronunciation did not represent such a vital part in communication (Cogo, 2016; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010).

Whether introducing English in multinational companies as their corporate language represents an obstacle for NNSEs or NSEs has proved to be the topic of recent research (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 298). From an NNSEs point of view, choosing the language other than their L1 may make them feel threatened as compared to NSs. However, Charles & Marschan-Piekkari (2002) prove that the inverse is more probable; that NSs will suffer from being misunderstood. Moreover, the research in this sphere has mainly investigated the phenomenon of accommodation (Cogo, 2016; Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 299). In this respect, it is interesting to mention the results of research conducted by Sweeney & Zhu (2010), who dealt with accommodation strategies and ascertained that NSs do not employ such strategies in an effective way and that further training when it comes to intercultural interaction is recommended (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 298). Even though these studies show that the accommodation skills represent an important element of a successful BELF
communication carried out among NNSs, Ehrenreich (2010) claims that adhering to native speakers’ norms is still deemed appropriate especially in written correspondence.

3.1.2 Academic ELF

Another domain in which ELF is used involves academia. One of the first linguists stressing the importance of this domain was Mauanen, who started in as early as 2003 to gather data for the ELFA corpus. This corpus tries to make more apparent differences in English academic usage between ENS and ELF speakers. Also, she proposes that in order to understand academic speaking “it is necessary to rid ourselves of the baggage of native English practices” (Mauanen, 2010, p. 15). She elaborates this by stating that nowadays it would be pointless to compare English used in an academic arena to an ENL’s benchmark due to the fact that academic research is ‘international in nature’. Thus, it is not restricted to any culture, nation or language community.

In scientific research, Seidlhofer, Breiteneder & Pitzl (2006) state that English “is perceived as a sine qua non for accessing information and publishing findings” (p. 4). Therefore, many European scientific associations have chosen English as the language in which they express their opinions. However, it is not only journals and scientific research where the presence of English is particularly noticeable. It is also universities where English is used as a medium of instruction that contribute to spreading ELF in academic settings. As a result of the increase in the number of exchange programmes, students and staff mobility, the impact of globalisation is tremendous (Coleman 2006). Kruseman (as cited in Coleman, 2006, p. 4) summed this up by saying that “English is the language of science. That is the language we have to use if we wish to prepare our students for an international career in a globalizing world”.

Many ELF researchers have made extensive use of the ELFA corpus and reached valuable conclusions. Ranta (2006), for example, demonstrates how in an academic ELF interaction, one is more likely to notice the progressive instead of simple form. She attributes this to the creative use “of a resource available within the English language for their own purposes, an ‘attention-catching’ function” (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 300).

That academic ELF has gained much attention and that it continues to do that can be seen from the numerous special issues, books and conferences on this topic (Björkman, 2010, 2011a; Mauaranen & Metsä-Ketelä, 2006; Haberland et al., 2008; Mauaranen & Ranta, 2009) (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 301). Some proof that things may be changing in academic ELF is the inclination to eradicate traditional proofreading by NSEs in order to publish academic achievements (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 301). Mauaranen & Metsä-Ketelä (2006) addressed their reading audience by stating:

This special issue...is written in ELF. Though native [English] speakers have not been excluded from the volume, they have not acted as the ultimate authorities of linguistic correctness or comprehensibility. Thus, the papers have not been ‘checked by a native speaker’ as the saying goes. (p. 6, as cited in Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 301).

Another fascinating aspect that causes optimism for ELF is stated in Jenkins’ (2009a) observation that most of her interview participants did not think it was essential to impersonate native speakers of English. Accordingly, she thinks that the favourable stand to ELF stems from the experience younger generations may have gained. To support this, Jenkins (2009a) quoted an Erasmus student participating in a study done in Hungary by Peckham, Kalocsai, Kovacs & Sherman (2008):
I liked very much with the English here to speak English with non-native speakers it’s the funny new words or new pronunciations that emerge and then you just keep those because you like them so much and not important anymore to say in the right way and even more fun to create this new language. (p. 205).

Moreover, stressing the value of intelligibility among students, one of the participants stated that “Erasmus English is totally different than the real English, but it’s like we have different accents, we use these words and it’s not correct at all, it’s like quite awful sometimes [laughs] but it’s good, we can understand each other” (Jenkins, 2009a, p. 206).

Inspired by the abovementioned quote, this study will centre on discourse occurring outside the classroom so as to offer evidence for the successful use of ELF.

### 3.2 ELF research according to location

Concerning the locations of ELF research, I should mention that two geographical regions emerge as significant according to this criterion: Europe and East Asia/ASEAN\(^1\). ELF was mainly investigated in the European context, in Denmark (Hüllen, Knapp, Firth), Germany (House), the UK (Jenkins), Finland (Mauranen), Austria (James, Seidlhofer) (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 285). Furthermore, the founding of the ELFA and VOICE corpora led to more people taking part in ELF research. At the same time ELF started to be researched in the ASEAN context, namely by Deterding and Kirkpatrick (2006), after the foundation of ACE (Asian Corpus of English) in Hong Kong (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 285). Therefore, we can infer that the emergence of the three corpora

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\(^1\) The Association of South East Asian Nations
brought about more empirical work carried out in these parts of the world. What follows is a brief outline of the findings for ASEAN ELF and a comparison with the European context.

English has become “the de facto official language of ASEAN”, as it is used in the interaction among non-native speakers of English in this region (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 221). That being the case, Kirkpatrick posed the question of whether Englishes of ASEAN speakers share some distinctive features and whether a distinctive variety of English is being developed in this part of the world. However, in his research, he proved that it “would be impossible to describe ASEAN lingua franca English as a single systematic system that could be codified” (Kirkpatrick, 2007a, p. 163). Thus, he concluded that when it comes to intelligibility, participants rarely have difficulties due to cooperation and tolerance of variation (Kirkpatrick, 2007a).

Turning to ELF in Europe, Seidlhofer et al. (2006) state that it functions as “a language of wider communication”, thus fulfilling the European Union ideal and promoting movement across borders (p. 5). Moreover, they explain that English in Europe operates in two directions simultaneously, namely top-down by appearing in different domains and bottom-up “by being used by speakers from all levels of society in practically all walks of life” (Seidlhofer et al., 2006, p. 5).

Due to the VOICE corpus, a large number of studies were conducted in European settings. Seidlhofer et al. (2006) mention a range of topics that surfaced from this data, such as verb morphology (Breiteneder, 2005a, 2005b), humour (Brkinjač, 2005), metalinguistic features (Wagner, 2005), the interculture of ELF (Keitsch, 2004) (p. 13). The question remains whether in Europe there will be a heterogeneous situation in terms of linguacultural backgrounds or maybe a
distinct regional variety of ELF will appear (Euro-English) and fulfil the function of a lingua franca “beyond the boundaries of nation states and individual languages” (Seidlhofer et al., 2006, p. 24).

Overall, outside of these two regions, there has been little or no research interest in ELF. Having witnessed the significant interest in ELF in China during the 2008 Olympic Games, scholars predicted that ELF was going to be popular in Latin America due to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 285). A great deal of research in the future will be needed in order to draw conclusions. Nevertheless, it comes as no surprise that Columbia was chosen as the host for the ELF11 conference in 2019 that presented many papers on ELF in this region of the world.

When mentioning geographical areas, Jenkins (2013) points out that ELF speakers are to be found worldwide, mainly in, speaking in Kachruvian terms, Expanding Circle regions (p. 28). Furthermore, she stresses the fact that ELF is not tied to specific locations and that it is “the composition of the conversation group and the purpose and setting of the conversation” that is of value (Jenkins, 2013, p. 29).

3.3 ELF research according to linguistic level

Regarding the level of language, ELF research can be divided into three sections: phonology, lexis/lexicogrammar, and pragmatics. In each subfield, renowned linguists have tried to define ELF in terms of specific features used in communication. ELF pragmatics dominated the focus in the earliest studies conducted through a NS lens (Firth, 1996; House, 1999). In later research, ELF is investigated ‘in its own right’, using authentic data (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 286). Most of the research provided a description of spoken data; however, recently there has been an
interest in research of written ELF, even though it is still too early to draw conclusions (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 286). The following is an account of the findings on each linguistic level.

3.3.1 Phonology

It would appear understandable that the first detailed study comes from this level of language, due to the fact that “all ELF users speak the language with some trace of their L1 accent” (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 215). Jenkins, who laid the foundations for this field, concentrated on two elements in her earlier research: intelligibility and phonological accommodation. The latter revealed that when participants wanted to be understood and convey a message, they slipped into the pattern of replacing certain features of their ‘non-standard’ accent with more standard ones (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 287). Furthermore, she discovered that particular English pronunciation features hindered or allowed mutual intelligibility in a lingua franca context (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 287). The important features that represented a requirement for successful communication were labelled as the phonological Lingua Franca Core (LFC) and can be summarised as follows:

*Consonants*

- All the consonant sounds that exist in the Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) except the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/.

- The RP intervocalic /t/ ([t]) rather than a GA one.

- Clear /l/ instead of the dark [l]; regular substitution of [l] with either clear /l/ or /o/ is unproblematic for intelligibility.

- The GA rhotic variant, the retroflex approximant [ɹ] rather than the RP post-alveolar approximant [ɻ].
- The aspiration [h] following the fortis plosives /p/, /t/, and /k/ in initial position in a stressed syllable.

- Initial and medial consonant clusters but not final consonant cluster.

- Elision of /t/ and /d/, across word boundaries or within the same word, has no negative influence on intelligibility and these are regularly elided even in careful speech.

**Vowels**

- Contrast between short and long vowels.

- Second Language (L2) regional (and consistent) qualities will remain intelligible except in the case of the long vowel /ɜː/ whose quality and quantity are both core features.

- Appropriate vowel length before voiced and voiceless consonants (e.g. /iː/ is longer in ‘seed’ than in ‘seat’)

**Prosody**

- Word stress, pitch moment, rhythm, weak forms and features of connected speech and pitch movement are all non-core features. These features have insignificant influence on the learner's intelligibility and are, to a large extent, unteachable.

- Nuclear stress is critical and enhances intelligibility.

- Division of speech into smaller units facilitates intelligibility. (Zoghbor, 2018, p. 2)

In addition to LFC, Jenkins provided an overview of features considered unimportant for intelligibility and labelled them as ‘non-core features’. What is interesting is that some of them are often designated as “particularly English ones”, and were thought to be crucial for intelligible pronunciation in EFL teaching, e.g. the th-sounds and dark l allophone (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 217).
What follows is the list of these features:

- these three consonant sounds: voiceless ‘th’ /θ/, voiced ‘th’ /ð/, and dark ‘l’ [...] (note that these sounds are also being replaced in some accents of ENL)
- vowel quality (e.g. in the conversation below, R pronounces the word ‘front’ as [front] using the vowel of that in RP ‘song’, and ‘charity’ as ‘cherity’)
- weak forms (e.g. the vowel sound in ‘to’, ‘from’ and ‘of’ when replaced with a schwa)
- other features of connected speech such as assimilation (adjusting one sound to become like the next, e.g. ‘red paint’ to ‘reb paint’) and elision (leaving sounds out, e.g. ‘probably’ as ‘proibly’, ‘friendship’ as ‘frienship’)
- the direction of pitch movements
- the placement of word stress, which varies considerably even across L1 Englishes

Jenkins repeatedly stated that the LFC should not be regarded as a pronunciation model but rather as a guideline for intelligibility (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 288). Moreover, she pointed out that her LFC needs to be modified and urged for more studies to be carried out. Other scholars (Deterding & Kirkpatrick, 2006; Osimk, 2009; Pickering, 2009; Pickering & Litzenberg, 2011; Rajadurai, 2007) have reached similar conclusions (Jenkins, 2013, p. 32).

3.3.2 Lexis/lexicogrammar

There is a belief that ELF speakers “routinely but not unvaryingly exploit the language systems of English to the extent that we can identify emerging patterns of lexical and grammatical form” (Jenkins et al., 2011, pp. 288-289). At first, linguists took interest in research of language
characteristics typical of ELF spoken interaction. Nowadays, interest has shifted to identifying communicative functions that influence these characteristics (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 289).

Seidlhofer pointed out that the level of lexis and lexicogrammar were not thoroughly researched in ELF context as opposed to phonology and pragmatics. In an attempt to make a contribution to this field of ELF she conducted a survey with the aim of finding regularly occurring features. Since the appearance of this list of characteristics, the VOICE and ELFA projects have started compiling data (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 289; Cogo & Dewey, 2006, p. 73). Even though these features were seen at the beginning as hypotheses, they later proved to be highly influential. Seidlhofer (2004) summarised features thereof:

- dropping the third person present tense –s
- confusing the relative pronouns who and which
- omitting definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in ENL, and inserting them where they do not occur in ENL
- failing to use correct forms in tag questions (e.g. isn’t? or no? instead of shouldn’t they?)
- inserting redundant prepositions, as in We have to study about
- overusing certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as do, have, make, put, take
- replacing infinitive-constructions with that- clauses, as in I want that
- overdoing explicitness (e.g. black color rather than just black). (p. 220).

In order for these characteristics to be included in the typical repertoire of ELF lexis, Dewey (2007) explains the process and specific criteria that should be employed. For example, qualitative and quantitative methods need to be used in order to ensure systematicity; they need to “occur frequently and extensively with features most often produced by numerous speakers from a wide
variety of linguacultural backgrounds”, and they need to be communicatively effective (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 289).

Using Seidlhofer’s findings and adapting them to their corpus, Cogo and Dewey (2006) found additional, prominent features in the ELF lexicogrammar. One is a “preference for bare and/or full infinitive over the use of gerunds, as in interested to do rather than interested in doing, or as in to study is… and to read is…, where the infinitive is used as the subject of a clause” as well as “exploited redundancy, such as ellipsis of objects/complements of transitive verbs, as in I wanted to go with, You can borrow” (Cogo & Dewey, 2006, pp. 75-76). Furthermore, in their subsequent studies, Cogo and Dewey (2012) emphasised other areas of language that deviated from ENL norms, such as the article system, preposition use, and collocations. Also, they report that on various linguistic levels there are creative and innovative forms regarding grammar systems “in terms of both inflectional morphology (as in the use of third person zero) and derivational morphology (especially with the productive use of suffixation…), and patterns of syntax” (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 291).

Recently, ELF research on this level of language has addressed the functional potential of ELF features. By drawing on this issue, Björkman shows that in order to establish successful communication, speakers adapt English by producing non-standard words, which could be seen in innovative examples like ‘discriminization’ or ‘levelize’ (Björkman, 2009, p. 231).

Another interesting aspect that has gained attention is how idiomaticity behaves in an ELF versus ENL environment. Pitzl reveals that idioms in ELF go through the process she refers to as ‘re-metaphorization’, meaning that they may be “created ad hoc by a speaker” (Pitzl, 2009, p. 317).
Nevertheless, despite different representations, the functionality of these expressions remains in both ENL and ELF (Pitzl, 2009).

One can undoubtedly appreciate Seidlhofer’s pioneering work in this area of ELF. However, some linguists believe that in order to describe and highlight salient features represented in ELF interactions she used the language “reminiscent of [that] used in error analysis” (Cogo & Dewey, 2006, p. 74). Thus, mentioning expressions like ‘confusing’, ‘failing to use’, ‘overusing’ and ‘overdoing’ seems to be in direct collision with her stand of ELF as sui generis (Cogo & Dewey, 2006, p. 74).

3.3.3 Pragmatics

A considerable amount of literature has been published on ELF pragmatics. As far as the settings are concerned, Jenkins et al. (2011) provide a comprehensive account of research distinguishing between those that used business-related telephone conversations (Firth, 1996; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Haegeman, 2002) and face-to-face conversations in an academic environment (House, 1999, 2002; Knapp, 2002; Lesznyak, 2002; Maaranen, 2003; Meierkord, 2002; Watterson, 2008) (p. 293).

Seidlhofer (2004) concludes that most EFL research in this area of language is done in Expanding Circle countries. Even though the studies are different when it comes to objectives, Seidlhofer (2004) comments that some generalisations are possible, such as:

- Misunderstandings are not frequent in ELF interactions; when they do occur, they tend to be resolved either by topic change or, less often, by overt negotiation using communication strategies such as rephrasing and repetition.
Interference from L1 interactional norms is very rare – a kind of suspension of expectations, regarding norms seems to be in operation.

As long as a certain threshold of understanding is obtained, interlocutors seem to adopt what Firth (1996) has termed the ‘let-it-pass principle’, which gives the impression of ELF talk being overtly consensus-oriented, cooperative and mutually supportive, and thus fairly robust. (p. 218).

Another aspect worth mentioning is the extent to which identity influences intelligibility. The problem may occur if a speaker decides to implement linguistic units specific to a particular group which are unfamiliar to other participants outside the group (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 294). As attested in Seidlhofer (2004), the best example to illustrate this would be the use of idiomatic expressions in ELF, where the research has confirmed that despite ‘unilateral idiomaticity’ of ENL idioms, they were still used by ELF speakers (p. 220). On the contrary, ELF speakers create “their own idioms”, which eventually become “markers of in-group membership” (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 294).

The use of discourse markers is already a thoroughly described area in ENL discourse. Be that as it may, in ELF communication, it was found that specific discourse markers have new functions (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 294). Mauranen (2005, 2009) investigated the use of chunking and emphasised EFL speakers’ creativity. She illustrated this by giving an example from corpora, showing that from two NSE expressions, namely in my view and from my point of view, typical means of expressing an opinion in ELF communication is in my point of view (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 295).
3.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have given a concise review of the theoretical and empirical research carried out in the ELF field by taking into consideration location, language areas and domains of ELF. While the early focus of ELF investigation focused more on providing ELF descriptions on a language level (phonology, lexicogrammar, and pragmatics), the ongoing research is mainly concerned about the underlying processes that give rise to the emerging features. Moreover, two domains are being more extensively investigated than any other, notably ELF in business and academic settings. On the subject of location, two geographical strands have emerged: mainland European and East Asian. Having discussed in previous chapters ELF research and what is meant by ELF, the next chapter will introduce communicative strategies, starting from the ones often described in the literature up to those that were examined in this study.
4. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

The objective of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive review of the literature on communication strategies and outline all the strategies examined in this study. It begins with an explanation of the concept of a communication strategy, then moves on to how previous scholars have dealt with categorising communication strategies, and finally outlines the strategies examined in this study.

4.1 Previous CS taxonomies

The concept of communication strategy (CS) was formulated in Selinker’s (1972) seminal article on interlanguage as one of the five fundamental processes used in L2 communication. In 1977, Tarone published a paper in which she provided a taxonomy still regarded as one of the most authoritative in CS research. However, it was Varadi (1980) who carried out the first CS analysis, which focused on message adjustment.

In the 1980/90s, several studies were conducted with the aim of determining and categorising CSs (Bialystok, 1990; Cook, 1993; Poulisse, 1987). A selection of the most influential papers, edited by Faerch and Kaspar in Strategies in Interlanguage Communication in 1983, had the same goal. Similarly, a group of scholars at Nijmegen University (Netherlands) undertook a study that proposed a new set of strategies (Kellerman, Ammerlaan, Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1990). Lastly, in 1997 another project that brought together the most important papers at the time was Kasper and Kellerman’s volume Communication Strategies: Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives. This collection was significant because it widened the scope of CSs research by including papers that perceived L2 acquisition not only as a cognitive but also as a social phenomenon.
As far as the definition of CSs is concerned, a literature review reveals that most call attention to ‘problematicity’ or ‘problem-orientedness’ (Dörnyei, Z., & Scott, M. L., 1997, p. 182). Communication strategies were described as:

“attempts made by non-native speakers of a language to remedy the disparity that exists between their communicative needs and the linguistic tools at their disposal” (Harding, 1983, p. 1, as cited in Rababah, 2002, p. 94);

“techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in an imperfectly known second language” (Stern, 1983, p. 411, as cited in Rababah, 2002, p. 94);

“means that speakers use to solve their communicative problems” (Paribakht, 1985, p. 132, as cited in Rababah, 2002, p. 94);

“means used by a speaker to overcome a difficulty encountered whilst attempting to communicate in the foreign language” (Towell, 1987, p. 97, as cited in Rababah, 2002, p. 94).

All these definitions have in common the fact that a speaker employs a particular CS when he/she is faced with a problem in communication and desires to overcome it.

ELF scholars have suggested that the issue of ‘problematicity’ needs to be tackled in the ELF field as well. In ELF conversations, there is a wide range of different accents and proficiency levels, such that the participants often seem to use ‘pro-active’ strategies in order to avoid potential misunderstanding. The characteristic of being prepared for a potential misunderstanding and knowing how to handle it represents the quality of ELF conversations and is a recurrent theme in ELF research (Björkman, 2014, p. 124).
Table 2: Various taxonomies of communication strategies (adapted from Dörnyei & Scott, 1997, pp.196-197)

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVOIDANCE</td>
<td>FORMAL REDUCTION</td>
<td>L1-BASED STRATEGIES</td>
<td>LINGUISTIC APPROACH</td>
<td>REDUCTION STRATEGIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic avoidance</td>
<td>Phonological</td>
<td>Language switch</td>
<td>Semantic contiguity</td>
<td>Formal reduction</td>
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<td>Message abandonment</td>
<td>Morphological</td>
<td>Foreignizing Transliteration</td>
<td>-Superordinate</td>
<td>-Phonological</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntactic</td>
<td></td>
<td>* Comparison</td>
<td>-Morphological</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lexical</td>
<td></td>
<td>* Positive comparison</td>
<td>-Syntactic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analogy</td>
<td>-Lexical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>FUNCTIONAL REDUCTION</td>
<td>L2-BASED STRATEGIES</td>
<td>* Negative comparison</td>
<td>Functional reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximation</td>
<td>Actional red.</td>
<td>Semantic contiguity</td>
<td>Contrast &amp; opposit.</td>
<td>-Message</td>
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<td>Word coinage</td>
<td>Modal red.</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Antonymy</td>
<td>abandonment</td>
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<td>Reduction of</td>
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<td>* Positive</td>
<td>-Meaning replacement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>propositional</td>
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<td>comparison</td>
<td>-Topic avoidance</td>
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<td>-Topic avoidance</td>
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<td>-Meaning replacement</td>
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<td>ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES</td>
<td>NON-LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES</td>
<td>Word coinage</td>
<td>ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES</td>
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<td>Compensatory</td>
<td>-Physical</td>
<td>Circumlocution</td>
<td>Paralinguistic strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literal translation</td>
<td>strategies</td>
<td>description</td>
<td>-Physical</td>
<td>Interlingual strategies</td>
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<td>Language switch</td>
<td>-Code switching</td>
<td>* Size</td>
<td>-Logical property</td>
<td>-Borrowing/code</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Interlingual transfer</td>
<td>* Shape</td>
<td>-Historical property</td>
<td>switching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Inter-/intralingual transfer</td>
<td>* Color</td>
<td>-Other features</td>
<td>-Literal translation</td>
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<td>-IL based strategies</td>
<td>* Material</td>
<td>-Functional description</td>
<td>-Foreignizing</td>
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<td>* Generalization</td>
<td>-Constituent features</td>
<td>Metalinguistic clues</td>
<td>Intralingual strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Paraphrase</td>
<td>* Features</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Approximation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Word coinage</td>
<td>* Elaborated features</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Word coinage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Restructuring</td>
<td>-Locational property</td>
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<td>-Paraphrase</td>
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<td>-Cooperative</td>
<td>-Historical property</td>
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<td>* Description</td>
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<td>strategies</td>
<td>-Other features</td>
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<td>* Circumlocution</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Non-linguistic</td>
<td>-Functional description</td>
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<td>* Exemplification</td>
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<td></td>
<td>strategies</td>
<td>Metalinguistic clues</td>
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<td>-Smurfing</td>
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<td>MIME</td>
<td>Retrieval strategies</td>
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<td>-Self-repair</td>
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<td>-Appeals for assistance</td>
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<td>* Explicit</td>
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<td>* Implicit</td>
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<td>*Checking questions</td>
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<td>-Initiating repair</td>
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<td><strong>ANALYSIS- BASED STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>CONCEPTUAL STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>SUBSTITUTION STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>DIRECT STRATEGIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CONTROL- BASED STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td>Analytic Holistic</td>
<td><strong>SUBSTITUTION PLUS STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td>Resource deficit-related strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LINGUISTIC/ CODE STRATEGIES</strong> Morphological creativity Transfer</td>
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<td><strong>RECONCEPTUALIZATION STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td>* Message abandonment</td>
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<td>Own-performance problem-related strategies</td>
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<td>* Self-rephrasing</td>
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<td>* Self-repair</td>
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<td>Other-performance problem-related strategies</td>
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<td>* Other-repair</td>
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<td><strong>INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td>Resource deficit-related strategies</td>
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<td>* Appeals for help</td>
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<td>Own-performance problem-related strategies</td>
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<td>* Comprehension check</td>
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<td>* Own-accuracy check</td>
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<td>Other-performance problem-related strategies</td>
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<td>* Asking for repetition</td>
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<td>* Asking for clarification</td>
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<td>* Asking for confirmation</td>
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<td>* Guessing</td>
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<td>* Expressing nonunderstanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Interpretive summary</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Responses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INDIRECT STRATEGIES</strong></td>
<td>Processing time pressure-related strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Use of fillers</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Repetitions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Own-performance problem-related strategies</td>
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<td>* Verbal strategy markers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other-performance problem-related strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Feigning understanding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
As regards CSs taxonomies, since Tarone’s (1977) first description, there have been numerous attempts to observe and classify CSs. Table 2 above provides a comprehensive overview of nine CSs taxonomies offered by Dörnyei and Scott (1997) and considered as most important in second language acquisition (SLA) research.

By comparing the strategies, Dörnyei & Scott (1997) were able to reach a conclusion that three taxonomies of the nine reviewed (by Tarone, Faerch & Kasper and Willems) divide strategies into those that include avoidance/reduction and achievement (p. 195). This means that some of them in order to convey the message modify or abandon the original content, whereas the rest keep the original message but in a modified linguistic form. As far as this duality is concerned, Dörnyei & Scott (1995a, 1995b) also mention it in their taxonomy; however, the remainder of the taxonomies bring solely achievement strategies into their focus (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997, p. 195). Furthermore, five of them (by Tarone, Faerch & Kasper, Bialystok, Paribakht and Willems) acknowledge language devices as one of the criteria to categorise CSs while the rest of taxonomies involve different norms (Ellis, 2008, p. 506).

Bialystok (1990) says that:

the variety of taxonomies proposed in the literature differ primarily in terminology and overall categorizing principle rather than in the substance of the specific strategies. If we ignore, then, differences in the structure of the taxonomies by abolishing the various overall categories, then a core group of specific strategies that appear consistently across the taxonomies clearly emerges. (p. 61, as quoted in Dörnyei, 1995, p. 57).
This view is supported by Rababah (2002), who writes that even though there are “different taxonomies with different structures, the underlying structure of these taxonomies is often the same” (p. 110). However, it is not just a prolific terminology that appears significant for CSs research. Another issue reported concerns the classification criteria when “each utterance betrays the presence of several strategies. This combination of approaches used by speakers in a single utterance leads to problems of classification” (Bialystok, 1990, p. 69). Therefore, one sentence may contain multiple communication strategies that might overlap, which in turn could pose a problem for correct classification.

As mentioned before, communicative strategies were first researched in SLA. However, their use and appearance have today extended to other paradigms, with ELF being one such case for application. Regarding the focus of both fields, there are certain differences that need to be taken into consideration. In the SLA paradigm, the focus is to achieve native-like proficiency, while at the same time L2 speakers are portrayed as deficient. Conversely, in the ELF paradigm, the target is successful communication among participants in which making mistakes in language production is not perceived negatively (Björkman, 2014, p. 124).

Moreover, it would not be possible to dissociate SLA CSs and ELF CSs from each other (Björkman, 2014, p. 124). Consequently, a conclusion could be drawn that a strong tendency exists for some strategies to occur more often in ELF settings. Björkman (2014) emphasises that certain strategies used in ELF environment would correlate to what Dörnyei labelled as ‘achievement or compensatory strategies’ in his view of CSs following traditional conceptualisation (p. 124). She goes on to say that, by the same token, the first group, i.e. ‘avoidance or reduction strategies’, shows almost no presence in ELF communication settings (Björkman, 2014, p. 124).
With regard to CSs and their pragmatic influence in ELF conversations, researchers have concentrated more on particular functions of a particular strategy. Table 3 provides a summary of the most important research dealing with these issues as outlined by Björkman (2014).

Table 3: Investigated strategies in ELF studies (adapted from Björkman, 2014, p. 126)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studies</th>
<th>Strategies or other pragmatic phenomena reported</th>
<th>Setting/data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firth (1996)</strong></td>
<td>Let-it-pass</td>
<td>Business phone interactions from a Danish company</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make it normal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wagner and Firth (1997)</strong></td>
<td>A general interactional analysis of CS including pauses and other markers, repairs, formulations and control checks</td>
<td>Business phone interactions from a Danish company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meierkord (2000)</strong></td>
<td>Backchanneling</td>
<td>Student corridor talk in England</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supportive laughter</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mauranen (2006)</strong> (see also Mauranen, 2007)</td>
<td>On preventing misunderstandings: Confirmation checks Interactive repair Self-repair Clarifications Repetitions Co-construction</td>
<td>Academic talk (seminar sessions and one conference discussion) from Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Speaker strategies</td>
<td>Listener strategies</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirkpatrick (2007b)</td>
<td>Spell out the word&lt;br&gt;Repeat the phrase&lt;br&gt;Be explicit&lt;br&gt;Paraphrase&lt;br&gt;Avoid local/idiomatic referents</td>
<td>Lexical anticipation&lt;br&gt;Lexical suggestion&lt;br&gt;Lexical correction&lt;br&gt;Don’t give up&lt;br&gt;Request repetition&lt;br&gt;Request clarification&lt;br&gt;Let it pass&lt;br&gt;Listen to the message&lt;br&gt;Participant paraphrase&lt;br&gt;Participant prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lichtkoppler (2007)</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Accommodation office in an Austrian student exchange organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penz (2008)</td>
<td>Comment on terms and concepts&lt;br&gt;Comment on details of task&lt;br&gt;Comment on discourse structure&lt;br&gt;Comment on discourse content&lt;br&gt;Comment on intent&lt;br&gt;Comment on common ground</td>
<td>Multi-cultural English-medium seminars at the European Centre for Modern Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cogo (2009)</td>
<td>Repetition and code-switching</td>
<td>Discussions of teachers of modern foreign languages in an institution of higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bjørge (2010)</td>
<td>Backchanelling</td>
<td>Simulated student negotiations from an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Kaur (2010, 2011)** | On achieving mutual understanding:  
Repetition  
Paraphrase  
Requests for confirmation of understanding  
Requests for clarification | International Master’s students in Kuala Lumpur |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| **Björkman (2011b, 2013)** | Comment on terms and concepts  
Comment on details of task  
Comment on discourse structure and content  
Comment on intent  
Comment on common ground  
Comment on signaling importance  
Backchanneling repair (self and other) (the first five strategies were adopted from Penz, 2008) | Teacher and student talk from a technical university in Sweden |
| **Matsumoto (2011)** | Sequences of repairs of pronunciation | Simulated student interactions at a US university |
| **Ollinger (2012)** | Proactive moves  
Retroactive moves:  
Move 1: Indication of understanding difficulty (Listener-initiated)  
Move 2: Re-establishing of understanding (Speaker-initiated)  
Move 3: Confirmation of re-established understanding (Listener-initiated) | A variety of settings |

Furthermore, Björkman (2014) mentions that the only reference to the communicative strategies’ framework related to ELF settings is Kirkpatrick’s study (2007) (p. 125). However, she criticises the way he categorised CSs. Kirkpatrick divided all strategies into speaker and listener, which, according to Björkman, might be complicated when it comes to assigning the roles in a
conversation since the moment a listener replies to a speaker he/she becomes a speaker as well. Therefore, she proposes another categorisation that is already known from CA: ‘self-initiated’ and ‘other-initiated’ strategies (Björkman, 2014, p. 127).

For the purpose of this dissertation, I tried to complement Björkman’s table and enhance it with the research relevant for this study. Table 4 illustrates further ELF research that deals with CSs.

Table 4: Further reported ELF CSs research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Konakahara (2012)</th>
<th>Restructuring</th>
<th>International graduate students in a British higher education setting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appeal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reformulating</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Björkman (2014)</th>
<th>Self-initiated:</th>
<th>Other-initiated:</th>
<th>Student talk at a university in Sweden</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicitness strategies</td>
<td>Confirmation checks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Paraphrasing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Simplification</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Signaling importance</td>
<td>Overt question</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Paraphrasing</td>
<td>Clarification requests</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comprehension check</td>
<td>Questions or question repeats</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Word replacement</td>
<td>Co-creation of the message/anticipation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Word replacement</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kwan and Dunworth (2016)</th>
<th>Repetition</th>
<th>Clarification</th>
<th>Self-correction</th>
<th>Direct questions</th>
<th>Make it normal</th>
<th>Let it pass</th>
<th>Error repair</th>
<th>Domestic helpers and employers in Hong Kong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
What the above-mentioned ELF studies of CSs have in common is that they seek to gain insight into the strategies already described in SLA research and to critically examine strategies that are important in achieving successful communication as far as different language backgrounds are concerned.

To the author’s knowledge, Björkman (2014) is the only researcher that provided a communicative strategies framework within an ELF perspective (apart from the aforementioned study by Kirkpatrick). She produced a taxonomy of strategies that occurred in ELF interactions in a higher education setting. This dissertation follows Björkman’s thought process and uses her framework as a starting point, adapting it to different settings, i.e. investigating whether these strategies are to be found in informal conversations between Erasmus students at the Karl-Franzens University of Graz, Austria.

4.2 Communication strategies in the Erasmus community

The following is a systematic account of communication strategies that Erasmus students used in their interactions. This section will start by explaining first the terms ‘self-initiated’ and ‘other-initiated’, which guide the analysis of this study, and then proceed to offer a description of each strategy.

4.2.1 Self-initiated communicative strategies

According to a definition provided by Björkman (2014), self-initiated communicative strategies “are those where the speaker himself/herself initiates the use of a CS for a variety of communicative purposes” (p. 129). She proceeds to say that the reason for doing so could be explained by the speakers’ decision to “enhance the explicitness of a statement they feel may be
potentially risky, to check the comprehension of an utterance, or to replace a word that may not be transparent to the other speakers” (Björkman, 2014, p. 129). Moreover, she points out that explicitness is a common thread found in repetition, simplification, signalling importance and paraphrasing which is the primary reason she groups them under one category (Björkman, 2014, p. 129). The current study reveals that four different self-initiated communicative strategies are being used among the Erasmus students in this study. These are repetition, paraphrase, self-repair and comprehension checks.

4.2.2 Other-initiated communicative strategies

Other-initiated communicative strategies are those that the speaker uses “after another speaker expresses a communicative need and marks the discourse for this communicative need, such as asking about part(s) of the preceding utterance” (Björkman, 2014, p. 132). In my study, repetition, paraphrase also represent part of the communicative strategies scope Erasmus students use in order to overcome misunderstanding alongside, confirmation checks, clarification requests and co-creating the message. What follows is a visual overview of my taxonomy in Figure 1 and a detailed theoretical outline of these strategies illustrated with the examples from the corpus.
Figure 1: Taxonomy of communicative strategies perceived in the study
4.2.3 Repetition

As noted by Norrick (1987), “[e]veryday face-to-face conversation thrives, in particular, on repetition” (p. 245). However, despite its ubiquity, far too little attention has been paid to repetition and its functions in conversations. Only a few scholars have tried to bridge this knowledge gap by portraying its forms and functions (Bazzanella, 1996; Bazzanella, 2011; Johnstone et al., 1994; Norrick, 1987; Tannen, 1987; Tannen, 2007).

Despite being a commonly used notion in pragmatics, ‘repetition’ is still a term difficult to define precisely. Schegloff (1997) describes it as a way of replicating some segments or entire utterances that appeared earlier in the conversation. Furthermore, Schegloff (1997) emphasises that the concept “allows for transformations geared to deixis, tense shift, speaker change, etc., as well as changes of prosody; it excludes paraphrase and other substantial rewording of its target” (p. 525). Unlike Schegloff, some scholars perceived paraphrase as a category of repetition (Johnstone et al., 1994; Norrick, 1987; Tannen, 1987). For the purposes of this study, it was decided that these two strategies should be analysed separately due to their influential roles in ELF interactions.

With respect to classifications, several criteria could be applied to instances of repetition. Some researchers have been interested in questions concerning the participant enacting the repetition and have elucidated the difference between ‘self-repetition’ and ‘allo-repetition’ (Tannen, 2007, p. 63). Self-repetition or ‘same-speaker repetition’ (Norrick, 1987, p. 246) implies that a speaker repeats him/herself whilst allo- or ‘other repetition’ (Johnstone et al., 1994, p. 15) is considered to be “repetition of others” (Tannen, 2007, p. 63). Secondly, regarding the time criterion, some scholars have attempted to differentiate between ‘immediate repetitions’ and
‘delayed repetitions’ (Tannen, 2007, p. 64). Whereas the former appears in the same turn and follows the original, the latter can be found later on in the conversation. Thirdly, with regard to form, there is a spectrum ranging from ‘exact repetition’ to ‘repetition with variation’. The first one suggests using the identical form with the same meaning as the original utterance, while the second type includes those instances in which at least one element is changed (Tannen, 2007, p. 63). The criteria and the respective categories are summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Classification of repetition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Self-repetition VS other-repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Immediate repetition VS delayed repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Exact repetition VS repetition with variation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the aim of singling out the repetition instances used by Erasmus students, this study used the categorization notions ‘self-initiated’ and ‘other-initiated’ as proposed by Björkman (2014). At this point, I would like to draw fine distinctions between self-initiated and other-initiated repetition by providing a couple of examples from the corpus. Whereas self-initiated repetition implies that the speaker reiterates his/her words (Extract 1), for other-initiated repetition to occur another speaker needs to convey a communicative need (Extract 2). Chapter six of this study will determine the types and purpose of repetition utilised by Erasmus students under such circumstances.
Extract 1

S2: i cannot really comment because i didn’t attend any courses on noooo i didn’t i just had two german courses here and i had to write my master thesis so i have no idea i mean i met the (. ) the guy one teacher from our department and he was really nice he helped me a lot with my master thesis so he was really nice but i don’t know about other (. ) teachers

Extract 2

S2: some things yes some things not but i mean it’s it’s similar to here (. ) but for example our department in slovenia on our faculty it’s much better really
S4: really
S2: much better (1) here it’s awful

4.2.4 Paraphrase

Paraphrase can be defined as “providing the same content by modifying the previous utterance or ongoing utterance” (Björkman, 2014, p. 131). It is considered by some linguists (Tannen, 1987) as an extended repetition; however, in my study, I will regard it as a separate category since its functions can significantly differ from those of repetition. Björkman (2014) made a distinction in her framework between simplification, which had as its aim to simplify “terms and concepts or lexicogrammar-related items” (p. 130), and paraphrasing. By contrast, this study incorporates this function of paraphrasing and looks at how it is expressed at a sentence and lexical level and how often participants tend to employ them.

When speaking about paraphrase, we should highlight that its use to pre-empt problems of understanding in ELF conversations has been already documented (Kaur, 2009). What Kaur (2009) emphasises is that a speaker often chooses to employ paraphrase when the problem is in understanding rather than hearing, which she connects to the use of repetition (p. 120).
Furthermore, the current study distinguishes between self-initiated and other-initiated paraphrase. Whereas the former refers to those examples in which a speaker wants to modify his/hers previously uttered elements (Extract 3), for the latter to happen discourse needs to be denoted for a communicative need (Extract 4).

Extract 3

1 S2: …because they it s a rich university i mean they have they have money to to ummm support research so i think it s better really really better but um but i mean in my country i think they they the studies are are hard are harder so yeah

Extract 4

1 S2: and i think i have the feeling that they are not over (2) the third (reich) <@> you know? </@>
2 S1: sorry
3 S2: @@ @ <un> xxx </un> but i think that they are feeling that i have that they have that they don’t talk about hitler about what happened here
4 S1: mhm
5 S2: in like fifty years ago

4.2.5 Word replacement

Self-repair is described as a strategy that is used “when the speaker corrects the pronunciation, the word selection, or the grammar of what they have just said” (Deterding, 2013, p. 131). The frequency thereof in conversation is reported to be high since speakers deal with the obstacles that occur in the interaction as they go along (Schegloff et al., 1977). As regards their function, self-repairs have often been portrayed in the literature as proactive (Mauranen, 2006), thus contributing to mutual understanding.
In her study, Björkman (2014) included the type of repair ‘word replacement’ and analysed their instances. Conversely, Kaur (2011) identified self-repairs on four different levels, namely phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactical. This study builds on the work done by Björkman and aims to interpret the role of word replacement in Erasmus students’ conversations. What follows is an example of self-initiated word replacement found in the data.

Extract 5

S2: longer yeah and the well if if i compare the level of difficult i mean i i would think that my my studying in brazil it is more difficult mmm so for example just to give you an example i am studying chemistry but in brazil i have to attend i have to finish five courses in mathematics and five courses in physics it s almost like we have like a basic cycle and that s what you call but here they they they chemistry students they have

4.2.6 Comprehension checks

Comprehension checks have been described in the literature as those strategies that speakers use – therefore self-initiated – in order to verify whether the listener understood the previously mentioned utterances. It is symptomatic that they often occur in the form of a question or a stressed word.

As far as the functions of comprehension checks are concerned, they are of great importance as they allow the speaker to determine the level of understanding in communication and spot any possible misunderstanding. Extract 6 illustrates their use.

Extract 6

S2: and it keep raining for like weeks here if it’s rain it’s maybe two days and then you go two sunny days and then it rains again so it is flexible it is changing i like it and then is less humid? here
S1: yeah
4.2.7 Confirmation checks

This strategy is used when the content of the previous utterance is not precise enough. Speakers usually ask questions (e.g. Do you mean?), or they use question repeats (i.e. repeating a word/utterance with a rising intonation) with the purpose of continuing the flow of conversation. Björkman (2014) groups overt questions, other-initiated paraphrasing and other-initiated repetition under this category. For the purposes of this thesis, these will be considered as different categories due to their different forms. Extract 7 exemplifies their occurrence in the corpus.

Extract 7

1 S2: i was never in croatia but everybody tells me about the party in croatia and so on
2 S3: yeah in the summer but not during the winter
3 S2: you mean during the winter it’s boring?
4 S3: it’s boring i mean only the locals are there and only a few clubs are open so yeah we
5 go mostly to the same place every weekend so it gets boring

4.2.8. Clarification requests

This strategy is similar to confirmation checks in that they are also used when inquiring about a previously uttered segment of a conversation. Correspondingly, they are often formed as questions. However, when using clarification requests participants “ask for explanations or more information on something they have not fully understood” (Björkman, 2014, p. 133).

Therefore, the use of confirmation checks gives the impression that the speaker is partially certain about the meaning of a word/utterance, while the usage of clarification requests is explained by the need to solve the incompleteness in communication. It is important to emphasise that this strategy contributes a great deal to the achievement of shared understanding, which is necessary for successful interaction. Extract 8 demonstrates this occurrence.
4.2.9 Co-creating the message

The following strategy, named by Björkman (2014) 'co-creating the message/anticipation' and by Kirkpatrick (2007) 'lexical anticipation', implies that participants finish each other’s utterances, but only in those situations where they cannot deliver their message. Through identifying the potential trouble and enhancing the utterance with the missing elements, co-creation is established. As a result, an utterance is produced that strengthens mutual understanding. The following extract reveals its usage.

Extract 9

S4: because they are thinking of moving out from <un> xxx </un> so yeah i think <5> that is not going to work </5> any more @@@@
S2: <5> yeah you will see </5> it happened to me last year when i returned i had a real crisis for i think over a month it was <6> so quite bad </6>
S4: <6> don’t scare me in</6> advance please @@
S2: yeah i don’t know what will your situation look like but probably you will have to
S4: adjust
S2: yeah
4.3. Summary

In its first part, this chapter has provided a definition of the notion of a communicative strategy and outlined the previous CS taxonomies both in SLA and ELF research. The second part has focused on descriptions and examples of the strategies relevant for this study. In the next section, I will introduce my study and take a closer look at its objectives, research questions, methodology and data.
5. THE STUDY: OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, METHODOLOGY, DATA

This chapter will outline my own study. The aim of the research is discussed alongside the core research questions. Thereafter, the methodological approach chosen for this study is described, followed by comments on the data collection process and comprehensive descriptions of the data analysis. I conclude this chapter by briefly mentioning ethical considerations applicable to this study.

5.1 The aim of the research, research questions and methodological approach

The prime aim is to investigate how international students talk to each other and overcome linguistic and cultural obstacles by using ELF. In analysing their speech, this study sets out to develop a full taxonomy of communicative strategies that international students – specifically Erasmus students at the Karl-Franzens University of Graz – employ in order to overcome misunderstandings in conversation and to that end a small-range corpus which consists of only non-native speakers of English is built with a view to offering new insights into the communicative effectiveness of ELF use. Therefore, the focal point of this study rests within Erasmus students’ communication and the suitability of ELF framework as the best approach from which insights could be gained.

While previous ELF research concentrated more on identifying phonological or morphosyntactic features, more recent literature has emerged dealing with pragmatic strategies and their functions. It should be noted that the reason for this could be because pragmatic features
have long been thought of as somewhat challenging to pinpoint compared to phonological or lexical features.

Notwithstanding that, the analysis of many pragmatic skills, especially in ELF, is of the highest importance since its use improves the conversation. Using pragmatic strategies in ELF interactions – consisting of participants with different lingua-cultural backgrounds and levels of proficiency in English – seems to nowadays be crucial in solving potential problems in a conversation or resolving complications in comprehension.

As mentioned in chapter three, ELF studies have mainly been carried out in two domains, that of academia and business. Academic settings are particularly appealing to researchers because the community is comprised of a significant group of international students or researchers with diverse L1 backgrounds. This is a compelling context in which to examine how language users accommodate and achieve communicative goals. Nevertheless, the drawback of such contexts evident in other research is the lack of focus on dyadic communication and instead on lectures or presentations. This study sets itself apart from other studies by particularly highlighting dyadic and polyadic ELF speech.

Furthermore, this study takes the difference view to the use of English, which contrasts with the deficiency view taken in EFL. This is to say that the perception of ELF speakers in this study is that they are users of English rather than failed learners. A further reason to take this view is found in the fact that they use English regularly either for their professional or casual conversation needs.

Rather than focusing on the type of mistakes that participants made, my analysis contributes to the research carried out in ELF by investigating the success of communicative
strategies used by Erasmus students. In order to do so, this thesis is led by one principal research question: what are the strategies Erasmus students use in order to prevent and overcome possible misunderstanding in a communication event?

Further underlying research questions in this study are:

- To what extent do Erasmus students use communicative strategies?
- What are the functions of communicative strategies?

A body of literature on research methodology usually distinguishes between qualitative and quantitative research. The former deals with the data that is not numerical and uses non-statistical methods while the latter tries to reach conclusions by implementing statistical methods with the use of numerical data (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 24). However, there is also a mixed methods research which combines both “qualitative and quantitative research either at the data collection or at the analysis levels” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 24). The latter was determined as the most suitable method to adopt for this investigation; obtaining a detailed view of the context and quantifying the results numerically.

5.2 Data collection

A wealth of ELF research analyses naturally occurring conversations; however, when it comes to data collection, certain obstacles and limitations dealing with methods or settings surface. What follows is an account of data collection used in my study. Research method and design will be discussed in the following section alongside the mention of the pilot study, whereas participants and their linguacultural backgrounds will be covered in the second part.
5.2.1 Research method and design

In the present study, I opt for homogeneous sampling, i.e., the subjects are selected on the basis of a degree of homogeneity whereby “the researcher selects participants from a particular subgroup who share some important experience relevant to our study” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 127). The particular subgroup in question is the Erasmus community in Graz. Erasmus+ is a European Union programme that promotes “education, training, youth, and sport in Europe” ([https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about_en)). It represents not only a unique opportunity for students to study abroad, experience different cultures, customs as well as improve other sociocultural elements, but also a chance to extend their knowledge of a respective field while pursuing their academic careers.

This study understands the Erasmus community as a ‘community of practice’ since it comprises a large pool of international students who experience similar processes, some of these being the adaptation to a new environment, experiencing cultural shock or using English as the only language of communication, i.e., lingua franca.

After my initial fascination with finding ELF communication among Erasmus students, I decided to conduct a pilot study in a seminar designed for international students. In this seminar, the students were encouraged to talk about their experience in Graz and learn about theories behind intercultural communication and the processes of adaptation. I spent two weeks in the seminar and recorded several group interactions. The students were divided into two groups with the microphone in the middle. They discussed a range of topics or just shared their experiences. However, the outcome of the pilot study was unsatisfactory since the process of transcription was
considerably time-consuming and laborious due to the overlapping in conversations. This prompted the logic behind changing the structure of interviews and limiting group size.

As a method of inquiry, the group interview was chosen to gain insights into the communicative strategies employed by ELF speakers due to its advantage of obtaining a comparatively large amount of qualitative data. During the interview, which was semi-structured, with all the questions set in advance, participants were asked how they felt in the new surroundings and what things they liked or did not like about Graz. The semi-structured approach is adopted as a balance between structured interviews and unstructured interviews. While on the one hand structured interviews “follow a pre-prepared, elaborate interview schedule” and often lead to the lack of spontaneity, unstructured interviews, on the other hand, represent the total opposite, allowing “maximum flexibility to follow the interviewee in unpredictable directions” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 135). Using the semi-structured type of interview enables not only the possibility to pose open-ended questions, but also the advantage of encouraging participants to explicate whatever seems relevant to them.

Furthermore, the group interview is chosen as opposed to one-to-one interviews since the role of an interviewer as a moderator is more desirable. I asked questions but also at times tried to provoke discussion when needed. The group interviews lasted between 40 to 65 minutes. I would usually start by prompting an introduction, in that way basic information about the speakers was obtained. I then proceeded with a couple of open-ended questions followed by closed-ended questions.

The groups consisted of two or three participants, excluding the interviewer. A small interview group was preferred because the pilot study revealed it would be impractical to do so
with a larger group, as participants talked simultaneously causing difficulties for the transcription and also presenting a challenge in the attempt to identify communicative strategies. Even though overlapping still occurred in group interviews, it was relatively easy to decipher what the participants wanted to say. One more reason for opting for smaller-size group interviews is that I did not want to limit participants’ critical thinking, which could be suppressed in bigger groups and lead to groupthink. One more thing to take into consideration is that the participants displayed different proficiency levels of the English language, ranging from intermediate to proficient. However, this did not hinder the group dynamics.

Once I decided that my research would deal with the students who were at that moment on their Erasmus stay at the University of Graz, I contacted the international office. I drafted a letter of invitation asking them to forward it to any Erasmus student whose mother tongue was not English. Additionally, in that email, I stated that I was conducting research on the role of English among Erasmus students and asked whether any of them would like to participate in the study, which would entail an informal interview about topics related to their life in Graz. Further, the email highlighted that the study was for academic purposes and that all the information given during the interview would be confidential. Participants were also told that they could withdraw from the research at any point or not answer questions they deemed uncomfortable. With regard to the timeline of this study, it should be stated that a pilot study was scheduled in November 2015 so that any possible shortcomings could be noticed. Letters of invitation for the actual study were sent in March 2016 to students who were staying in Graz for a semester or a year, and the interviews were carried out in the period from May to July 2016.
As far as the setting for the interview is concerned, the students were given the option to choose a venue of their convenience, and any kind of influence was not exerted. Since it was emphasised in a letter of invitation that the interview would be of an informal nature and should resemble their everyday conversations, all participants preferred to chat about their experiences in the park, cafés or nearby dormitories, and not on the university grounds.

In this specific context, the participants were aware that I was also an Erasmus student, which could have made them feel more comfortable, seeing me as somebody from the same ‘community’. Therefore, as far as my involvement is concerned, not only was I able to be an observer, but also a participant, which helped immensely in reaching valuable conclusions. Engaging in interviews to a limited extent enabled me to share and ask about other participants’ experiences. Moreover, while the interviews were held, I took brief notes, which I thought could be of importance in the data analysis.

While recording the participants, one needs to be aware of the ‘observer’s paradox’, which was noticed and discussed by Labov, who said that “the aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain these data by systematic observation” (Labov, 1972, p. 209). In this study, the Erasmus students were aware of the fact that they were recorded, however, for most of the time, they would forget that fact since a mobile phone was used as a means of gathering data. The data analysis section discusses this issue and explains why this approach has a number of advantages. Furthermore, I think that my presence did not have any bearing on the quality of the data since my role as a participant and observer contributed greatly to the flow and dynamics of the conversation.
Moreover, I would like to highlight that in this study, the data was obtained under as natural as possible conditions. The single characteristic that separates my study from others carried out in ELF field is that I took part in conversations. It is noteworthy that I did not try to lead the discussion and hold the floor in any way or extract a particular result that could be deemed to be significant for the research.

5.2.2 Participants

A question that might arise concerns the rationale for choosing the Erasmus community as the focus of my study. The answer lies in the fact that there is an increasingly significant presence of international students at European universities, including Karl-Franzens Universität Graz. Moreover, in the last couple of years, the university has enabled students to follow some lectures and seminars in English. As a result, many exchange students find themselves using English as a primary means of intercultural communication, and importantly to achieve comprehensibility, the latter being central to my thesis. What is more, being myself one of the recipients of Erasmus scholarship and thus a witness and a participant in conversations with non-native speakers of English, it was illuminating to discover specific first-hand patterns that occur in Erasmus students’ speech.

Turning now to the recordings, I have in total seventeen communicative events ranging approximately from 40 to 65 minutes and resulting in 15 hours and 35 minutes. Of the 39 participants, 14 are male and 25 female. The size of groups ranges from two to three speakers, except in one case where there are five speakers. All of the participants are aged between 20 and 28.
As regards their linguacultural situation, it encompasses 18 different backgrounds: most of them belonging to Romance languages (Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian), followed by Slavic (Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian, Bosnian, Czech, Ukrainian), Germanic (Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish), Hellenic (Greek) and Finno-Ugric languages (Finnish, Hungarian). In Table 6, you may find the number of participants alongside the information about their gender and country of origin.

Table 6: The country of origin and number of participants, including their gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(2)F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>(4)M; (5)F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(2)M; (3)F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(1)M; (3)F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(1)M; (5)F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be emphasised that the groups consist of non-native speakers of English since I wanted to establish homogeneity in the sample and find out more about their experience with native speakers and the possible problems that might have occurred in their conversations. Nevertheless, heterogeneity was reflected in participants’ different linguistic backgrounds and genders. I should point out that these sociolinguistic factors did not play a significant role in my selection of groups. Therefore, some groups included members of the same nationality but only in cases of bigger groups. Also, being a native speaker of a Slavic language helped me in conversations with the speakers from the same group of languages insofar as to understand the similar concepts, notions, and experiences that these languages and cultures have in common. Some of the participants from the study knew each other from university or German-language classes, but for most of them, it was the first time they met during our interview. Being part of the Erasmus community in Graz, some of them stayed in touch, which proved to be just one of the advantages of this research.
5.3 Data analysis

This section will discuss how the data obtained for this study is processed and analysed. As explained earlier, the data was compiled through interviews carried out with students who were studying abroad, in this case at the University of Graz. Since a group interview was chosen as the method of collecting data, all the sessions were done in my presence. Students were asked questions about their Erasmus experience, the status of English in the world and in Graz, cultural shock and similar topics. Given that I perceive myself as one of the ELF speakers, when some of the strategies reported were noticed in my speech, they were excluded from the data analysis.

The interviews were recorded with the help of a mobile phone which was placed on the table in front of the participants. The choice of not using a microphone and other recording equipment was made because they were not only bulkier but also distracting for students. A couple of pilot recordings were undertaken beforehand in order to assure that the quality of the recording was high.

After having recorded all the interviews, I transformed them into texts in the next step. In order to do so, I transcribed the interviews using VoiceScribe editor, downloaded at the official page (https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/voicescribe) alongside the mark-up and spelling transcription conventions on how to use it. VoiceScribe uses the plain-text format and all the audio files are in wave format. Using this editor proved useful when transcribing, due to its user-friendly approach and attached audio player. Also, the conventions were of great help since they were used for a similar type of ELF data. In view of the fact that the objective of this study is to locate communication strategies and to report on their usage and frequencies, some of the conventions...
were adapted since they were not relevant for the current investigation, e.g. pronunciation patterns and variations. A screenshot of VoiceScribe editor is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Screenshot of VoiceScribe
Once I transcribed all the recordings, I proceeded to determine all the communicative strategies. This segment of my research was undertaken in two phases. The first phase included reading through the transcript several times so that I could gain a relatively comprehensive overview of the data. At this point, I started coding certain parts of a transcribed conversation that might be of importance for the study. Also, the brief notes I took while observing the interactions contributed to the speed of the process. I should acknowledge that during this phase, I did have in mind Björkman’s taxonomy of communicative strategies, which served as a guide. With a set of categories developed, the second phase involved a more intensive analysis of extracts that best captured the use of a particular strategy. Furthermore, the examples considered complex and to that extent intriguing for the study were also coded at this point.

Even though the process of transcription was time-consuming, it proved to be fruitful because it enabled me to get to know my data thoroughly. However, it must be emphasised that even if transcriptions are detailed, they “will never capture the reality of the recorded situation” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 246). Adolphs (2006) suggests using video recordings for the purposes of obtaining more information. Notwithstanding this suggestion, once again, I thought that having a video recorder in a café might not go in line with the informal atmosphere, which the research aimed for.

Silverman (2001) states that by counting and using simple statistics, research may yield more comprehensive results than just by using solely qualitative analysis. In this study, transcribing interviews itself represents part of the qualitative data analysis alongside identifying and categorising communicative strategies, which is strengthened with quantitative, namely
finding out about their frequencies. In this perspective, this study is in agreement with other studies which prove that a mixed approach gives better results.

What should be stressed is that the data analysis is based on spoken language and deals with phenomena that occur in spoken interaction. Also, only the linguistic data from the interviews is analysed, i.e. metalinguistic information is not in the focus of this investigation. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that this study adopts a Conversation Analysis (CA) framework in its broadest sense to map the usage of interactional strategies (Firth 1996). The discourse was studied by taking into account the turn-taking system so that the classification of communicative strategies would be easier. Given that the participants had as a goal to acquire mutual understanding, the CA approach was used to identify instances of misunderstanding and the way the interviewees dealt with it. What this study and other research done with the help of CA as a data analysis means have in common is that they focus on the form but also the function of particular strategies. Even though CA does not consider the sociolinguistic dimensions, like gender, age, linguistic background and focuses just on what is in the data, this study will investigate them if they show a pattern or are of interest for the usage of a strategy in question. Moreover, apart from the turn-taking system, this study includes details on overlapping and pauses when they are of importance.

Most studies that take the CA approach are qualitative, and they rarely try to mention notions such as typicality. They instead focus on several examples which are carefully analysed and then generalised. By contrast, this study will provide the frequency of communicative strategies to ascertain which of these Erasmus students use the most.
5.4 Research ethics

Ethical considerations need to be taken into account in research. One of them concerns the aim of the research. In this study, participants were not informed about the exact purpose of interviews since their self-awareness could have jeopardised the study. Yet, they were given some information about the broader context, i.e. the global use of English. Prior to undertaking the investigation, written consent for recording was obtained.

Also, the names of participants in the study are not revealed; instead, they are given numbers in the order they spoke in each communicative event, which makes it difficult to trace them back. Moreover, the date of the recording is omitted for the purpose of anonymity. Even though the information about linguacultural background needed to be disclosed since it was necessary for the analysis, other sensitive information was kept in confidence. Additionally, they were informed that all the recordings obtained would not be released online to the general public.

5.5 Summary

To sum up, this study deals with the communicative strategies’ analysis in a community of practice, i.e., Erasmus students. What separates this research from all the others carried out in the ELF area is the conditions. To be precise, the interviews were done in an informal, friendly atmosphere and even the participants stated that they were often not even aware that the recording device, i.e., the mobile phone was in front of them, which supports my claim that the data was gathered in almost naturally occurring settings.

This study adopts a stance in which all participants are viewed as speakers of ELF and not learners of English. By differentiating these two categories, it tries to contribute to research carried
out in ELF, which perceives ELF speakers as language users in their own right (Seidlhofer, 2004). This chapter has reviewed the aim of this study while also explaining the data collection and data analysis used in this investigation. In the next section, I give an account of the findings of the research.
6. FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings which emerged from the analysis. It begins by describing the frequency of each strategy, including the extracts from the corpus in order to illustrate its usage. As explained earlier, this study adopted Björkman’s taxonomy (2014) as a point of departure which divides the communication strategies into self-initiated and other-initiated. The significant differences and similarities perceived in ELF informal interaction among Erasmus students will be discussed in the forthcoming sections.

6.1 Self-initiated communicative strategies

This section analyses self-initiated communicative strategies such as self-initiated repetition, paraphrase, word replacement and communication checks. The frequency of these strategies is illustrated below (Figure 3).

![Diagram showing number of self-initiated communicative strategies]

Figure 3: Number of self-initiated communicative strategies
From the data in the figure above, it is apparent that self-initiated repetition is by far the most frequent self-initiated communicative strategy employed among Erasmus students. Thereafter, the instances of self-initiated word replacement and self-initiated paraphrase are found to be comparatively similar to each other in terms of their occurrence. Moreover, the results obtained demonstrate that comprehension checks constitute the minority and are the least prominent self-initiated communicative strategy. The next section provides an account of these strategies illustrated with the examples taken from the corpus.

### 6.1.1 Self-initiated repetition

As mentioned in chapter four, self-initiated repetition entails a speaker reiterating his/her words. In order to get a better overview of the use of repetition in ELF talk, certain criteria had to be applied. Firstly, an original sentence of the repetition needed to be identified in the transcribed text. Secondly, neither repetition of disfluencies (e.g. I like…I like…I like) nor repetition used for backchannelling purposes (e.g. yeah yeah) were found to be of considerable significance for this study. Thirdly, it is essential to acknowledge that even though repetitions can be found on several levels, this study has as its aim only those that occur on a lexical or syntactic level.

As regards the time of occurrence, we have mentioned in chapter four that repetition can be classified into immediate and delayed. Bearing in mind how previous researchers (Lichtkoppler, 2007; Tannen, 2007) dealt with this issue, it was decided that immediate self-initiated repetition should be defined as one that appears immediately after the original utterance or in the same turn (Extract 10). On the other hand, delayed self-initiated repetition was considered as such when there was at least one turn between the original and repeated element (Extract 11).
Extract 10

1 S3: no *i have seen i have seen*
2 S1: you have okay(.) what do you think about that
3 S3: *it’s it’s strange* yeah *it’s strange* but i like it because i like dogs @@

Extract 11

1 S3: today *the woman was very rude at the shop*
2 S2: they they (1)
3 S3: she was like <L1pt>a:h</L1pt>
4 S1: that is an interesting thing to talk about
5 S3: *she was really rude at the shop*

It is apparent from Figure 4 below that the majority of self-initiated repetition instances appear immediately after the original or in the same turn. Consequently, slightly more than a fourth of all self-initiated repetitions are classified as delayed. A comparison of the two results indicates participants’ preference to repeat themselves in the same turn offering an explanation that they wished to be emphatic.

![Figure 4: Self-initiated repetitions according to time](image)

It is apparent from Figure 4 below that the majority of self-initiated repetition instances appear immediately after the original or in the same turn. Consequently, slightly more than a fourth of all self-initiated repetitions are classified as delayed. A comparison of the two results indicates participants’ preference to repeat themselves in the same turn offering an explanation that they wished to be emphatic.
Even though classifying self-initiated repetitions as immediate and delayed did not prove to be a demanding task, a couple of examples surface in the data that need to be explained. In Extracts 12 and 13 self-initiated repetition is discontinued by the use of a signal of listenership. In these cases, it is difficult to determine whether self-initiated repetition is immediate or delayed since one part of it remains in the same turn as the original utterance, whereas the other appears later. Since I interpreted yeah and mhm as backchannel signals, which I did not count as turns as they serve to give listener feedback only, I classified these two examples as immediate repetition. It is worth mentioning that these are the only two instances of such an occurrence.

Extract 12

1 S3: <1> oh come on </1> don’t say who cares it reflects everything if the people are poor
2 it reflects the
3 S1: yeah
4 S3: basically everything

Extract 13

1 S3: so maybe in that point they are more closer more
2 S2: mhm
3 S3: closer to students and

As far as the scale of fixity is concerned, a couple of preconditions needed to be set out so that the obtained results could have value. First, exact repetition implied precise wording, whereas repetition with variation included those examples in which a minor or major change occurred. The moment all the elements were changed without altering the idea constituted a paraphrase which is viewed as a distinct strategy in this study. Furthermore, an important factor in deciding between exact repetition and repetition with variation was a pause. If participants took a pause after the
repetition of an original phrase or utterance, this would classify as an exact repetition and the elements that follow would not constitute any variation (Extract 14). If the pause was taken immediately after the original phrase or utterance and the repetition ensued, then that would represent the example of repetition with variation (Extract 15). The following examples show this:

Extract 14

1 S2: the only the only (. ) part where when things are international are these students parties or students happenings or whatever (. ) what they have like like global village with cooking (. ) that’s when lot of erasmus people are there so they have to be international

Extract 15

1 S2: they all seem yeah i mean but but one was from serbia @@ i did not know that so yeah but so she was very (. ) she was very relaxed and yeah my mentor here is also very friendly

It should also be borne in mind that there is a significant difference between exact repetitions and repetitions of disfluencies. As seen in Extract 14, the speaker does not repeat the segments just because he/she is not able to produce an utterance but rather for the purposes of emphasis and considerable relevance for the rest of the conversation.

Typically, self-initiated repetition appeared in this study once either in a changed or original form. However, there were twenty-one instances of multiple self-initiated repetitions. Extract 16 illustrates this use.
Extract 16

S2: i mean in kiev you also don’t have all the transport twenty-four hours but taxi is so affordable that if you share it with some friends it can cost you like two three euros so i mean you just
S1: yeah in serbia it’s the same
S2: <un> <1> xxx </1> </un> you just been
S3: <1> well at </1> my place it’s very expensive
S2: of course i mean who wants to drive around mountains in the middle of the night like what ta taxi driver
S3: of of course
S2: so
S3: but still it’s very expensive if you want to go from (1) my town to the next town to like a party place we paid (1) twenty-one euros one trip (.) and <2> you can </2>
S2: <2> per person </2>
S3: just bring eight people
S1: no like for a ride
S3: and it was tops fifteen minutes (1) so i think i think that’s very expensive

Extract 16 shows how speaker three emphasises the enormous cost of taxi use by employing repetition three times. Speaker three starts by mentioning the phrase it’s very expensive as soon as in line 6. Somewhat later, in line 11, the same speaker employs the same phrase by offering more explanation afterwards. Moreover, in line 16, speaker three sums up their opinion regarding the price by utilising repetition one more time.

In contrast to the previous example, there are instances of self-initiated repetition in the data which proved to be difficult to categorise due to the excessive use of repeated segments. In Extract 17, the speaker mentions as often as four times that he/she is unable to describe what is to be perceived strange or unusual in Austrian culture.

Extract 17

S3: i don’t know (.) i really don’t know i am thinking my my flatmate but i don’t know yeah maybe (.) how how do you make pasta but for for us no one nobody can make pasta so it’s <un> xxx </un> everywhere i think i don’t know (.) i really don’t know
Nevertheless, it is not the continuous repetition of the sentence *I don’t know* that seems to be problematic in the analysis but the second occurrence of the segment *I really don’t know* at the very end of this turn. If we postulate that the original model is an utterance *I don’t know*, the first repetition that ensues is one with variation since it contains one altered element, i.e. *really*. The issue arises when the utterance *I really don’t know* is repeated for the second time. This sentence could be tagged as either exact or repetition with variation depending on the original model. If we were to refer to *I don’t know* as our original model, then this would be a clear example of repetition with variation, whereas if we were to take the sentence *I really don’t know* as our primary source then the following occurrence would be an exact repetition.

The analysis indicates that deciding on the source or model utterance is of extreme significance for the labelling. Extract 18 illustrates this point clearly by showing that there are two ways to classify them.

Extract 18

1 S3: <1> johanna no no johanna told me johanna told me (. ) </1> to stay away from
2 from that park
3 S2: really
4 S3: <2> really </2>
5 S4: <2> really </2>
6 S3: <3> yeah and </3>
7 S2: <3> she is Austrian </3> so
8 S3: there and <LNde> griesplatz </LNde>

In the same way as in Extract 17, the issue that surfaces is whether the second mention of the sentence *johanna told me* should be classified in reference to the previous segment, therefore, being an example of exact repetition or to the first mention of the name, therefore, being repetition with variation. What needs to be emphasised is that there are a couple of instances where the
above-mentioned problems are noticed, and they are not included in the total count of self-initiated repetitions. This occurrence always happens when two exact repetitions follow the original utterance in the same turn.

With respect to the question of the total number of self-initiated repetitions in terms of form, this study finds that slightly more than half of all the instances are repetitions with variation (Figure 5).

![Figure 5: Self-initiated repetition according to form](image)

As far as the functions are concerned, self-initiated repetition is predominantly used for the purposes of securing understanding and being more explicit. However, patterns can be observed in the data that suggest the speaker’s intention is to enhance the lucidity of their own utterances. The following is a brief outline of the most prominent ones.
One of them is the repetition used for emphasis reasons which is characterised by the use of *very very* or *really really* followed by an adjective. Extract 19 exemplifies this point.

Extract 19

1 S3: <1> they are very catholic yeah </1>
2 S1: and it’s really like
3 S3: especially here in graz because it’s a small city
4 S1: yeah
5 S3: they are **very very catholic**

In Extract 19, a speaker was previously asked to describe the Austrians using a couple of adjectives. Even though it is mentioned in the conversation that he/she perceives them as Catholic, this particular speaker has the floor to emphasise this statement one more time and not just by repeating the whole utterance but by stressing the adverb *very*. A similar thing occurs in the following example.

Extract 20

1 S2: yeah it’s also clime (.) well yeah i think that’s it and also something that it is **really really** curious umm well especially in brazil during our meals we talk a lot
2 S1: aha
3 S2: and they don’t talk at all during the meals
4 S1: aha
5 S2: so for example (.) during the lunch time in the <un> xxx </un> work people are like quiet **really really** quiet and i could not understand that why can’t you you can’t talk and eat that’s the perfect combination for me and it’s not like that here so yeah i think those were my yeah

The repetition of *really*, exemplified in Extract 20, shows one more way a speaker chooses to highlight the message. Speaker two discusses the differences between Austria and Brazil in terms of culture and customs. Wishing to stress how inquisitive he/she finds the fact that in Austria people are too quiet while they are eating, this participant repeats the adverb *really*. 
Another pattern observed that contributes to the improvement of comprehension is what Norrick (1987) labelled ‘parallel phrasing’, which is when a speaker provides a list of itemised things with the aim of securing meaning and understanding. Extract 21 portrays this use as found in the study.

Extract 21

1 S2: contact the electric company and **i didn’t have** hot water **i didn’t have** heating system
2 **i didn’t have** anything so i had to call these er elec the company and i have to make an
3 appointment (.) and it was like after three days and nobody really cares when i came back
4 to ask do do you need a hand so do you have to move stuff i can help you or <1> nobody
5 </1>
6 S1: <1> yeah </1>

In the extract above, speaker two in their desire to stress the fact that he/she had to do everything alone increases the level of clarity by repeating particular segments. In this way, comprehension is guaranteed, which is testified by a minimal response.

Moreover, this study finds examples in which participants used key-word repetition, which has as its aim the repetition of a particular word deemed to be important for the conversation and understanding. The following example proves that a couple of key-word repetitions could be found in the same turn giving the speaker a chance to attain their objective.

Extract 22

1 S3: yeah another thing that i found really **weird** is there is a lot of **muslims** here lot of
2 people from i don’t know **turkey** and no it’s **weird** to think in austria there is so many
3 people from i don’t know turkey and there are muslims or arab <1> or something like that
4 </1>
In Extract 22, speaker three is asked to comment on things he/she finds peculiar in Graz. By mentioning that it is in their opinion *weird* that there are so many people who are *Muslims* and from *Turkey*, the focus is directed towards these specific words.

Another example found in the corpus demonstrates this tendency.

Extract 23

1. S3: so what i think **austria is very beautiful .(.) beautiful mountains .(.) beautiful .(.) beautiful city** yeah and yeah i i am i am here also for **mountains** so @@@ hm but i so i
2. think there is a very good culture music

Extract 23 illustrates that the participant uses repetition by mentioning several times the key word *beautiful* to get their message across. Therefore, an explanation for the use of key-word repetition could be offered by stating that speakers opt for it in order to place emphasis on these words and secure understanding.

Taken together, these results provide valuable insights into the use of self-initiated repetition, thereby suggesting that the participants employ it frequently so as to ensure understanding and be more explicit.

**6.1.2 Self-initiated paraphrase**

Self-initiated paraphrase is defined as a strategy employed when a speaker wants to rephrase the previous utterance without changing the content or idea. The results of this study indicate that self-initiated paraphrase is found in one hundred instances in the corpus. With regard to the time of occurrence, self-initiated paraphrase can be classified into immediate and delayed. This study defined immediate self-initiated paraphrase as one that appears immediately after the original utterance or in the same turn (Extract 24). Conversely, delayed self-initiated paraphrase
was considered as such when there was at least one turn between the original segment and paraphrase (Extract 25).

Extract 24

1 S2: @@@ i spend on food really really and also on travels because i think that’s worthy
2 i i don’t want to care about money right now because i wanna live the erasmus ss experience
3 so i’m going on trips and i’m buying the food that i like

Extract 25

1 S3: probably because i i don’t know why but in the next town they speak different than i
do (.) you can basically say by the way a person speaks where they where the person is
2 from
3 S2: mhm
4 S3: just by listening to a person

Figure 6 provides the summary statistics for self-initiated paraphrase as far as time of occurrence is concerned.

![Figure 6: Self-initiated paraphrase according to time](image)

Figure 6: Self-initiated paraphrase according to time
It can be seen from the pie chart above that the majority of instances of self-initiated paraphrase tend to appear within the same turn, whereas slightly more than one third is to be found later in the conversation.

As far as the functions of self-initiated paraphrase are concerned, one of them involves simplifying the previously uttered content. Even though Björkman (2014) in her research singled out this particular function of paraphrase as a separate strategy, this study considers the instances of simplification as one of paraphrase. Extract 26 illustrates this function of self-initiated paraphrase.

Extract 26

1 S3: yeah like some bars but not so crowded like <un> xxx </un> you can take your drink
2 or (.) we have like place really cool places with wine or ouzo like traditional greek and
3 and we usually go there and if we are we want then later we go to club (.) here you must
4 definitely go to a club there is nothing else to go you have only one option club or staying
5 at home

In Extract 26, when speaking about the customs in his/her country, speaker three employs paraphrase so as to simplify the word mentioned before. Since ouzo refers to the drink widely consumed in Greece, speaker three might have assumed that the rest of the parties involved in the interaction is not familiar with it. Therefore, the most likely reason for utilizing it is speaker three’s wish to achieve clarity.

However, the data in this study also reveal that self-initiated paraphrase may be expressed by using different words as opposed to simplifying. The following example illustrates this point.
Extract 27

S2: [...] it’s it’s they are like that and they were educated <un> xxx </un> history i don’t know but it was really hard also for me to to recognise that not as (. ) not like er like for example the australian of course he he he did not want to be rude but it’s like it’s culture it it was difficult for me to understand that this was culture yeah i think so i think those two aspects

In the extract above, speaker two compares practices in Austria and his/her home country. What could be seen in lines 2 and 4 is speaker two’s effort to ensure understanding by employing paraphrase twice. It seems possible that by replacing hard and recognise with difficult and understand speaker wishes to express the explicitness and lucidity of his/her message. Self-initiated paraphrase is used not only at the lexical but also at the sentence level. The following extract exemplifies this occurrence.

Extract 28

S2: if that worked in my country they should work in here (.) if they don’t i have to change something about myself er (. ) if i’m not getting what i like then i should change the manner i am trying to see that <un> <2> xxx </un> </2>

In Extract 28, speaker two is referring to the culture shock experience and his/her habits. At first, this speaker conveys his/her message by saying how the change of habits might influence him/herself. However, this is quickly followed by paraphrase that rephrases not just one word but the whole sentence in order to ensure understanding and be more explicit.

Interestingly, it is observed in the corpus that the phrase I mean introduces paraphrases for the purposes of being more explicit. Extract 29 illustrates this point clearly.
In the extract above, speaker two provides an answer regarding the use of English among international students. Having said that English is a *neutrum language*, this speaker might have realised that this phrase needs further elaboration. In line 2, speaker two employs the phrase *I mean* immediately followed by paraphrase with a view to achieving clarity.

Overall, these results indicate that self-initiated paraphrase is utilised frequently in informal interactions among Erasmus students. Whether the speaker chooses to rephrase a word or a whole sentence, paraphrase is employed in order to pre-empt problems and secure the effectiveness of understanding.

### 6.1.3 Self-initiated word replacement

As was pointed out in the section on communicative strategies, self-initiated word replacement represents a type of self-repair that occurs at the lexical level. In order to evaluate the frequency, I identified the instances of self-initiated word replacement by focusing on the speaker’s speech adjustments.

The current study finds that there are ninety-one instances of self-initiated word replacement in the corpus. Figure 7 introduces the categories of word replacement according to their frequency.
As Figure 7 shows, word choice category seems to be the most frequent, constituting half of all instances of word replacement. The insertion of a lexical item takes the second place, making it slightly more than a third of all instances, whereas pronoun replacement represents the least prominent category of word replacement. Even though pronoun replacement might be incorporated in the word choice category, this study distinguishes it as a separate category due to its specific use. What follows is a detailed account of these categories illustrated with the examples from the corpus.

Word choice represents a category of word replacement where a speaker self-corrects him/herself and chooses another word that best describes the current situation. This occurrence is noticed in forty-seven instances in the corpus. The following examples illustrate this category.
Extract 30

S5: i think when you go on erasmus (.) (.) (.) (.) the country (.) the the people that you meet
the least is the local people from the country you are gonna meet more many more people
from

Extract 31

S2: i was actually maybe a little bit depressed at beginning because i thought that that they
have no nature (.) no parks cause i am really i am really used to going to the woods every
day with my dog and i don’t have a dog here so i don’t have anybody to go hiking with or
anywhere and then i found there is a huge forest really actually close to my place (.) so i
was really happy about that

What these examples have in common is the fact that the speakers decided to perform a word
replacement in search of a better word to describe the context in question. What is symptomatic is
that the replaced item did not cause any disruption in syntax. In Extract 30, speaker five initially
chooses the word country in order to demonstrate what happens when international students go
abroad but quickly realises that instead of this word the word people would much better serve the
context. A similar thing occurs in Extract 31, where speaker two describes the first impressions of
living in another country. In line 2, speaker two replaces the word nature with parks, which just
goes on to show the intention of this speaker to enhance clarity and avoid any vagueness.
Furthermore, this successful attempt at minimizing ambiguity reveals one more characteristic,
namely the speaker’s practice to replace a general term with a more specific one.

The research reveals that the insertion of lexical items is found in thirty-four examples in
the corpus. The extracts below demonstrate this occurrence.
Extract 32

1 S2: mhm so maybe bars or cafes is a thing is an austrian thing but not nightlife

Extract 33

1 S2: yeah but i don’t think they go to the centre (.) to the city centre that much i think that local people live more in their villages outside the city they just go there for a work so they don’t have to see other people all the time (.) mmm yeah

The recurring theme identified in the extracts above reveals that speakers self-correct so as to secure understanding and enhance clarity in the interaction. In Extract 32, when referring to bars and cafes, speaker two realises that mentioning that it is a thing would probably not be precise enough for the participants in the conversation, which triggers this speaker to insert Austrian in order to pre-empt any communication problems. Likewise, in Extract 33, speaker two chooses to modify a noun with another noun (in this case city), with a view to increasing lucidity.

The third category of self-initiated word replacement is pronoun replacement found in ten instances in the corpus. The following are the examples.

Extract 34

1 S3: yes yes for us (.) for students it is not good but if you work here it’s amazing

Extract 35

1 S2: you don’t even feel it only the newest ones and and it’s like very weak (.) the feeling is very weak

The similarity that can be noticed in the extracts above is that speakers are aware of the fact that the use of pronouns may lead to ambiguity. Therefore, they opt to pre-empt it by replacing them
with their referents. In Extract 34, speaker three immediately realises that the pronoun *us* may be too general, which is why it is followed by a noun that makes it more specific what this speaker had in mind. In the same way, in Extract 35 speaker two is talking about the air-conditioning in trains and in addressing this issue, this speaker uses the pronoun *it*, realising a few seconds after that clarity needs to be increased by inserting the noun *feeling*. As a result, the sentence does not lose its meaningfulness, and the conversation can continue without any signs of misunderstanding and disruption.

In view of what has been discussed with respect to self-initiated word replacement above, it can be summarised that this strategy has as its aim to pre-empt any trouble in understanding that might occur by either replacing words or inserting lexical items.

### 6.1.4 Comprehension checks

As previously mentioned in the outline of the strategies identified among Erasmus students, comprehension checks are self-initiated, and they serve the function of checking the listener’s understanding. In order to assess the frequency of comprehension checks, I initially used the search function in my corpus; I inspected the phrases that were cited in the literature as recurring most frequently. I thereby gained a perspective on the use of comprehension checks. At this stage, I also sought to discover whether participants used comprehension checks other than those described in the literature. The results are outlined in the following order: first, the forms and frequency of comprehension checks are delineated in Figure 8. This reveals the most prominent type of comprehension checks. Thereafter, I elaborate on the functions of comprehension checks and illustrate this with examples from the corpus.
Overall, twenty-five instances of comprehension checks were observed in informal Erasmus students’ interactions. As Figure 8 shows, it is apparent that the majority of comprehension checks employed are in the form of a stressed word. Thereafter, the second most frequent kind of comprehension check is the minimal check *okay*, which accounted for twenty per cent. Only a fifth of the total number of instances goes to short questions such as *you know*, *do you know*, *you know what I mean* and another minimal check which is *yeah*. These comprehension checks are worthy of further inspection and analysis. This can be achieved through reference to examples of comprehension checks with comments on their usage and function.

As the following extract demonstrates, the corpus indicates that there is only one situation in which the phrase *you know what I mean* is used.
Extract 36

S4: for practicals we usually have like er (1) small groups which work directly with the professors
S3: aha
S4: so it’s not like a huge classroom of h one hundred people and then you know what i mean?
S3: yeah
S4: if we come to <LNde> sprache </LNde>
S3: mhm
S4: or however you say it with him you (.) there is like three of you and him for like twenty or thirty minutes

In Extract 36, speaker four describes the size of a group that he/she participates in at university. In order to emphasise the benefits of smaller groups, the speaker contrasts the first assertion regarding the group size (line 1), with a remark about an opposite scenario and uses the comprehension check at the end of this remark to ascertain comprehension of the meaning by the conversation partner. Once the response in the form of a minimal check is provided, the speaker proceeds with the original thought. In addition to ensuring comprehension, this check suggests that the speaker also sought to prevent any situations which could lead to misunderstanding.

As far as the question do you know is concerned, participants make use of it twice. The following extracts present these examples together with helpful contextual information.

Extract 37

S1: why don’t you do you master here
S2: yeah that could like but i would need a scholarship for sure
S1: yeah
S2: but erm yeah i think i would do a mas i can do a master here (1) erm but erm what i was going to say is that (1) like i i am really excite i am really looking forward to go back because i learned a lot here
S1: <1> mhm </1>
S2: <1> like </1> i learned in a i mean in the academic part and also the (1) erm like erm other aspect of life
S1: mhm
S2: and i i am happy because i am going back and i i really hope i can put that in practice do you know? (1) and to some way somehow to (1) i don’t know take different i i mean a different way of thinking to my country this is really important
S1: but did you change your way of thinking when you compare situation before you got here
S2: yes

Extract 38

S2: <1> ermm </1>
S1: <1> what did you </1> learn
S2: i think it was like the same about the shyness and so on
S3: mhm
S1: mhm
S2: but it’s it’s the strange i mean it’s such a challenge because when you you are in a foreign country and then especially in a german speaker country so like here (.) usually people i don’t know but i mean if you want to buy something like in a market and then of course like the old woman she doesn’t speak german and then then (.) english actually but then you have in you have your german and then you have to manage your german and try a communication do you know? (. ) sooo i think er i’m more self-confident about it because (. ) i’m just i’m just er i have to i i must handle with three languages so my <LNde> muttersprache </LNde>

In Extract 37, the participants discuss their plans for the future, while in Extract 38, the topic of conversation is the outcome of their international stay. In both instances, the participants presumably meant to say do you know what I mean; however, they omitted the second part and only uttered the first words of the phrase. This could be attributed to the fact that they did not wait for a response from the listeners and opted to continue with their monologue. Moreover, there may have been non-verbal behaviour involved that has not been included in the transcriptions. Yet, the speaker might have noticed an expression of understanding on the interlocutors’ faces that contributed to their resuming the talk. Regardless, both instances display the aim of comprehension checks, i.e. making sure that the segments of a conversation are clearly comprehended.
A somewhat altered short question, *you know*, is also found in the corpus. In the analysis, I have distinguished between the use of *you know* as a discourse marker and as a short question. In order to determine the function of the occurrence, I took into consideration the rising intonation, which characterises a question. The following extract shows one instance of the above-mentioned short question found after applying this criterion.

Extract 39

1. S2: and i think i have the feeling that they are not over (2) the third (reich) [@> you know? 
2. S1: sorry
3. S2: @@ xxx but i think that they are feeling that i have that they have that they don’t talk about hitler about what happened here
4. S1: mhm
5. S2: in like fifty years ago

In Extract 39, speaker two shares general impressions of Austrians and Germans and decides to use a comprehension check at the end of their turn in order to check the understanding of the immediately preceding phrase. Additionally, it should be noted that the phrase in question is posed in a slightly unclear and hasty manner. This is indicative of the potentially sensitive nature of the issue. As a consequence, the conversation is followed by *sorry* in line 3, which leads to further elaboration by speaker two. This is the only example in which *you know* is said with rising intonation at the end.

Regarding the use of *okay*, it occurs five times in the corpus in the function of a comprehension check, namely in a rising intonation pattern. The following extracts reveal their usage.
Extract 40

S3: i like the relationship between the professor (1) and us so er i came from a big university and professors are (2) gods @@@ and (1) you feel alone and very far from professors

S1: mhm

S3: so i think it’s (.) yeah maybe (4) it depends from the professors but from the course okay? (.)

S1: mhm

S3: but here we have (.) so i speak i speak for me for mathematician we have erm <L1it> poqi </L1it> <LNde> weniger </LNde> okay so we have the possibility to speak with professor and ermmm

In Extract 40, speaker three offers their opinion on the power distance in the relationship between professors and students at their home university and the University of Graz. The statement about professors who are seen as gods, seemingly the main message, is further stressed in line 4. Here it is emphasised that it is not only the professors themselves who play a crucial role in the outcome of this relationship but that it also depends on the courses. In order to verify whether participants understood the intent fully, this speaker utilises a minimal check at the end of their utterance. It is of significance here that the speaker waits for confirmation so that they may continue with the original thought. In this respect, the example below is different.

Extract 41

S3: vienna is like bigger city modern city you <1> have </1>

S2: <1> seven times </1> bigger

S3: you have other things to see but ok if you study there you will see them and you will be (.) bored of them okay so i prefer i prefer in graz

S4: <2> and here </2>

S3: <2> at least for </2> six months okay? <un> xxx </un> i don’t know

S5: <un> xxx </un> small

S3: yeah
Extract 41 provides a snippet of conversation among Erasmus students discussing whether they find Graz or Vienna more suitable for studying. Here, speaker three in line 6 wants to highlight that they prefer staying in Graz for at least six months which explains the use of the comprehension check *okay*; however, the speaker does not wait for an immediate response from the interlocutors, but proceeds with the expression of their opinion. Taken together, these two examples represent the evidence of the interlocutor’s wish to check understanding so that the communication could be successfully resumed.

The use of the minimal check *yeah* as a comprehension check only occurs in one instance in the data.

Extract 42

1 S2: but but it will be strange in the beginning i think (.) because it’s exactly like that like
2 you have a schedule (1) and well i i will have dinner now and then you prepare your own
3 food like one meal (.) and yeah (.) but actually my my parents they are not so strict yeah?= 4 S1: =mhm
5 S2: so but this like this things that you used to do alone and then you have to do together
6 that will be hard

In Extract 42, speaker two employs the comprehension check after the word that they want to emphasise, i.e. in this case talking about the fact that their parents are not that *strict*. By using rising intonation speaker two intends to verify whether the word is understood, which is proven further in line 4.

The remaining, and by far the most frequent form of a comprehension check, is the use of a stressed word. In a total of fifteen instances, it occurs with the aim of checking further understanding. The function of this type of comprehension check is further exemplified below.
Extract 43

S4: and it was like past six pm and everything was closed and i was completely shocked because in croatia i could buy cigarettes at one am if i wanted to and here nothing worked and then (.)  erm i found like those like machines?
S2: yeah
S3: mhm

Extract 44

S3: having lunch or dinner in italy is always a party
S2: <1> aha okay aha </1>
S3: <1> or something like that </1>
S2: aha
S3: so and (2) yeah it’s strange and we we care a lot about having lunch or dinner
S2: mhm
S3: for example in restaurants we always have like the towel?
S2: towel <2> a:hhh </2>
S3: <2> andddd </2> so here it’s different and i like the austrian food but italian food is

The most striking observation to emerge from these examples is that they occur at the end of an utterance. In both extracts, the speaker stresses the word by using a rising intonation. This is done with a view of checking whether the participants in a conversation understood the message (in this case a word) so the line of conversation can resume.

Despite the fact that comprehension checks tend to appear at the end of a turn, there were also cases in which the speaker would use a comprehension check without making any pauses afterwards. Extract 45 demonstrates this well.
Extract 45

S3: I like the fact that they have a lot of practicums? For instance if you are doing TESL, you can basically take xxx didactics and methodics from your first year onwards and in Zagreb you do your bachelor thesis basically we all have the same programme on our bachelors (.) and then you do your masters and it’s only on your masters that you decide whether you want to study linguistics literature or TESL or translation which is (2) not good because you have everything cramped up in four semesters and we don’t get much from it so that’s great here but erm yeah and they also have a lot of (1) experience (.) for instance they worked with refugees? (.) they taught English to refugees and German too so that’s great we only have our practicum twice in our two years.

In Extract 45, speaker three wants to check whether the word *practicum* is understood by accentuating it. However, they do not pause, but instead, continue to explain the situation further. A similar thing occurs again towards the end of their turn when it is mentioned that the Austrian students work with refugees. At this point, the speaker chooses to check the comprehension of the word in question, which is then followed by a paraphrase in order to secure understanding. This result may be interpreted due to the fact that the speaker observed the non-verbal cues of their interlocutors to deduce whether they fully understood the word or whether the situation needed further elaboration. Nevertheless, this is a decision that is made in the moment which serves to show that speakers tried to avoid misunderstandings proactively. Although video recordings of these exchanges are not available to substantiate this explanation, this seems to be the most likely explanation.

Interestingly, in one example, a participant’s use of code-switching is detected as a means to check comprehension. Even though there is a debate among linguists whether code-switching should be considered as one of the communicative strategies and thus treated separately (Dörnyei & Scott 1995a, 1995b, Cogo 2009), this study does not adopt that stance and instead investigates
its functions if they are tied to other strategies that are the focus of this thesis. Extract 46 illustrates this point.

Extract 46

1 S3: but we tried er buying wurstel? er (.) sausages of every sort
2 S2: yeah
3 S3: just to try them out and we tried (.) buying the traditional products pretty much as as
4 far
5 S2: yeah
6 S3: as we we could manage with the language
7 S1: mhm
8 S3: but we we didn’t go somewhere

In Extract 46, when asked about Austrian dishes, speaker three mentions the German word wurstel and then proceeds to explain it by translating it. Once more, the speaker does not wait for an immediate minimal response but opts to continue with the utterance.

In summary, these results show that Erasmus students use comprehension checks in various forms. Whether they are structured as long or short questions, minimal checks or stressed words, comprehension checks are employed in order to guarantee the efficiency of understanding. Having demonstrated the occurrences and use of self-initiated communicative strategies in the corpus, I will now move on to discuss another type of communicative strategies employed by Erasmus students.

6.2 Other-initiated communicative strategies

This section outlines other-initiated communicative strategies analysed in this study; namely, other-initiated repetition and paraphrase, confirmation checks, clarification requests and
co-creating the message. Figure 9 provides the breakdown of other-initiated communicative strategies according to their frequency.

![Number of other-initiated communicative strategies](image)

Figure 9: Number of other-initiated communicative strategies

As shown in Figure 9, the data from this study reveal that co-creating the message is the most frequent other-initiated communicative strategy employed among Erasmus students. The instances of confirmation checks, clarification requests and other-initiated repetition are comparatively similar to each other in terms of their occurrence. Furthermore, the results obtained demonstrate that Erasmus students utilised other-initiated paraphrase a few times. The following is a detailed description of other-initiated communicative strategies illustrated with the examples taken from the corpus.
6.2.1 Other-initiated repetition

Other-initiated repetition is defined as a repetition that is triggered by another speaker’s wish to check on comprehension. As such, it should be distinguished from and not mixed with other-repetition, which implies the repetition of another speaker. In the study, there are twelve instances of other-initiated repetition. What follows is a detailed look at the usage of other-initiated repetition complemented with examples from the corpus.

In connection with its form, Figure 10 shows that more than half of other-initiated repetition instances belong to exact repetition rather than repetition with variation category. Both types can be seen in the following extracts.

Figure 10: Other-initiated repetition according to form
Extract 47

S4: [...] german with long words and it’s very sometimes complicated to have a fluid language
S2: yeah
S4: so
S2: and **did you improve your german**
S4: what?
S2: **did you improve your german**
S4: i think i think yeah but

Extract 48

S2: **few dialects from your region**
S3: hm?
S2: **so there are several dialects in your region**
S3: yeah it basically changes every town
S2: okay

Extract 47 exemplifies exact repetition as employed by Erasmus students. Speaker four’s clarification request triggers the choice of opting for exact repetition. A similar thing occurs in Extract 48, where speaker two decides to change a couple of words with a view to securing mutual understanding when prompted by speaker three. As mentioned, if there is at least one part of repetition that is changed in comparison to the original utterance, I classified that occurrence as repetition with variation.

After analysing the trigger words that led to the utilisation of other-initiated repetition, the results of this study indicate that it occurs not only after clarification requests, as shown in Extract 49, but also after the word **really**. The following example illustrates this use.
Extract 49

1 S1: i think it was different
2 S3: **you had electricity one day and the other day we didn’t have** <2> electricity </2>
3 S2: <2> really? </2>
4 S3: yeah we had electroci i mean not we because i wasn’t born yet but my parents when
5 they were little they had electricity one day and the other day they didn’t have it <3> and
then they </3>

In Extract 49, the topic of conversation is how different life is and was in the participant’s countries. Speaker three recalls this experience from stories he/she was told, which prompts speaker two in line 4 to use *really* to check understanding and express astonishment at the same time. In the next line, speaker three repeats the previously uttered phrase in a slightly changed manner so as to confirm understanding. What this example demonstrates is that other-initiated repetition could be used to pre-empt any possible understanding problems that might occur in an interaction.

Another important finding is that other-initiated repetition is employed among Erasmus students due to hearing problems. Extracts 50 reveals this occurrence.

Extract 50

1 S1: but do you think that they know english au<1> strains </1>
2 S3: <1> old </1>*er people don’t older people don’t*
3 S1: all all the people?
4 S3: **older people don’t**
5 S2: yeah they don’t

Extract 50 touches upon the topic of English knowledge among Austrians. In line 2, speaker three expresses their belief that this is not the case with the older generations, and he/she does this by repeating it twice. Speaker one repeats in the next line what he/she heard in rising intonation which
initiates speaker three to employ exact repetition. By reiterating their words, speaker three focuses on the achievement of shared understanding in the interest of preventing any communication issues.

The results in this section show that other-initiated repetition contributes not only to mutual understanding but also to pre-empting problems in ELF interactions.

6.2.2 Other-initiated paraphrase

Even though there were only two instances of other-initiated paraphrase in the corpus, this study shows that the participants employ it when they want to reformulate their own previous utterances after a need for rephrasing has been expressed. Extract 51 illustrates the occurrence of other-initiated paraphrase in the corpus and its use.

Extract 51

1 S3: i don’t think it’s possible to say the austrian people are like that or they aren’t
2 S1: what what do you mean
3 S3: you cannot generalise in that way i think
4 S2: <1> yeah that’s it </1>
5 S1: <1> yeah but </1>
6 S3: <1> global </1> isation and and everyone can choose to own lifestyle and
7 S1: that’s true
8 S3: people are individuals not stereotypes

In the conversation above, the participants were asked whether they liked the people in Austria. However, speaker three expresses their opinion by stating that he/she does not believe in stereotypes. When asked to elaborate on what he/she meant, speaker three chooses to paraphrase the previously uttered part of a sentence. Despite the fact that there is an acknowledgement by speaker two in line 4 and speaker one in line 7, speaker three opts to employ paraphrase in the next
turn one more time, only in this case self-initiated, so as to secure understanding and emphasise their message. This example indicates that other-initiated paraphrase is used to enhance clarity and resolve any ambiguity that might occur.

6.2.3 Confirmation checks

In reviewing the communicative strategies that represent the focus of this thesis, it is stated that confirmation checks are employed to confirm the understanding of previously uttered statements, remarks, comments or opinions. Since these fall into the category of other-initiated strategies, what is common is that they need a trigger word or phrase in order to be utilised. Strong evidence of this will be illustrated by the extracts to follow in this section. As far as the frequency of confirmation checks is concerned, the procedure of pinpointing them was the same as previously portrayed for comprehension checks; namely, by utilising the search function and determining whether forms of confirmation checks attested in the literature are also evident in my research data. Figure 11 below shows the breakdown of some of the most frequent confirmation checks found to be used by Erasmus students.
Figure 11: Forms and frequency of confirmation checks

There are sixteen instances of confirmation checks in total. It can be seen from the pie chart above that slightly less than two-thirds of the total number of instances are question repeats, i.e. the repetitions of a word with question intonation. They are followed by you mean and do you mean, at 31% and 6% respectively.

Regarding you mean, the corpus shows that it is found five times. The examples below demonstrate its use.

Extract 52

1 S3: and trains here are much better than than in the balkans <3> in croatia especially </3>
2 S1: <3> that’s true </3>
3 S3: because the buses and the trains there are (.) slow and also not very modern and not very <4> neat inside </4>
4 S2: <4> yeah but you need </4> you need <5> to think also </5>
5 S3: <5> stuff like that </5>
S2: about making business with the train i mean nowadays nowadays to make business between barcelona madrid the two big cities the trains are always full (.) and that is because S3: if you go to work you mean? S2: exactly they go they run every half an hour there is a train to madrid and in two hours and twenty minutes you are from city to city and there are six hundred and fifty km

Extract 53

S1: next question is how do you find people from graz people from austria people from graz S2: i think they are quite sympathetic S1: how are they similar to people <1> from your country </1> S3: <1> nice you </1> mean? (.) S2: yes i think they are quite nice and friendly S3: yeah i think also they are nice they can help you if you need help but i think they are quite (.) distanced

In Extract 52, the speakers are comparing transport infrastructure in Austria to that in their home countries. Speaker three seems somewhat confused by the use of the phrase make business, which speaker two considers very important and demonstrates this by repeating it two times (line 7). Consequently, speaker three in line 9 paraphrases and uses a confirmation check in order to reinforce and contribute to mutual understanding which is further enhanced by speaker two’s confirmation in line 10.

Similarly, Extract 53 displays how the use of you mean leads to better understanding. When asked about the personal experience with people in Graz, speaker two responds by using the word sympathetic, which prompts speaker three (line 5) to employ a confirmation check. The reason for doing this could be traced to the fact that speaker three possibly found the word nice to be a better synonym, which is confirmed by speaker two in the next turn. Extracts 52 and 53 both indicate that confirmation checks were employed with a view to confirming and securing understanding.
The slightly longer form do you mean appears once in the corpus. Extract 54 below shows the context of this confirmation check.

**Extract 54**

1. S1: okay anything else
2. S4: the siren on saturday
3. S3: yeah
4. S4: every at twelve am yeah pm
5. S1: yeah
6. S2: but we have it like do you mean like normal clock or the sirens like once in a month or
7. S3: no once every saturday there is the siren from the fire
8. S4: at least at
9. S2: oh yeah yeah because we have it like once in a month and it’s like first wednesday it’s
10. a first wednesday in month

In the extract above, speaker four mentions a custom in Austria to sound a siren each Saturday at noon. It is unclear to speaker two whether speaker four is referring to a fire alarm siren or more likely the sounding of a bell in town. This uncertainty triggers speaker two to make use of a confirmation check (line 6). In doing so, they seek to determine the accuracy of what has been mentioned moments before and ensure understanding. In the very next line, speaker three explains what they had intended. Furthermore, we see that apart from the minimal response, speaker two confirms that something similar takes place in their country, but on the first Wednesday of a month. Therefore, it might be concluded that this is the motivation behind speaker two’s use of this particular confirmation check.

As previously mentioned, this research has shown that Erasmus students in their conversations, as far as confirmation checks are concerned, tend to use more question repeats as a way to confirm whether previous parts are accurate or not. At this point, I would like to stress that
repetitions of a word with question intonation may also belong to the clarification requests category, which is also established in this study. Nevertheless, the only difference is that a question repeat having the function of a clarification request is seen in this study when a speaker requires a further explanation that may solve a potential communication problem. This issue will be mentioned and dealt with in more detail in the section on clarification requests. What follows are examples of question repeats found in the data.

Extract 55

1  S5: like we bought a kebab and it was
2  S2: <un> xxx </un>
3  S5: what was it se seven euros per each seven
4  S3: seven?
5  S5: seven
6  S2: then you did the bad deal come on

Extract 56

1  S3: but still it’s very expensive if you want to go from (1) my town to the next town to like
2  a party place we paid (1) twenty-one euros one trip (.) and <2> you can </2>
3  S2: <2> per person </2>
4  S3: just bring eight people
5  S1: no like for a ride
6  S3: and it was tops fifteen minutes (1) so i think i think that’s very expensive
7  S2: twenty-one euro for eight people?=
8  S3: =eight people for ten fifteen minutes
9  S2: okay (3) makes sense

In Extract 55, speaker five wants to point out the price of a kebab they bought by repeating it twice in one turn. When speaker three decides to use a confirmation check in the next turn in order to validate the previously uttered phrase, speaker five repeats the phrase again and confirms the essential information. Likewise, in Extract 56, when talking about the experience of paying a high
fare for a taxi ride, speaker three desires to highlight the extent of the expense. Consequently, speaker two decides to use a confirmation check (line 7) to promote understanding. What is interesting in this example is that this participant summarises and repeats the information in question intonation. What follows in the next turn is the confirmation in the form of repetition. Therefore, no extra information and clarification are required and provided, which distinguishes this category from clarification requests.

Overall, these results indicate that the speakers used various forms of confirmation in order to confirm understanding and negotiate meaning.

6.2.4 Clarification requests

Another other-initiated communicative strategy noted among Erasmus students is the clarification request. As discussed previously in the section on confirmation checks, a fine line exists between these two categories. It is therefore sometimes challenging to determine whether the participant in an interaction used one or the other, especially when question repeats are involved. In this study, I describe clarification requests as strategies speakers utilise in order to request clarifications that may solve a comprehension problem. The pie chart below (Figure 12) represents the frequency and all the forms of clarification requests found among Erasmus students.
Figure 12: Forms and frequency of clarification requests

In total, there are thirteen instances of clarification requests. As can be seen from the pie chart above, the short question *what* accounts for nearly half of the instances (46%), whereas question repeats make up only half of that number. More extended questions such as *what do you mean*, and *what does it mean*, comprise less than a fifth of the whole chart, while the least frequent clarification requests are *did you say* and *yeah* at 8% each.

Overall, clarification requests directly address potential comprehension problems by introducing questions. Extracts 57 and 58 below portray the use of *what do you mean* and *what does it mean*. 
In Extract 57, participants are talking about differences in educational systems. Speaker two mentions (line 1) that universities in their country make use of continuous evaluation. However, speaker three still finds this puzzling and needs the meaning of the term ‘continuous evaluation’ to be refined, which is why they pose the question what do you mean (line 9). What makes this example interesting is that the participant provides a synonym, i.e. assessment, alongside their interpretation. This direct clarification request leads to a full explanation of what speaker two had
in mind. As a result, shared understanding is accomplished, which can be seen by the use of a minimal response in line 14.

On a similar note, in Extract 58, participants are involved in a discussion regarding the similarities between German and Dutch. Speaker three seems to be interested in the meaning of a particular word and attempts to pronounce it in Dutch, which does not seem familiar to speaker two (a native speaker of Dutch), which is evident by the inquiry about its meaning. The next turn sees speaker three explaining the meaning of this specific word. Thereafter, in line 7, speaker two provides the correct pronunciation of the word in question. This is an example of how pronunciation issues could potentially lead to a lack of understanding. In using a clarification request and asking for further explanation, the problematic portion of the dialogue is successfully resolved.

A similar intention can be seen in the extract below, which depicts the use of the question *did you say* that occurs once in the study.

**Extract 59**

1. S3: they have a stereotype i think
2. S5: that’s what i said (1) that’s what i said that the people (.s) the people show you bad
3. S5: i am not sure from the other on the other side i am not so sure because i met in austria
4. S3: that they joke for hitler <1> with germans</1>
5. S4: <1> yeah i am agree </1>
6. S2: <un> xxx </un> that they have accepted it
7. S3: <un> xxx </un> sure yeah
8. S5: *did you say* that they joke?
9. S3: yeah they joke
10. S4: yeah
11. S3: i don’t know i am not sure
12. S5: i think in germany they take it more seriously that they talk about it
In Extract 59, the topic is the reaction of Austrians to the mention of Hitler’s name in discussion. Speaker three shares (line 4) their experience of a professor who remarked that sometimes Austrians have a laugh at this topic. Further on during the course of the conversation, speaker five wants to possibly pre-empt misunderstanding, which is why they employ the clarification request (line 9). However, it must be underscored that the use of did you say could be twofold. It is entirely possible that the reason the participant is asking this question could be due to poor hearing, or simply because they wanted to highlight the verb joke. Nevertheless, in the next turn speaker three aids understanding by providing a minimal response and repetition.

A similar use is noticed in the next extract, where Erasmus students used what, and a question repeat in order to clarify and request more information.

Extract 60

1 S5: but do you like more the touristic people or international environment of the
2 international students city
3 S3: <1> well </1>
4 S2: <1> what </1> was the first thing
5 S3: yeah
6 S5: @@@ i don’t know anymore @@ do you like more like international environment
7 with students or whether touristic environment with
8 S3: what
9 S2: artistic environment
10 S5: touristic like vienna for example
11 S3: aaaaa noo <un> xxx </un> the first one <un> xxx </un>
12 S2: yeah
13 S3: i would not like tourists <2> <un> xxx </un> </2>
14 S2: <2> today there were </2> a lot of tourists only croatians (.) entire schlossberg was full
15 of it

In the extract above, the participants discuss the advantages and disadvantages of larger and smaller cities as far as studying is concerned. Speaker five makes inquiries into this; however, the
very formulation of the question triggers speaker three to use a clarification request (line 8). This example is also interesting because in the next turn, another speaker uses a question repeat in order to request more information. In line 10, we can see that speaker five corrects and provides further clarification. At this point, it should be mentioned that the reason both speakers two and three initially use a type of clarification request could be due to poor hearing, or speaker five’s accelerated talk.

Another example of a question repeat is shown below in Extract 61.

Extract 61

1   S2: like bice (.) you know bice magasin
2   S1: no
3   S2: it’s like some type of trendy magazine
4   S3: **bice** how is this spelled
5   S2: `<spel>` v i `</spel>`
6   S3: a:h vice vice
7   S2: vice vice
8   S3: yes yes

Here, we have the curious case of pronunciation contributing to the confusion of the interactants. Speaker two is of Spanish origin and they pronounce the sounds /b/ and /v/ in a similar way; this sound corresponds more to the pronunciation of English voiced bilabial stop. Even though speaker three is familiar with the magazine they are talking about, which becomes apparent later in the conversation, the pronunciation they are not accustomed to makes this speaker repeat the word and immediately ask about its spelling. Only when speaker two starts spelling out the first two letters does speaker three realise the name of the magazine in question. This is yet another example of how the use of a clarification request results in understanding.
It is notable that in my corpus there is only one example in which yeah was used as a question. Extract 62 below illustrates this use.

Extract 62

S3: yes yes i definitely think (.) or i don’t think i know that i have to improve my german because i have only been studying it for a very short period of time that started about a year ago and learned a bit with grammar books and television (.) but not i haven’t learned as much as i would like to because english is the main problem i think
S2: yeah? wh why
S3: because it’s the lingua franca and everyone speaks english and erasmus students <1> don’t </1>
S2: <1> oh yeah </1>
S3: want to <2> speak german at all </2>
S2: <2> yeah yeah </2>

In Extract 62, the participants discuss the use of English among Erasmus students in Austria. Speaker three seems to think that their ability to speak English may hinder their desire to improve their German. This prompts speaker two to use a clarification request in the form of yeah in a question intonation followed by a question with a view of asking for the reason and/or more detail (line 5). In the next turn, speaker three reveals their own view of the situation and provides an explanation. In doing so, speaker three clarifies the meaning of their statement and contributes to understanding.

Together the results provide insights into the function of clarification requests and suggest that Erasmus students make use of them to elicit the information necessary for successful communication.
6.2.5 Co-creating the message

Co-creating the message seems to be one of the strategies that Erasmus students tend to use in their interactions in order to avoid communication problems. The principle of this strategy is that participants jointly produce an utterance in a communication event. This reveals the collaborative nature and cooperation through which shared understanding is maintained. The reason why this strategy is perceived more as a collaboration than interruption is that the participants are involved in the turn-construction process. They use the information mentioned before and try to assume what the previous speaker meant to utter.

In my research, co-creating the message occurs in twenty-two instances. It seems that a typical pattern is formed when a participant pauses at the end of their turn, which seems to have the function of a request for help. This can be seen in the following examples.

Extract 63

1 S4: i don’t think so it was properly about habits but i have observed that Austrian has a strange reason of life during week they wake up **very** (.)
2 S2: **early** yeah
3 S4: early and fi and open and and close their business very soon in the night <1> for example at when you are </1>
4 S2: <1> yeah the secondary school </1>
5 S4: when it is a six or seven <2> most of the business </2> are closed
6 S3: <2> yeah <un> xxx </un> </2>

Extract 64

1 S4: <1> it’s </1> it’s more interactive in seminar
2 S2: yeah
3 S4: you can you can more practice your your (.)
4 S3: **with knowledge**
5 S4: knowle <2> dge yes </2>
Extract 63 and 64 demonstrate how participants co-construct the utterance and enhance understanding. In Extract 63, the speakers talk about the habits of Austrians they have observed. Speaker four wishes to draw attention to the fact that Austrians get up earlier in the morning than other people. However, what we can notice is the brief pause (up to a half of a second in line 2) after which speaker two provides a lexical suggestion based on the previously mentioned information (line 3). In the next turn, speaker four accepts this suggestion by repeating it and continues with their utterance. A similar thing occurs in Extract 64, where speaker three co-participates by providing a word. The reason why this speaker feels inclined to do so is again the momentary pause made in line 3.

Regarding the type of a phrase that is employed, there are fourteen examples with lexical suggestions in the corpus as opposed to eight instances that use longer phrases. The previously discussed Extracts 63 and 64 show how other participants contribute to the conversation by providing a word. Figure 13 below represents the forms and frequency of co-creating the message.

![Co-creating the message](image)

Figure 13: Forms and frequency of co-creating the message

64% 36%
As can be seen in the pie chart above, the use of lexical suggestions makes up approximately two-thirds of the total number of instances, whereas the remainder goes to longer phrases. The following extracts deal with longer phrases.

Extract 65

1 S2: mmm i cannot say because i mean the problem i see here is that you need sometimes
2 to find out or figure out yourself what’s a what hooo <1> hooo </1>
3 S3: <1> what </1> works better for you
4 S2: what works better for yo for you i mean maybe the uni the interface between
5 international students and the and the (. ) university err is not is not that fluent and
6 S3: mhm

Extract 66

1 S3: if you have a forty-five-minute break you’ll go for a coffee here
2 S4: you go to library
3 S3: yeah

Both extracts above reveal how the use of longer phrases helps to co-construct an utterance and add to shared understanding. In Extract 65, the speakers talk about the differences in their educational systems, particularly what they think about the practice of their host university to allow students to choose classes as opposed to having a fixed curriculum. Speaker two’s argument is that students have to decide on their own what seems to be best for them. However, speaker two appears to struggle to finish the utterance, which prompts speaker three (line 3) to provide a phrase that helps to establish understanding. The proof that the completion is successful is the repetition by speaker two in the next line. Likewise, Extract 66 illustrates the use of a longer phrase with the purpose of contributing to better understanding. The only difference between these examples is that in Extract 65, we can find overlap, whereas in Extract 66, there is none.
Interestingly, there are a few aspects that I observed in my research data. As far as the meaning is concerned, I realised that some participants would tend to provide words that are semantically narrower and more specific once co-creating has been completed. Extracts 67 and 68 support this claim.

Extract 67

1 S4: yeah, in french it was in ’80s that it was voted that we should banish the cigarettes in public areas so such as restaurants and pubs but it is true that here it’s it’s a problem if you don’t if if you have problem with your (1)
2 S5: mouth
3 S4: with
4 S5: mouth
5 S4: yes with your breath and <1> because </1>
6 S5: <1> because </1> the clothes stink afterwards
7 S4: yeah

Extract 68

1 S2: yeah but even next year i will miss this because i have (. ) a lot of time even in the beginning i didn’t know what to do with it (2) i too much time because you you can just live on your own and i don’t have a lot of (1)
2 S4: obligations
3 S2: fixed courses yeah obligations (1) everything is really relaxed here

What these two extracts have in common is the fact that the speakers who express their request for help by utilising a pause, initially do not accept the lexical suggestions offered by their co-participants. In Extract 67, the speakers are discussing whether smoking is banned in their respective home countries and the disadvantages of being a smoker. Speaker four at the end of their utterance pauses for one second (line 3), which prompts speaker five to complement the sentence. However, speaker four possibly thinks that this is not the right word they want to use,
which results in repetition on both sides. Finally, speaker four agrees but tries to provide a word
that is, probably in their opinion, narrower in meaning (line 7).

Similarly, in Extract 68, when asked whether they will miss Graz upon returning to their
countries, speaker two wants to underline that the free time spent in Graz is going to be missed.
Based on what has been uttered before, speaker four provides the word *obligations* (line 4). The
reaction from speaker two is that at first a word more specific and narrower in meaning is provided.
Thereafter, a minimal response and the acceptance of speaker four’s lexical suggestion follows
(line 5). Nevertheless, what needs to be stressed is that these two examples are the only ones that
display these characteristics. Still, this would be an interesting point to investigate in a larger
corpus.

Even though the participants would often make a pause which would trigger a response
from an interlocutor, it sometimes happens in a conversation that overlapping occurs, as has been
mentioned in some of the previous extracts. This means that the speakers would utter at the same
time the word/phrase they think best fits the context. Extracts 69 and 70 exemplify this point.

Extract 69

1   S2: there is like
2   S3: do you know that there is a tube channel also
3     S2: yes
4   S3: i watch the videos
5   S2: <1> and and you have to see </1>
6     S1: <1> what’s that </1>
7   S3: <1> it </1> s kind of like a documentary channel but it’s more like exploring all the (.)
8     like <2> controversial </2>
9   S2: <2> underground </2>
10  S3: underground controversial things in the society like i don’t know prostitutes drugs
Extract 70

1. S3: and are you still studying or are you working xxx
2. S2: well i came here to complete my master thesis
3. S3: aha
4. S2: so i was thinking that it would be a nice chance for me to (.) to do it in in here because
5. i wanted to learn a bit of <LNde> deutsch </LNde>
6. S3: mhm
7. S2: i i have the feeling that nowadays little by little in a spain companies errr require more
8. and more (.) <1> <LNde> deutsch </LNde> </1>
9. S3: <1> german </1> really
10. S2: yes
11. S3: really that’s cool

In my corpus, there are a few examples of co-creating the message through overlapping. In Extract 69, the speakers talk about a particular YouTube channel. Speaker three wants to elaborate on the topics this channel deals with and, already in line 8, signals that they are looking for the right word to describe it. Speaker two suggests the word that appears to be different from the one speaker three uses when overlapping (line 9). Nevertheless, mutual understanding is achieved, which is seen by the repetition and confirmation by speaker three. Likewise, in Extract 70, overlapping enhances collaboration. This example is interesting because it can be seen that the speaker uses code-switching for the second time in order to express themselves. Based on what speaker two previously uttered, speaker three predicts and suggests a word (line 9). The next turn serves as the proof that shared and joint co-participation led to successful comprehension.

The results in this section indicate that Erasmus students use the strategy of co-creating the message with the aim of preventing problems in communication. It is interesting to note that by completing each other’s utterances, the interactants enrich the communication process and contribute to enhancing mutual understanding.
6.3 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the communicative strategies that represent the locus of my analysis. It began by describing self-initiated communicative strategies; namely, self-initiated repetition, paraphrase, word replacement and comprehension checks. The section that followed examined other-initiated communicative strategies, i.e. other-initiated repetition, paraphrase, confirmation checks, clarification requests and co-creating the message. In the next chapter, I will discuss the findings of my empirical research and compare them to other studies.
7. DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to discuss the findings outlined in the previous chapter and compare them to other studies in the ELF field. It is divided into two sections that correspond to the analysis of self- and other-initiated communication strategies. Each part elaborates on the findings and makes a reference to previous research. Figure 14 illustrates the total number of communicative strategies perceived in the corpus.

Figure 14: Number of communicative strategies in the corpus

As shown in Figure 14, this study reveals that the bulk of communicative strategies belong to the self-initiated category, whereas other-initiated communicative strategies account for ten per cent of the total number of instances. What follows is a close-up look at these two categories.
7.1 Self-initiated communicative strategies

With respect to the question of frequency, this study ascertains that there are six hundred and five instances of self-initiated communicative strategies in the corpus. A possible explanation for the significantly larger number in comparison to other-initiated communicative strategies may be the speakers’ attempt to be more explicit or pre-empt problems either by repeating, rephrasing, repairing themselves, or checking comprehension.

As far as self-initiated repetition is concerned, the findings confirm that Erasmus students prefer to employ it in the same turn so that their message could resonate more with other participants. The results concerning the form of repetition show that repetition with variation and exact repetition are similar in terms of their frequency. Regarding the functions of repetition, the present findings accord with Björkman’s (2014) account of self-initiated repetition used as an explicitness strategy to strengthen understanding of a key piece of information. Moreover, the study reveals a pattern of results that corroborates Björkman’s (2011b) findings concerning the repetition of *very* followed by an adjective. Further, this study appends to this aspect of repetition by finding in the corpus instances of *really* followed by an adjective. Additionally, the findings observed in this study mirror those of the previous studies (Norrick 1987, Kaur 2012) that examined ‘parallel phrasing’, reaching the conclusion that participants utilise it to ensure their utterances are understood.

With regard to repetition and its functions in ELF contexts, Mauranen (2006) was one of the first scholars to touch on this topic, mentioning it in the context of signalling misunderstanding. Similarly, Cogo (2009) stresses that repetition can be used to show support of the speaker’s utterance alongside the fact that they can also be employed to provide “time to catch up on the
missed discourse” (p. 260). Furthermore, Kaur (2009) inspected whether there were any possible occurrences of communication breakdown. She came to the conclusion that ELF participants used repetition, especially after minimal response, prolonged silence, and overlapped talk. Therefore, she claims that the speakers tend to employ repetition in order to contribute to shared understanding and avoid any problems in conversation. On a similar note, Cogo and Dewey (2006) note that it “is used as an accommodation strategy in order to achieve efficiency and, at the same time, to show cooperation among speakers” (p. 70).

As regards paraphrase, the current study ascertains that the participants tend to employ it, preferably in the same turn than a few turns after. Furthermore, the use of paraphrase as a means to obtain clarity and prevent communication problems is found both at lexical and sentence level, which is in line with research carried out by Kaur (2009). In the same vein, Deterding (2013) mentions paraphrasing as one of the strategies used to avoid misunderstandings. However, in his analysis, he classifies paraphrasing instances as self-initiated repairs, which is different from this study. Another finding found in my study and attested in ELF literature is the use of the discourse marker *I mean* to introduce paraphrase (Franceschini 2019). In other words, speakers promote comprehension by attracting listeners’ attention to the rephrased elements (Mauranen 2007, Kaur 2011).

It has been demonstrated that self-initiated word replacement has a pivotal role in lessening the risk of ambiguity. Three categories spring from the analysis showing how they contribute to successful communication: word choice, the insertion of a lexical item, and pronoun replacement. The present findings seem to be consistent with Kaur’s (2011) study, which analysed self-repair
occurrences in ELF interactions not only at the lexical but also at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic level.

Even though I noticed in my data that self-repairs are ubiquitous, which is in accordance with what scholars observed in ELF conversations (Mauranen 2006, Franceschi 2019), this study adopted Björkman’s (2014) category of word replacement and therefore analysed only those instances. When mentioning her taxonomy and word replacement, I should highlight that she found a few instances of other-initiated word replacement, which were not found in the current study.

Regarding comprehension checks, I conclude that Erasmus students use them to enhance their utterances’ exactness. Comprehension checks are perceived through the use of long or short questions (you know what I mean?, do you know?, you know?), minimal checks (okay?, yeah?) or stressed words. The literature also enumerates examples with Are you with me?, Do you follow/understand?, Do you know what I am saying?, and many others (Jamshidnejad 2011, Vettorel 2019). However, this study did not find any instances of the questions mentioned above.

In addition to focusing on particular phrases commonly associated with comprehension checks, this study reports on another significant aspect. To be exact, it is shown that code-switching could be used as one of the ways to check comprehension and to that end contribute to mutual understanding.

Björkman’s (2014) study reveals that comprehension checks are the most prominent among self-initiated communicative strategies. However, it needs to be mentioned that she grouped repetition, simplification (treated as paraphrase in the current study), signalling importance, and paraphrasing under one category, i.e. explicitness strategies. It seems possible that the explanation for different results is found in the dissimilar methodologies of the studies themselves. Björkman’s
study involved group-work sessions with students working on a specific task (requiring a final product), whereas this study focuses on informal and casual speech. Having compared my findings with others concerning self-initiated communicative strategies, the next section of this chapter addresses the other category perceived in the data.

7.2 Other-initiated communicative strategies

In comparison to self-initiated communicative strategies, other-initiated communicative strategies are not as prominent, appearing only in sixty-five instances in informal spoken interactions among Erasmus students. The strategies investigated are other-initiated repetition and paraphrase, confirmation checks, clarification requests, and co-creating the message.

What differentiates this study from Björkman’s (2014) is that she grouped paraphrasing, repetition, and overt questions under the heading of confirmation checks in her framework. This research characterises overt questions as confirmation checks focusing on their form and distinguishing them from the instances of other-initiated paraphrase and repetition.

As noted in the previous chapter, the use of other-initiated repetition has been found to play a decisive role in achieving mutual understanding. The participants in the study prefer exact repetition to repetition with variation, which could be explained by the need to make an emphasis on the most critical parts of an utterance. Consequently, it is noteworthy that they may use it in situations where overlapping or hearing problems occur.

There have not been many studies dealing with other-initiated repetition. Björkman (2014) briefly discusses the importance of repetition, reporting that it represents the second biggest subset
of other-initiated strategies in her study. Similarly, Putry, Munir and Purwati (2019) found in their study that repetition is dominantly used.

In relation to other-initiated paraphrase, I should mention that it is the least frequent strategy in the corpus. Nevertheless, a couple of instances observed suggest that Erasmus students employ it to promote understanding. This strategy has been explored to a limited extent in the ELF field. One of the mentions is by Björkman’s (2014) illustrating how paraphrased segments lead to the promotion of understanding. Conversely, Putry, Munir and Purwati (2019) reveal that other-initiated paraphrase is not as frequent as other strategies. However, this discrepancy could be attributed to the scarcity of data. The former included fifteen hours of recordings, whereas the latter incorporated one hundred minutes of conversation.

Upon examining confirmation checks, this study reveals that they are to be found in various forms, out of which question repeats are the most frequent. Other forms include ‘you mean’ and ‘do you mean’. Moreover, the data posit that the speakers make use of confirmation checks in their interactions so as to mitigate possible vagueness and secure understanding. The research into confirmation checks in ELF surroundings has revealed that they tend to be used proactively in conversations to prevent misunderstandings (Mauranen 2006, Björkman 2014).

As regards clarification requests, what becomes evident from the instances in this study is that after their use, successful communication can be ensured. This inquiry has shown that they are found in a variety of forms such as short question ‘what’, question repeats, ‘what do/es you/it mean’, ‘did you say’ and ‘yeah’. Further research on clarification requests lists other expressions/phrases such as ‘What does he/she mean’, ‘I didn’t catch that’, ‘I’m not with you’, ‘Could you explain’ (Jamshidnejad 2011, Vettorel 2019).
In Björkman’s (2014) study, clarification requests are reported to be the most frequent, accounting for almost a third of the other-initiated communicative strategies. These discoveries are in agreement with Putry, Munir and Purwati’s (2019) findings which show that asking for an explanation is often employed. In terms of frequency, the findings of this study do not support the previously mentioned research. However, it is important to bear in mind that different aims of these studies might have led to unexpected outcomes.

Finally, co-creating the message is the most frequent other-initiated strategy perceived among Erasmus students, demonstrating that they jointly tried to enhance understanding of their utterances. The study reveals that participants also prefer to provide a lexical suggestion rather than employ longer phrases. It is difficult to explain this choice, but it might be related to the fact that the speakers felt that their longer phrases might impose on another person’s way of thinking. Moreover, some instances reveal that participants would collaborate by providing semantically narrower words, which would be an interesting feature to examine in further research using a more extensive corpus. In using code-switching for this strategy as well, Erasmus students attest to the fact that this mutual collaboration results in successful comprehension.

On the subject of co-creating the message, other studies point out the collaborative nature between participants that leads to sentence completion and the achievement of a communicative goal (Deterding 2013, Cogo and Dewey 2012, Kaur 2011, Kirkpatrick 2010). The findings of the current study seem to be consistent with other research as far as the functions of co-creating the message are concerned. However, in terms of frequency, the contradictory result can be seen in Björkman’s (2014) study, which reports only a few instances. The possible interpretation could be
that Björkman’s participants were involved in close-ended tasks requiring a final product, e.g. the solution of a problem, a report.

### 7.3 Summary

In its first part, this chapter has outlined the most important findings in this study in terms of self-initiated communicative strategies and tried to link those to other ELF research. The second part has focused on descriptions of the other-initiated strategies. In the next section, I will conclude my study and take a closer look at its limitations and contributions.
8. CONCLUSION

When I started writing my dissertation, the phrase *Don’t panic* from one of my favourite books was at the forefront of my mind. Nevertheless, embarking on this PhD journey represented not only one of the best things in my life but also a proof of my academic capacity, which is why I write these concluding remarks with a bittersweet feeling.

In its first section, this final chapter has as its aim to summarise each chapter of the thesis and to underscore the main research findings by linking them to my previously outlined research questions. Furthermore, the current study’s limitations are mentioned alongside the contribution and suggestions for future research in sections two and three, respectively.

8.1 Summary

This thesis begins by introducing and defining ELF as offered by the eminent scholars. It then provides a section on a contrast between ELF and EFL and World Englishes while at the same time mentioning and elaborating on the concept of the ownership of English. Furthermore, chapter two introduces the notion of ‘communities of practice’, adopted in this study. Chapter three reviews the empirical ELF research by taking into account three criteria: domain, location, and linguistic level of analysis. As far as ELF inquiry domain is concerned, there are two of them that attract scholars’ attention: business and academic ELF. As regards the location, Europe and East Asia come on the ELF scene as two regions where ELF is mainly investigated. When mentioning the linguistic levels, it should be highlighted that the early research sought ELF descriptions in phonology, lexicogrammar, and pragmatics. However, recent scholarship on ELF attempts to detect and explain the processes that brought about these descriptions.
Chapter four serves as an introduction to communicative strategies aiming to deal with the concept of communicative strategies and highlight the most important communicative strategies taxonomies both in SLA and ELF studies. In an attempt to fully comprehend the nature of ELF conversations among Erasmus students, the second section presents the terms that led this study (self-initiated and other-initiated), introducing a detailed summary of communicative strategies illustrated with the examples found in the corpus.

In the chapter dealing with methodology, I discuss this thesis’s purpose, which is to undertake an inquiry into Erasmus students’ communication. To be specific, this study lays great emphasis on communicative strategies occurring in Erasmus students’ conversations and tries to ascertain their importance in a communication event. The main objective is to compile and investigate a spoken ELF corpus that would generate findings relevant to preventing and overcoming misunderstandings among ELF speakers. Moreover, this section describes the methodological approach chosen for this study and outlines the research questions. This chapter also includes sections on data collection, analysis, and research ethics.

Chapter six constitutes the empirical part of my study. It is divided into two sections that probe and describe strategies employed in Erasmus students’ informal interactions. The first section deals with self-initiated communicative strategies, revealing that self-initiated repetition is the most prominent strategy used for the purposes of emphasis or enhancement of understanding. Apart from repetition, this section convincingly demonstrates that Erasmus students also utilise self-initiated paraphrase, word replacement, and comprehension checks to pre-empt problems and get their message across. The second section critically examines other-initiated communicative strategies, shedding light on their frequency and functions. It is found that co-creating the message
represents the most frequent strategy that contributes to a better understanding among Erasmus students. Nevertheless, other-initiated repetition, paraphrase, confirmation checks, and clarification requests are also detected to play a pivotal role as far as mutual understanding is concerned.

Finally, the discussion chapter seeks to establish a connection between other research carried out in the ELF field and the present study. It outlines each strategy providing interpretations and elucidating on the usage.

**8.2 Limitations**

In relation to this study’s limitations, the lack of data necessary to provide further evidence for my findings needs to be mentioned. I did not do follow-up interviews with the participants from my study in order to get their viewpoint on the strategies and possible reasons for employing them. I was unable to do so since most of them stayed for a semester in Graz, and by the time I was finished with the transcriptions, they were already back in their home countries. I have tried to reach them and carry out an interview; however, most of them did not want to partake.

In addition, the small size of the corpus would represent another limitation. I have gathered and transcribed fifteen hours of interactions among Erasmus students. I need to underscore that I am well aware that the limited number of participants might lead to challenges as far as generalisations are concerned. Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that even a small corpus could detect and shed light on the processes and strategies employed by Erasmus students or, to that extent, other ELF users.
8.3 Contribution and future research

This thesis set out to conduct research into the strategies involved in spoken informal Erasmus students’ interactions. The main goal was to provide a taxonomy of strategies in an environment where English is used as a lingua franca, i.e. among Erasmus students. What needs to be pointed out is that the results may not apply to other contexts. Therefore, when comparing findings, the variables set in this study (the most important being the nature of informal and casual conversation) need to be taken into account.

Furthermore, this study can be distinguished from others since it shines a light on conversations among Erasmus students, for there is a paucity of research as far as ELF and Erasmus groups are concerned. Therefore, it could be said that the findings from this project contribute to the existing knowledge of spoken ELF interactions.

Even though the ELF field has only attracted the linguists’ attention in the last two decades, it needs to be emphasised that there is a dearth of empirical data. Whereas earlier ELF research based its inferences mainly from written corpora, current studies draw primarily on spoken communication. Further research might investigate different communicative settings alongside the portrayal of other strategies attested in the literature. A number of possible future projects should entail working on longitudinal studies so that valuable insights into ELF could bring to reliable conclusions. It is also of utmost importance that there is a discussion concerning ELF’s emergence and development since its analysis still poses a challenge in the linguistic community.

Ending on a positive note, since the publication of pioneering works (Jenkins 2000, Mauranen 2003, Seidlhofer 2001), a growing number of articles, theses, conferences dealing with
ELF only serve as a reminder of how ELF has become a field developing at a rapid pace. In an attempt to depict ELF as a variety ‘sui generis’, ELF scholars have provided a comprehensive set of theoretical hypotheses that in the future may stir up or question central notions of applied linguistics.
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10. APPENDIX

A. ABSTRACT

The main objective of this thesis is to investigate English as a lingua franca (ELF), a phenomenon that has attracted linguistic attention in the last twenty years. Specifically, the study aims to analyse communicative strategies non-native speakers of English employ with a view to securing understanding. With respect to that, informal ELF conversations among Erasmus students at the University of Graz are investigated.

This study deploys qualitative methods, i.e. semi-structured interviews with Erasmus students were tape-recorded and transcribed. The crucial task was to build a taxonomy of strategies that non-native speakers of English use in informal spoken conversations. The dissertation comprises the sections on ELF’s theoretical foundations and the sections on the strategies complemented with the examples from the corpus. The findings show that Erasmus students employ various strategies with the aim of achieving mutual understanding and preventing possible communication problems.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca; Erasmus students; communicative strategies
Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, Englisch als Lingua Franca (ELF) zu untersuchen, ein Phänomen, das in den letzten zwanzig Jahren linguistische Aufmerksamkeit erhalten hat. Die Studie zielt insbesondere darauf ab, Kommunikationsstrategien zu analysieren, die Nicht-Muttersprachler des Englischen anwenden, um Verständnis zu gewährleisten. In diesem Zusammenhang werden informelle ELF-Gespräche zwischen Erasmus-Studierenden an der Universität Graz untersucht.

Die Studie stützt sich auf qualitative Methoden, die als halbstrukturierte Interviews mit Erasmus-Studierenden auf Band aufgezeichnet und transkribiert wurden. Die entscheidende Aufgabe bestand darin, eine Taxonomie von Strategien zu entwickeln, die Nicht-Muttersprachler in informellen gesprochenen Konversationen verwenden. Die Dissertation umfasst die Abschnitte zu den theoretischen Grundlagen der ELF und die Abschnitte zu den Strategien, ergänzt durch die Beispiele aus dem Korpus. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Erasmus-Studierende sich verschiedener Strategien bedienen, um ein gegenseitiges Verständnis zu erreichen sowie potenzielle Kommunikationsprobleme zu vermeiden.

Schlagwörter: Englisch als Lingua Franca; Erasmus-Studierende; Kommunikationsstrategien
B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose Austria for your semester/year abroad?

2. Do you like it here? Are there any aspects that you do not like?

3. What do you like most in Austria?

4. Do you like the people here? How are they different from people in your home country? Find three words that best describe Austrians.

5. Are there any habits that you find unusual/strange in Austria?

6. Have you had negative experiences in Austria?

7. When it comes to universities, how is a university in Austria different from your home university?

8. What about the relationship between students and professors?

9. What do you miss most from your home country?

10. Did you experience culture shock when you came here? Did you adapt? What can a person do in such circumstances? How can you cope with the transition?

11. What did you learn from your stay here?

12. Could you live in Austria? Why/why not?

13. What do you think about the English language being used among Erasmus students? Is it easy for you to understand other students?
C. TRANSCRIPTION SAMPLE

Duration: 49:48

Number of participants: 4

Key to transcription conventions (adapted from VOICE mark-up conventions) http://www.univie.ac.at/voice/documents/VOICE_mark-up_conventions_v2-1.pdf

?.........................rising intonation

(.)........................brief pause in speech (up to a good half second)

(1).............................longer pauses marked with the number of seconds in parentheses

<1> </1> ............overlaps

:.............................lengthened sounds

L1.............................utterances in a participant’s first language

LN.............................utterances in languages which are neither English nor the speaker’s first language

<un> </un> ........unintelligible speech

<beg 00.00>

S1: ok first we’ll start by introducing ourselves [S2] you can go first

S2: hello i’m [S2] i’m from slovenia i study library science (.) and i love these people

S4: @@@

S1: ok good (.) [S3]

S3: i’m [S3] i come from croatia and i study croatian and english

S1: good

S4: and i am [S4] i come from croatia and i study it and english

S1: good ok so er (.) tell me why did you choose graz for your semester abroad

S4: well me and my roommate were thinking of going to vienna because we really liked vienna went there last winter (.) for our like birthdays

S1: mhm
S4: and then there was no like matching classes in vienna so went here @@
S3: a:h okay
S1: okay you two
S2: i wanted to go somewhere to learn german and i had to check the cities where we have our bilateral contracts with our university so i chose graz because it’s close (2) that is actually main reason yeah
S1: were there any other options other cities
S2: yeah i could go to leipzig or mainz that is in germany but i don’t know somehow i decided to take graz because it’s closer and i can go home during the weekend
S1: okay good you
S3: i chose graz because i wanted to improve my german and graz was the only city which (1) was offered so
S1: good and do you think that you improved your german (1) you two
S3: i think
S4: a tiny bit <1> @@@@@ </1>
S1: <1> tiny bit </1>
S3: <1> i think </1> i think yeah
S1: okay good
S3: it has improved
S1: it has improved
S4: yeah definitely
S3: yeah
S1: you [S2]
S2: definitely especially because of the un intensive course in september but yeah i got sick now that i should have studied for my german exams so that is a definitely minus
S1: what do you think about german courses german language courses in graz <2> intensive course</2>
S2: <2> intensive course </2> was incredible semester courses i don’t know <LNde> sprachkompetenz </LNde> it was ok cos gerlinda is nice (1) i didn’t like the <LNde> grammatik </LNde> course (1) because i don’t like <LNde> grammatik </LNde>
S3: @@@@@
S2: otherwise christa was nice
S1: mhm <3> you two </3>
S3: <3> i </3> i think they are good but i should have studied more because <4> it all depends on on us so yeah </4>
S2: <5> definitely definitely i didn’t </5> study almost anything
S3: yeah
S2: it was quite horrible
S3: but i acquired a lot of new vocabulary
S1: oh that’s good
S3: <6> that’s a good thing yeah really </6>
S2: <6> yes exactly me too </6>
S3: because you just hear germans <7> german everywhere around </7> and then you just
S4: <un> xxx </un>
S2: and then you just catch a word and <8> it’s like oh my god</8> i understood something
S3: <8> yeah </8>
S1: but do you try to speak in german did you make an effort
S3: ah not really
S2: yeah i <9> actually did </9>
S4: <9> we spoke with domi </9> <1> in german </1>
S3: <1> yes yessss </1>
S2: especially when we got drunk
S3: yeah
S4: especially when we got drunk
S2: @@@@@
S3: domi is actually the only person who speaks german with us so
S4: <2> and anze sometimes </2>
S2: <2> nooo and my roommate </2>
S3: anze yeah okay
S4: sometimes
S3: yeah <3> anze tries </3>
S2: <3> ok for me </3> it’s weird to speak german to anze because he speaks Slovenian so i can <4> speak Slovenian </4> <5> with him </5>
S4: <4> yeah </4>
S3: <5> yeah yeah </5>
S2: but my roommate was quite useful we spoke german sometimes and i was (1) that was cool we should have done that more often but yeah (1) <6> i didn’t make effort </6>
S3: <6> my roommate tells </6> me only er good morning and how are you
S4: oh @@@
S3: the only phrases i hear on daily bases
S1: but do you continue speaking with him
S3: no <7> i </7>
S4: <7> you </7> don’t talk at all
S3: i reply in in english
S4: <8> oh okay </8>
S3: <8> @ </8>
S2: but it’s really <9> hard to </9>
S4: <9> but you </9>
S1: but why didn’t you try just continue the conversation
S3: because i was shy (1) really <1> i just didn’t want to speak with them </1>
S2: <1> yeah but you don’t have any </1> topic to to <2> speak </2> with them about
S4: <2> ah </2>
S2: he <3> i mean </3>
S4: <3> he doesn’t </3> talk at all
S3: no
S4: with kaetan or with
S3: in in german
S4: <4> aha okay </4>
S3: <4> yeah </4> we were speaking in English
S4: okay
S3: but not in german
S1: but also to your other roommate not in
S3: yeah johanna she was always speaking english with me (. ) i mean they wanted to to speak with me but
S4: yeah
S3: but it’s normal i feel embarrassed too when i am supposed to like speak my german because my accent is <5> horrible </5>
S3: <5> yeah </5>
S4: and because i have to think to <6> form a sentence </6>
S3: <6> yeah you always </6> have to pay attention on <7> on grammar </7>
S4: <7> and </7> i feel really stupid <@> when </@> i try to
S3: yeah
S2: and it is much easier just to
S4: yeah
S2: continue <8> or start </8>
S1: <8> switch to english </8>
S2: yeah in english (1) because it’s better
S1: mhm
S3: but i’ve decided that i am gonna try to speak german when i come back in September
S4: yeah
S3: yeah
S2: yeah i decided that in september too @@@@@ <9> sorry it didn’t work out so </9> i did
S3: <9> @@@@@ i did </9>
S2: today actually woman stopped when i was passing the street she stopped and asked me something in german and i was like okay i understood this one should i reply in german or english what should i do now <1> i was in </1>
S4: <1> if she’s old </1> then german @@@ <2> if she is young then english </2>
S2: <2> no she was young (. ) she was young </2> she understood me but she didn’t speak english so <3> yeah </3>
S3: <3> what </3> did you do
S2: i told her where she was and where should she go i told everything in
S3: in german
S2: no in english
S3: <4> in english okay </4>
S2: <un> xxx </un> of course i started in german then <5> i got lost </5> somewhere
S3: <5> yeah </5>
S2: because i did not know one word so
S3: okay
S2: yeah
S1: okay good so do you like it here in graz
S3: love it @@@
S4: <un> xxx </un>
S1: okay
S4: <un> xxx </un>
S3: i love it
S2: it was nice
S3: such a beautiful city
S4: nooo it’s it’s so nice
S3: yeah <6> second hometown </6>
S4: <6> i wish i could stay </6>
S1: but what aspects of graz you like and what aspects you don’t like di discuss that
S2: <7> i just like people </7>
S4: <7> i like </7>
S3: <8> i love people </8>
S4: <un> xxx </un>
S4: that’s i i like people here a lot because they are really polite
S3: <9> they are polite </9>
S4: <9> they are </9> really nice and they are really <1> good hearted </1>
S3: <1> mmm <1> mhm
S4: <2> but i don’t like <2>
S2: <2> not everybody </2>
S4: i don’t like the fact that they are really not fun people they really don’t like <3> going to </3>
S2: <3> yeah </3>
S4: <4> cafes going out </4>
S3: <4> mhm mhm </4>
S4: they really like like to work i guess
S3: yeah
S4: they are hardworking and they don’t really party as much as we do @@@ <5> or in </5> the same ways as we do <un> xxx </un>
S3: <5> they are </5>
S2: i think it’s really nice and at the same time really weird that they always stop when i want to cross the street (1) that freaks me out
S4: i think that’s awesome in in croatia <6> car the cars </6> <7> almost runs you over </7> every single day so
S3: <6> that s great </6>
S2: <7> yeah but i am not used to it </7> yeah exactly but i am not used to it cos in slovenia people don’t do that usually
S4: yeah
S3: this is really respectful
S4: yeah
S3: i like it
S4: and i like how everything is so neat hear and v well organised
S3: <un> xxx </un>
S4: and in croatia it’s nothing like that like the college is well o organised all the people like know what to do know <8> where to do it </8> know who to go who to ask
S3: <8> they don’t care </8>
S4: and here err
S3: mhm
S4: i mean at home it’s like <9> completely different </9> @
S1: <9> mhm mhm </9>
S3: yeah
S2: it’s not so different compared to slovenia so i was not really shocked about erm
S1: mhm <1> i guess </1>
S2: <1> one time </1>
S1: it’s pretty organised in your country
S4: yeah @@ <2> @@ </2>
S1: <2> because in our countries </2>
S2: some things yes some things not but i mean it’s it’s similar to here (.) but for example our department in slovenia on our faculty it’s much better really
S4: really
S2: much better (1) here it’s awful
S3: but do you prefer ljubljana over graz
S2: yeah
S4: <3> really </3>
S3: <3> definitely </3>
S2: yeah definitely
S3: so if you could choose you would rather live in
S2: of course i mean i would live here if i (. ) if somebody offered me a really good job with a lot of money i would stay here for a year or two but not more (. ) <4> i prefer ljubljana definitely </4>
S4: <4> i would stay </4> i would stay i love rijeka <5> but i would stay </5> <6> @ </6>
S3: <5> yeah </5> i would <6> like </6> to stay here
S1: but
S3: i can definitely imagine <7> my life </7> here <un> xx </un>
S4: <7> yeah yeah </7>
S1: but are there any aspects that you don’t like
S4: i told you i don’t like how people can’t <8> party </8>
S3: <8> boring </8>
S4: they are boring
S1: okay
S2: <un> <9> xxx </9> </un>
S4: <9> and when they do </9> get drunk then they vomit all the time they <1> don’t know how to drink </1> @@
S1: <1> okay okay but</1>
S2: <1> ok:ay </1>
S1: you are talking about people we are going to talk about that later but er (. ) just the city itself (1) <2> and the country </2> itself
S2: <2> no </2>
S3: <3> er:m </3>
S4: <3> there is no </3> sea @@ <4> @@ </4>
S3: <4> yeah okay </4>
S1: <4> okay so </4> you miss sea
S3: yeah the most important thing there is <5> no sea </5>
S4: <5> yeah </5>
S1: okay
S4: but still there is a river so and there is like the the nice hills and the parks and everything we don’t have that at home
S1: mhnm
S4: it’s it’s more like concrete city (1) so
S3: yeah (1) actually one austrian guy a couple of days ago told me that it would be <6> so good </6>
S2: <6> in your party </6>
S3: yeah if we could have er sea where
S4: yeah
S3: now seiresberg is
S1: a:h
S4: yeah definitely
S3: yeah that would be great
S2: <un> <7> xxx </7> </un>
S3: <7> and graz </7> would be (1) dream city
S4: yeah it would
S1: but they have a lake nearby so
S4: <8> it’s not the same thing you can’t <9> describe that <9> @@
S3: <8> you can’t (.) there is no beach <8>
S1: <9> of course it’s not of course it’s not <9>
S3: there’s no beach so
S2: okay for me that is not a problem <1> since i live in the city <1>
S4: <1> @@ <1>
S2: and i mean i don’t live far away from the seaside but (1) <un> <2> xxx <2> <un>
S4: <2> nothing in <2> slovenia is far <3> away <3>
S2: <3> yeah <3> @@ exactly so for me (.) this is pretty much like ljubljana just (.) ljubljana’s nicer
S3: but there is <4> one minus <4>
S2: <4> cause it’s cheaper <4>
S3: it’s erm it’s always cold not always <5> but it’s very cold <5>
S1: <5> okay so so the weather weather <5>
S3: <6> yeah weather <6>
S4: <6> yeah but <6> not for me because it is colder than croatia
S3: <7> mhm <7>
S4: <7> a lot <7> colder but still it rains less than in Rijeka
S3: mhm
S2: <8> yeah (1) exactly <8> <un> <9> xxx <9> <un>
S4: <8> rijeka like <8>hold the winter <9> record raining <9> every day for two weeks straight and here there is like literally <1> no rain <1> at all
S3: <1> yeah <1>
S1: mhm mhm so but when it comes to crime in graz do you feel safe
S3: m:
S2: yeah on the other side of the river <1> it’s <1> a little bit horrible
S3: <1> yeah <1> <2> the other side scares me <2> really
SS: <un> <2> xxx <2> <un>
S2: yeah it’s scary
S3: yeah
S2: there’s a lot of (. ) i don’t know weird people i had unpleasant some (. ) <3> events </3>
S4: <3> yeah me too </3> but i think the only reason why i feel so unsafe is because i wasn’t born
here so i am not sure how to react or what to say to someone who starts like talking to me in the
middle of the night when i am walking home and in croatia that happens as well but at least i can
tell them something or like i know where to run or call the police or whatever here i i don’t know
any of tho those things so @
S2: but otherwise on this side of the river where we live (. ) i think it’s just fine
S3: mhm
S2: people look normal and everything is ok i feel safe to walk down the street in the middle of
the night
S4: mh
S2: i don’t even think about it (1) yeah
S3: we live in a multicultural society here <4> so that </4> is a bit scary
S4: <4> yeah </4> yeah
S3: yeah
S4: <5> the park is scary </5>
S2: <5> it’s actually really </5>
S3: mhm yeah
S2: park is scarry because <6> there is a lot of </6>
S4: <6> park is scary </6> even during the day i know that
S2: yeah
S4: every every friday when <7> we have </7> beauty and style
S3: <7> mhm </7>
S4: if i go to the city afterwards then i have to pass through the park
S2: mhm
S4: and this week like there were like really lot of people young people sitting there and everyone
was screaming to me on german and i don’t understand <8> @@@ </8> what but it was so
uncomfortable @
S3: <8> yeah of course </8>
S2: it is a bit <un> <9> xxx </9> </un>
S3: <9> that always happens </9> (1) but i am still scared of walking alone
S4: anywhere <1> or </1>
S3: <1> no no </1> not when i am walking now at three o’clock but during the nights
S4: <2> but it depends </2>
S2: <2> i was i was </2> scared to go <3> to the park </3>
S4: <3> if it’s like </3>
S2: in the middle of the day like two days ago when i was going home or somewhere cos there was a lot of <4> weird people </4> there
S4: <4> yeah </4>
S3: mhm
S4: i wouldn’t be scared to go to the center but <5> like the park </5> and <6> the other places </6>
S2: <5> yeah </5> <un> <6> xxx </6> </un>
S3: <6> mhm </6>
S4: yeah definitely i would never go there (1) like at night
S2: i think they should do something ab about that park
S4: but it’s a park what can you do there there is lightning it’s just
S2: i don’t know they <un> <7> xxx </7> </un>
S4: <7> i mean </7> i think there is always that one place in every town where it’s like completely unsafe to go
S3: well
S4: @ sometimes
S3: something could be done <8> really </8>
S4: <8> yeah i think so too </8>
S3: people should be there
S4: <coughs>
S3: enjoying in that park and
S2: yeah
S3: everybody is scared of going there so
S2: yeah actually we don’t know <9> if every everybody is scared </9>
S4: <9> yeah @@@@@ </9> <un> <1> xxx </1> </un>
S3: <1> johanna no no johanna told me johanna told me </1> to stay away from from that park
S2: really
S3: <2> really </2>
S4: <2> really </2>
S3: <3> yeah and </3>
S2: <3> she is Austrian </3> so
S3: there and <LNde> griesplatz </LNde>
S1: <LNde> griesplatz </LNde> also
S3: yeah <4> she told me that really </4>
S4: <4> i dont know where </4> griesplatz is where is that
S2: that is
S3: <LNde> kebabstrasse </LNde>
S2: <LNde> kebabstrasse </LNde> yeah i <un> xxx </un> to ask
S3: yeah
S2: kebabstrasse but the kebab is good
SS: @@@@@@@@@ </5> @@@@@ </5>
S1: <5> we will come to that later also </5> so what do you like most in graz or in austria so if you were to pick no if you were to pick one thing but that is different from your country okay something what what would it be so it could be like culture or it could be i don’t know multi what did you say <6> multi </6>
S3: <6> okay </6>
SS: multicultural
S1: multicultural society here in graz student city <7> let’s say </7>
S3: <7> okay </7>
S1: something like that so what would be one thing that separates graz from your city
S3: i would say
S1: but the good thing not the <8> bad one </8>
S3: <8> okay </8>
S4: @
S3: I would say handsome guys (.) <9> really </9>
S1: <9> okay </9> <1> guys </1>
S3: <1> cos </1> i never meet a cute <2> people </2> in my hometown never
S4: <2> really </2>
S1: okay
S3: and here i am constantly being surrounded by cute guys
S1: thank you
S3: yeah @@
S2: i don’t know i just like people here
S4: yeah i agree i think the number of er students here is far bigger than in in rijeka and there is so
much different people so much like different back<3> grounds </3>
S3: <3> mhm </3>
S4: and different cultures and young people in general so yeah
SX: <un> <4> xxx </4> </un>
S2: <4> i like tram </4>
S4: yeah
S2: i like tram we used to had that in ljubljana we don’t have it any more cos (1) somebody was
really stupid and told that buses are the future <5> yeah </5>
S3: <5> @@ </5>
S2: really (.) we used to had that but we don’t have it anymore that was crazy yeah
S3: yeah but jakominiplatz doesn’t look really good because of
S2: no of course not
S3: its tram stations
S2: because of all the wires
S3: mhm
S4: yeah
S2: yeah
S4: but the traffic is awesome much better <6> than rijeka </6>
S3: <6> mhm mhm </6> (1) mhm
S2: yeah (1) actually i think it’s better
S1: okay er so when you compare people so characteristic-wise <7> when you compare </7>
S3: <7> okay </7>
S1: people from your country to people from austria how different are they
S2: how many austrian people that we really <8> meet </8>
S4: <8> actually </8> no i met this one girl like last weekend
S3: okay
S4: two days ago when I was smoking on the balcony <9> @@ </9>
S3: <9> mhm </9>
S4: of your apartment
S3: who was it
S4: i have no idea i forgot @ but we were talking about the differences of austrian people and
croatian <1> people </1>
S3: <1> aha </1>
S4: and i told her that i i i think i kind of said too much but i told her @ that i think that austrian
people are very reserved and that’s the thing that i don’t like
S1: mhm
S4: because <2> croatian </2> people
S2: <2> yeah </2>
S4: are really open <3> and if you meet </3>
S2: <3> yeah that’s true </3>
S3: <4> that’s true </4>
S4: <4> like croatian </4> or even bosnian or serbian slovenian person somewhere they will
always invites invite you to coffee what’s your name how are you and everything and if you see
an austrian person for example at college when i asked them what time is it or is this your class
they will just answer with yes or no or like <5> one word </5>
S3: <5> that's all </5>
S4: and goodbye you know so
S3: yeah i told that to kaetan also (.) we had a conversation about that and he he said to me that he
would like to change something because he he wasn’t aware of that so <6> he told me </6>
S2: <6> mhm mhm </6>
S3: that maybe he could change his (1) behavior
S1: mhm
S2: yeah but i actually think that most of north european people are like that (.) people from the south or balkan people are much more open to other people they invite you to their home they give you food <7> every time you come </7>
S4: <7> yeah that’s true </7>
S3: yeah yeah
S1: but <un> xxx </un> about the concept of going out here and <8> in in our countries </8>
S2: <8> it’s so much different </8>
S4: <8> it’s much </8> different
S2: yeah
S1: yeah
S4: it’s much different
S1: did you find
S3: they are so calm
S1: did you find this strange <9> no strange part</9>
S4: <9> no i kind of </9> expected that
S3: yeah
S1: okay because i didn’t expect <1> that </1>
S4: <1> really </1>
S1: <2> no no </2>
S3: <2> but i prefer this </2>
S4: i don’t prefer because i think that’s er it’s not very spontaneous and it’s not very like everyone is so serious sometimes
S3: <3> mhm </3>
S4: <3> so </3> i can’t relax very good but the thing that i like is how the clubs look because in rijeka there is no clubs you can only find like coffee shops which at night then open and <4> become clubs </4>
S3: <4> mhm mhm </4>
S4: but no actual clubs like club motion and stuff like that
S3: mhm
S2: i just don’t like for example when we went to johana’s party and err
S3: mhm
S2: whatever she had a party and we had to buy our own drink
S3: yeah <5> that was </5>
S2: <5> that </5>
S3: a strange experience really
S2: that was really weird i mean i have heard of stories like that and <6> i was surprised </6>
S4: <6> that's not weird </6> at all why
S3: we were there surrounded by bunch of austrian people and they were all together and we were just speaking
S2: to each other <7> yeah </7>
S3: <7> yeah </7> to each other and
S4: but how many people were there
S2: i don’t know <8> thirty maybe </8>
S3: <8> we left quite early </8> so yeah <9> thirty </9>
S2: <9> yeah </9>there had to be at least thirty people
S3: nobody even came to us and <1> try to introduce themselves </1>
S4: <1> wait and where was the party </1>
S3: it was in guestroom
S2: <2> yeah </2>
S3: <2> it’s </2> (.) coffeshop
S2: <3> club club yeah </3>
S4: <3> o:::h </3> <4> so it was </4>
S3: <4> no it’s a pub yeah </4> like club
S2: we went out
S4: o:::h i meant it was like in your apartment <un> <5> xxx </5> </un>
S3: <5> no no nooo it was </5>
S2: <5> no no we went out </5>
S3: it was johana’s birthday
S2: <6> and we had to buy our own drinks </6>
S4: <6> a:h okay that’s that’s not cool </6>
S3: <7> yeah </7>
S4: <7> that’s not </7> cool <8> that’s not cool </8>
S2: yeah <8> it was kind of weird because </8>
S4: because always like this year it was different because i was here and i wasn’t expecting celebration but usually at home when i have a party when i throw it i buy <9> all the drinks </9>
S3: <9> we always prepare </9>
S1: <1> we all yeah </1>
S2: <1> of course that’s </1> <2> totally normal in our culture </2>
S3: <2> that’s normal thing</2>
S1: i told that to her also yeah
S3: yeah
S2: that is totally normal i mean sometimes when we get together and go to park like
S4: <3> yeah that’s different that's that’s </3>
S2: <3> a huge group of people </3> everybody brings what they want to drink
S4: <4> yeah yeah </4>
S3: <4> yeah </4>
S2: <4> and that’s it </4>
S2: <5> but when you have a birthday or anything </5>
S4: <5> we don’t do that either </5> if i go out with my friends like every weekend we meet up and then we buy all the drinks together @@@
S2: <6> okay yeah </6>
S4: <6> because we always </6> like
S3: mhm
S4: give a piece of like some money and then we buy
S2: whatever is more <7> practical </7>
S4: <7> yeah </7>
S2: <un> <8> xxx </8> </un>
S3: <8> well i was invited </8> er chrise’s welcome dinner and each of us had to pay five euros for that dinner
S1: a:h oh my god
S3: and then they invite you
SS: a::::::h
S3: yeah yeah i forgot they invite you and then at the end of a dinner you have to give some money and then
S2: <9> what was the dinner </9>
S3: <9> they told us like </9> to give approximately five euros
S4: i mean that’s fine if you say it like if you <1> agreed </1>
S3: <1> if you </1>
S4: to do that before<2> hand </2>
S3: <2> that's true </2> yeah
S4: but if you invite some<3> one </3>
S3: <3> yeah </3>
S4: like if i told [S1] yeah i want to invite <4> you to </4> go get dinner
S3: <4> yeah come please </4>
S4: with me then <5> okay </5>
S1: <5> and then all </5> of a sudden you you tell me pay <6> five euros </6>
S4: <6> @@@@@ </6>
S1: bitte
S4: bitte
SS: @@
S2: yeah
S4: no
S1: that’s terrible <7> but </7>
S2: <7> there </7>
S1: are there any other other habits of austrian people that you find unusual or strange
S4: m:
S1: something <8> that they do </8>
S4: <8> i think </8> they are very active i think that croatian people aren’t at at least in rijeka i don’t know <9> how it is for for split </9>
S2: <9> active in what kind of sense </9>
S4: active i mean physically active i see people running down the street in the morning we never do that <1> you can never see in rijeka </1> you can never see
S2: <1> yeah we do that a lot </1>
S4: i know but rijeka is kind of a different city
S3: yeah i know i know
S4: it’s very it’s like there’s hills and everything
S2: mhm
S4: so it’s not practical to run every morning and there is a lot of traffic and it’s like a city a city there is no parks or anything <2> so you know </2>
S2: <2> mhm mhm </2> <un> <3> xxx </3> </un>
S4: <3> and they </3> always drive bikes we can’t drive bikes at all at home
S1: okay
S2: that is actually quite amazing i was surprised that they they go everywhere by bike and <4> they do that all winter</4>
S4: <4> mhm mhm </4>
S2: because in ljubljana for example there is a lot of people who go to work to school whatever by bike but usually not in december or in january cos
S4: <5> it’s cold </5>
S2: <5> we feel </5> that it’s too cold so we just don’t do that here people don’t care about cold they just go
S4: and they don’t care about how they are dressed for example i saw one girl with huge high heels like pink high heels
S2: yeah
S4: and her pink bike and she was driving
S3: @@@
S4: first like on her hands she was like completely like that’s normal <un> <6> xxx </6> </un>
S2: <6> this is just my way of </un> xxx </un> and that’s it
S3: i think they do not pay attention to <7> their physical appearance definitely </7>
S4: <7> yeah yeah yeah that’s true </7>
S3: yeah <8> i’m really okay with that </8>
SS: <un><8> xxx </8></un>
S4: that’s a big difference i forgot about that
S3: mhm

S4: but i remember like in the first two weeks when i came to graz er one time i got really lost i
sat on the wrong tram and i wanted to go to college but i missed like the stop or whatever and then
i went out of the tram and i was completely lost and there was this one girl like walking past me
and i was like hello can you tell me like where my university is and she was like which language
did you just speak and i was like english and a little bit of german and then she started speaking
on croatian and she told me that she recognised i was croa<9> tian </9>
S2: <9> yeah </9>
S4: because of my make-up
S3: make up
S2: oh my god <1> that is crazy </1>
S4: @@@ <un><1> xxx </1></un>
S1: <un> xxx </un> make-up
S4: @@ yeah
S3: <2> but they really they don’t put a lot of make-up </2>
S4: <un><2> xxx </2></un> make-up and i wear like eyeshadow <3> everything </3> you know
so
S3: <3> yeah </3>
S4: @
S2: yeah we we don’t do that either we usually dress more (.) <4> casual sport style </4>
S4: <4> you you dress sport </4>
S2: whatever <5> i mean </5>
S4: <5> i mean </5> i remember when we were in ljubljana <6> ever </6> yone was like
S2: <6> yeah </6>
S3: yeah mhm
S4: sporty
S2: i mean we dress up sometimes but not every day i just don’t feel like getting up and pull it
putting
S3: yeah
S2: all of the make up on my xxx

S3: yeah but in my hometown people exaggerate with that they

S4: in my hometown too because if you come to korzo you will see like all the people passing by like completely dressed up

S2: mhm mhm

S3: yeah

S4: eleven am literally

S3: mhm mhm that's not good

S2: everybody wants to look good

S4: yeah but i think it’s in his in your country

S2: <1> yeah serbia </1> is the same

S4: it’s the worse <2> @@@@@ </2>

S2: <2> yeah yeah </2>

S1: of course it’s the worse

S2: yeah yeah

S4: @@@@@

S2: i heard about a story there is

S4: <3> because i feel </3>

S1: you know when you go to the supermarket if you don’t

S2: yeah

S1: i mean for a woman if you don’t have make up or

S4: yeah

S1: i mean

S4: i think that serbian woman dress up like the most from all of us like

S2: yeah <4> yeah </4>

S4: <4> but i </4> think they are the prettiest too even though that’s like

S1: i guess it err i think it depends on the region i wouldn’t say that all of them are</5>

S4: <5> yeah maybe maybe </5>
S2: <5> yeah </5> (2) i heard stories that in beograd i don’t know which part of beograd but there is like a street or district whatever where girls come all dressed up beautiful whatever and they erm they are just trying to find a rich future husbands
S4: sponsor @@
S2: yesss i i dont know what it’s called
S1: it’s usually in some clubs i would guess
S3: <6> oh my god </6>
S2: <6> no there is </6> really like a street full of bars and everything (.) a friend of mine from beograd told me i don’t know what is the name of the <7> street </7>
S3: <7> and only </7> <8> rich guys come there </8>
S2: <8> and and actually </8> actually i heard that their parents pay <9> for plastic surgeries and everything so that they could get married really </9>
S4: <9> oh come on i i think that i think that is </9> exaggerating already i think that is exaggerating
S1: yeah
S2: ok i will ask her what’s the name of that street really
S1: ask her ok let s talk about graz now
S4: @@@
S1: so for example what do you think about erm (.) sundays here <1> in graz </1>
S4: <1> they are </1> so boring
S1: yeah because nothing works <2> on sunday </2>
S4: <2> nothing work </2> nothing <un> xxx </un> them
S1: is it in your is it in your countries like that
S4: no
S2: <3> for me it’s really weird </3>
S1: <3> was it a shock for you </3>
S3: i think it should be everywhere <4> like that </4>
S4: <4> it shocked me </4> like the first week i was trying to find a place to buy cigarettes from
S2: yeah
S4: and it was like past six pm and everything was closed and i was completely shocked because in croatia i could buy cigarettes at one am if i wanted to and here nothing worked and then (.) erm i found like those like machines
S2: yeah
S3: mhm
S4: and then the
S3: <5> you had the experience </5>
S1: <5> but you but you also </5>
S3: <6> with the guy </6>
S4: <6> then the arabian guy </6> attacked me and
S1: but you also you also when buying cigarettes you you cannot buy just one pack you need to buy two packs yeah
S4: you can buy one pack if you put exactly the sum of euros
S1: aha aha
S4: because for example my cigarettes cost fours four eighty and then i put five and it’s fine
S1: aha
S4: because you can’t put less than five inside
S1: mhm
S2: a:hh
S4: and then the the arabian attacked me when i went to buy cigarettes the first time he wanted to marry me
S3: @@
S4: and then he
S1: he attacked you
S4: he didn’t physically attacked me but but <7> he came </7>
S2: <un> <7> xxx </7> </un>
S4: <8> up to me </8>
S1: <8> mentally </8>
S4: he came up to me and he saw that i was struggling with it because i tried to put my card inside but it doesn’t take croatian cards because you have to have an austrian pass it’s automatised in way that if you put at the end it reads your age so if you re over 18 or not and he came and he took my
card from my hands and i was like no no i can do it myself and he didn’t let me and he keeps speaking in german and i told him i can’t speak german and he was like oh i will give you my card you are so beautiful you you have such nice eyes do you have a boyfriend do you live alone do you need me to take you home now

S1: oh my god

S4: and i was like trying to walk away and he kept walking next to me @@ and then i was like okay goodbye i will come to because he works at a restaurant right there and i was like okay if i want to i will come to your restaurant and then we will have coffee and i started walking really fast @@ and then i never saw him again (.) thanks thank god @@

S2: something similar happened to me too

S1: was it a negative experience that you had

S4: i was shocked but that happens in croatia literally every second day so it was okay the only shocking thing was that i came here and i thought like everyone is polite no-one will do that and in croatia they do it all the time so

S1: aha but did you two did you have negative experiences in graz

S2: yes exactly it was something similar to [S4]'s experience and it was on the other side of the river so that’s why and it was in the middle of the day so that was the weirdest thing ever

S4: but there is a lot of crazy people here i think but i think the reason for that is there is more people (.) like in general @@

S2: no i don’t think so because there is a lot of i i used to live in prague and there is a looot of crazy people there too but nobody wants to talk to you harass you whatever

S4: <9> but in croatia </9>

S2: <9> you feel safe </9>

S4: it happens like every every single <1> like every second day like on my way to </1>

S2: <1> i don’t know i am (.) not used to that </1>

S4: to college i sit sit in the bus and then there comes one time one guy he is like 60 he sits next to me and he tells me (.) you look like a naughty teacher @@

S2: oh my godddd

S3: <2> that doesn’t happen to me in croatia </2>

S4: <2> 8 o’clock 8 o’clock </2> in the morning @@

SS: @@

S3: i didn’t have a negative experience there was only one woman and she <3> asked me to </3>

S2: <3> what about </3> the austrian guy that we went on a date with
S4: <L1cr> o boze </L1cr>
S2: <4> @@@ </4>
S3: <4> yeah </4> he he was creepy really he was creepy
S4: yeah
S3: and he was sending me <5> messages all the time </5>messages all the time every day yeah
S2: <un> <5> xxx </5> </un>
S4: but i think that(.) er you kind of created that situation you
S3: i know
S4: you didn’t have to go to coffee with him at all for example like <6> you you remember </6>
S2: <6> she took me </6>she took me (1) with her
S4: no you didn’t go out with us that time me tena and domi and sofie were out
S3: okay
S4: i think it was like a party in december like really late december i don’t know why you didn’t go out
S3: i was at home probably
S4: yeah probably and we got like really @ drunk
S3: all of you and sofie
S4: yeah and sofie too
S3: <7> really </7>
S2: <7> sofie too </7>
S3: <8> sofie got drunk </8>
S4: <8> yeah all of us </8>
S2: <9> woooow </9>
S4: <9> because it </9> was like the all you can drink party
S3: a::h
S4: <1> so we could only drink at domi </1>
S2: <1> a:h in motion </1>
S3: you were at club <2> motion </2>
S4: <2> yeah </2> and <3> we we climbed the bar</3>
S2: <3> oh yeah i remember that one</3>
S4: and everything it was so fine but but i met this guy i mean i didn’t even meet him
S3: <4> okay </4>
S4: <4> anze </4> gave him my name
S3: really
S4: yeah
S3: why did he do that
S4: because i said to the waiter that he is awesome i don’t why i said it to him i said it to him probably <5> because he ga </5>
S2: <5> because you were wasted </5>
S4: yeah i say nice things but i didn’t think of him as someone atractive to me like in a he’s an attractive boy i just said like you re awesome and that’s it and then he gave him my name anze did and then the next day like messages @@@ do you remember me
S2: what messages on facebook
S4: yeah yeah <6> yeah anze gave him </6>
S3: <6> he was a waiter </6>
S2: yeah
S4: yeah he is a waiter there and i think i don’t know why even anze thought that because to me he looks younger than me maybe or he just looks like that i don’t know but still <7> he is not my type at all </7>
S3: <7> ok so what happened with the </7>
S4: nothing i just ignored him like i always do to people who text me like that  @@@@@
S3: smart decision
S2: i ignore people on facebook too
S3: yeah
S4: that s normal you should because why should you answer someone who you don’t know like <8> if if you i </8>
S2: <8> i even ignore people who i know </8>
S4: if i like someone i would like them if i know them not i am not going to send messages to people i don’t know so that s kind of it works both ways so
S1: okay and you [S2] your negative experience
S3: a chinese guy
S2: no he was from egypt
S3: o:h
S4: @@@@@
S2: <9> i don’t know he he </9>
S4: <9> close enough @@@ </9>
S2: yeah (. ) i was just walking on the street i was i don’t know why was i there actually it was in the middle of the day he just approached me he asked me something and i said hey sorry i don’t speak german cause i didn’t feel like talking to him and then he started something in half english half german and he was following me for like ten minutes and talking and asking me some questions and i was responding but not really and then i told him hey sorry i have to go now and he was still following me and i said hey dude really if you don’t turn around right now i am gonna freak out and he left (. ) and i just start running calm and that was it
S3: well it was first week of my stay here and then i was walking alone and then one guy he was from china and he came to me and he asked me to take a photo of him (. ) so i did and i was thinking that was all and then he he just started walking behind me and i he just asked me erm where do you come from
S4: <1> mhm </1>
S3: <1> something like </1> that but i just ignored him
S4: <2> mhm that’s the smartest thing to do </2>
S3: <2> that was the only thing yeah </2>
S4: that’s the smartest thing to do in those situations
S3: ignore
S1: ignore yeah okay
S2: isn’t it horrible that you have to be rude to peop<3> le in order to </3>
S4: <3> that’s not rude </3> that’s not rude that s taking care of yourself
S2: i know but you have to be you have to be rude to him and ignore him in order so <4> he would not </4>
S4: <4> but he was a psycho @ </4>
S2: <5> i mean i don’t know yeah </5>
S4: <5> and that s that’s the thing you should do </5>
S3: yeah but i was feeling really guilty because of alexander (. ) <6> because i ignored him </6>
S2: <6> oh yeah i know </6>
S4: <6> who’s alexander </6>
S3: that guy we had
S4: <7> aha </7>
S2: <7> he was </7> not a bad guy but he <8> was just weird </8>
S3: <8> yeah he was </8>
S4: yeah but (.) yeah maybe you shouldn’t have gone to coffee with him
S2: yeah <9> i don’t know </9>
S3: <9> but he </9> asked me for five times so
S4: and then you told him you are (1) <LNde> anstregend anstregend </LNde> how do you say that
S2: <LNde> anstregend </LNde>
S1: stressful stressful
S4: <L1cr> naporan </L1cr>
S1: stressed
S2: <LNcr> naporan @ </LNcr>
S4: annoying you re annoying
S1: annoying
S4: @@ because that is what my friend beljo does and i told him that he
S2: beljo
S3: mhm
S4: is not mentally sane because that’s what he does to girls now
S2: okay
S1: okay now speaking about university how is the the university of graz different from your own home universities
S3: erm professors speak with their students
S4: mhm
S3: all the time
S4: mhm
S1: good that s
S3: interactive
S1: that’s one more aspect relationship
S3: yeah
S1: between students and teachers how is it
S3: interactive classroom really it’s not just they are not like xxx all the time
S4: mhm
S3: but they ask you questions
S4: mhm
S3: and they (.) they give you feedback so i like it and i think that just by attending
S4: mhm
S3: the class you can really learn a lot
S4: that’s true
S3: because you are present there not only you are there but
S4: yeah
S3: you are mentally present so and in croatia as far as i know my friends and i we are always
reading a book during the lecture
S4: mhm
S3: or we are talking to each other
S4: us too us too
S3: yeah
S2: all people bring laptop or watch a movie or something
S3: yeah but here but here
S2: people do that in slovenia a lot
S3: austrian students they really pay attention to what the teacher is doing and talk
telling
S4: but they do that for a reason because the quality of classes here is much higher than
the quality of classes of
S3: i agree because our teachers they just put power point presentation
S4: yeah
S3: and then we have to write down what they are saying and that’s all I don’t like it. I think this is really good.

S2: I cannot really comment because I didn’t attend any courses. Noooo, I didn’t just had two German courses here and I had to write my master thesis. So I have no idea. I mean, I met the guy one teacher from our department and he was really nice. He helped me a lot with my master thesis, so he was really nice, but I don’t know about other teachers.

S4: mhm. I think the shocking thing for me was my first like all the teachers told us to call them by their first name.

S3: <8> really </8>

S2: <8> okay </8> <9> that is a little bit weird </9>

S4: <9> yeah and they called us </9> by our first names, and for me that is really surprising because at home we all talk.]

S2: <1> we </1> xxx <un> </un> <1> 

S4: to the professors with like their last name and we dutzen </LNde>

S2: yeah

S4: no <LNde> sietzen </LNde>

S1: <LNde> sietzen </LNde>

S4: instead of <LNde> dutzen </LNde> and for me that is kind of disrespectful because I don’t think that was

S3: mhm

S4: like grew up together went to coffees together so I don’t think that they should

S3: yeah

S4: call me by my first name

S2: <2> yeah yeah </2>

S4: <2> or or that </2> I should call them by their first name, for me that’s not cool but I think that that is like if that is like the worst thing than it’s great because their feedback was awesome and everything else was awesome. So yeah.

S3: but that’s not the case with an English department I think

S4: yeah maybe not <3> I don’t know because </3>

S3: <3> no because </3> our professors he strictly told us that he we should address him as doctor <4> not as professor but as doctor </4>

S4: <4> really </4>
S2: <4> doctor <L1cr> opa </L1cr> </4>
S4: in pronunciation he told us to call him by his first name but he is like twenty-five literally
S2: okay
S4: and the linguistics the linguistics teacher too but he is trying to be cool in front of us he always mentions justin bieber so i think that s his personality
S3: mhm
S4: but the it major is different because er for <5> practicals </5>
S2: <5> i remember the </5> justin bieber story yeah @@
S4: for practicals we usually have like er (1) small groups which work directly with the professor
S3: aha
S4: so it’s not like a huge classroom of one hundred people and then you know what i mean?
S3: yeah
S4: if we come to <LNde> sprache </LNde>
S3: mhm
S4: or however you say it with him you there is like three of you and him for like twenty or thirty minutes
S1: was there something strange that you observed at the university something that was a shock for you in classes
S4: knocking on the desks
S3: yeah (.) that definitely
S2: i heard about that but i <un> <6> xxx </6> </un>
S4: <6> i was just i was so </6> shocked that i instantly texted everyone from home i was like everyone is knocking on the bench here
S3: <7> me too </7>
S4: <7> what the fuck </7> what do i do @@@
S2: so when you want to say something you start knocking <8> and they </8>
S4: <8> when you want to say </8> <9> something </9>
S3: <9> no no </9>
S4: and when you want to ask a question but also like at the end of the lecture instead of clapping they like <1> bang or </1>
S2: <1> why would you clap </1>
S3: <2> yeah but we </2>
S4: <2> i don’t know </2>
S1: when i want to ask something <3> you do this </3>
S4: <3> yeah also </3>
S3: yeah
S4: also when when they <4> like </4>
S1: <4> i just </4>i just know at the end of the lesson instead <5> of clapping </5>
S4: <5> in the end </5> of the lesson but also <6> when they want to ask </6> something they
they knock on the
S2: <6> why would you clap </6>
S3: but in <7> croatia </7>
S1: <7> it’s a tradition </7>
S4: in <8> croatia </8>
S3: <8> at the end </8> of the lesson we do not even clap
S4: <9> we don’t even </9>
S1: <9> no no we don’t do that either </9>
S2: <9> we don’t do that we just go </9>
S4: we just we just usually run out
S3: thank god yeah
S4: and there is one other thing that in croatia you can leave the classroom whenever you want to
without any excuse like if you re
S2: <1> yeah </1>
S1: <1> you can </1>you can you can also do that here
S2: <2> yeah yeah you can </2>
S4: <2> i i have never seen people </2> do that
S3: yeah i see them <3> quite often </3>
S4: <3> i see them </3> like for example on beauty and style when they leave five min earlier
S3: yeah
S4: but if anyone wants to leave like
S1: you can leave i think you <4> can </4>
S4: at the middle of it
S1: i think you can leave and er what about is there anything else that you observed concerning animals
S3: oh dogs
S4: there’s dogs in the in the public but i like that i like that
S3: mhm shops
S1: but is that allowed
S3: university
S1: in your home universities
S4: no it’s not allowed
S3: i think
S4: it’s not allowed anywhere
S3: i think it is allowed maybe but it’s just not we are not used to that i think but
S1: did you find this strange
S3: yes
S4: i mean
S3: it’s a bit strange
S4: it was strange at first but i really like dogs
S1: for me it was strange
S3: yeah but they come with really big dogs so
S4: but all the big all the problematic dogs have muzzles i know i see
S3: mhm
S4: the way that they treat their dogs and it is really nice because they are really good ways dogs for example in croatia you couldn’t bring a dog in the bus because it would be everywhere
S3: yeah
S4: but here they never do that so
S1: mhm mhm
S3: yeah
S4: obviously they trained them well well really well so there is no reason why they shouldn’t be allowed

S1: yeah but what if somebody has a problem with dogs somebody

S4: which problem

S2: yeah for example

S1: there are people who are afraid of dogs

S2: yeah there’s a lot of people who are afraid of dogs

S3: that’s true

S1: yeah would it be okay to let them

S4: there’s a lot of people like me who are really afraid of birds are you going to

S1: but birds are not

S4: not allow birds to exist because i am afraid of them

S1: but not just allowed yeah but

S2: but they live in the nature

S4: i am really afraid of birds i am xxx

S2: yeah but they live in nature you can’t do anything about them unless you kill them

S4: which nature they live here literally in front of my building so

S2: yeah but they are not trained

S1: yeah but

S2: wild animals

S3: okay some things should be considered really because some people

S1: you can you can

S3: are really afraid of dogs and then when they see a dog

S4: but the dogs are so polite and well behaved

S1: yeah you have different breeds of dogs

S2: no but

S3: that’s subjective

S1: yeah

S3: kind of thinking yeah really my mum is so scared of dogs
S4: <2> i was scarred of dogs when i was little </2>
S3: <2> no matter if that’s the little dog or big dog or </2>
S2: i mean i <3> love </3> dogs
S4: <3> yeah </3>
S2: but i still think it’s weird that i see dogs in zara or h and m or whatever
S1: do you think that it’s hygenic to just like when you go to a store or when you want to buy <4> something </4>
S4: <4> yeah i know </4> know
S3: yeah
S4: that’s the only thing i don’t like i don’t like when they let animals in like the stores with clothes
S3: mhm
S4: because those are supposed to be clean clothes and dog can never be so clean because they like walk on the mud they like rub <un> xxx </un> for everywhere so for me that s that’s not ok but
S2: do you remember the story that dora told us when we went to seiersberg (.) she said that she saw a dog in zara in seiersberg
S3: okay
S2: pooped on a floor <5> and the woman </5>
S3: <5> oh yes yes </5>
S2: they did not clean <6> behind her dog </6>
S3: <6> yes yes yes </6>
S2: so i was a little bit freaked out about that
S3: but the owners should take i mean should be responsible for their <7> pets </7>
S2: <7> i mean </7> i like dogs but i still prefer to have them at home or <8> than in wild </8>
S3: <8> mhm because you have a dog </8> and you would never do that
S2: i would not want to take him everywhere because he is happy when he is at home why would i take him
S1: mhm
S2: to zara <9> i mean whatever </9>
S3: <9> mhm mhm </9> but really
S1: okay good next question what did you learn from your stay here (.) personally and academically also so two two perspectives
S3: well not only have i learned a lot about other people but i really learned a lot about myself (1) really i can’t even believe that (. ) i am cleaning i am cooking all ah not really cooking but

S3: i am somehow taking care of myself and

S1: okay

S3: yeah that that was something new and i erm appreciate what other people do for me and i hang out more with people i erm respect their opinions and their views and yeah really multicultural living

S4: yeah

S3: so everything is different

S1: and academically

S3: academically well it is more difficult at my university so academically mmm yeah they are not really advanced here i think so

S1: okay

S2: i did learn some german that was ok i don’t know i it was difficult to get used to a new language but otherwise everything was pretty much the same for me cause i have done this already last year so it was not that much different

S1: and personally

S2: i met some new interesting people i go out more much more as i do at home because i don’t really live in the city center so it’s i just don’t feel like going out at night because there is a problem how will i get home in the middle of the night taxi is really expensive there is no bus so we usually just hang out at other people's pla other people places

S1: mhm

S2: yeah (. ) that s about it i think

S1: [S4]

S4: well i learned a lot about myself like and i learned a lot about other people and i think that what i really appreciate about this is that i met a lot of different people because for me at home i always i hang out with the same people i did when i was 6 years old so this was really different and also all of you are older than me so i think @@@ so i think that was kind of cool because you’re all like what i would like to be in like three or four years so

S2: really

S4: yeah

S2: that’s so cute
S4: because you’re all like you take care of yourselves so good and you’re very confident in yourself all of you so
S3: yeah
S1: okay okay
S2: <1> we are getting better and better by </1>
S4: <1> and academically i </1> learned a lot in computers science because computer science here is much better in vua better organized than it is in rijeka so learned to program better and a lot of other things but when it comes to english not so much because <2> english is better at </2> home definitely
S3: <2> mhm mhm </2> i agree with you
S1: okay and do you know what’s a culture shock
S4: yeah @
S1: you know the term culture shock
S3: yeah of course
S1: so what was a culture shock for you okay we already discussed that <3> briefly </3>
S3: <3> yeah </3>
S1: sundays
S3: <un> xxx </un>
S1: sho shops are not working
S3: mhm
S1: maybe university to some extent okay but in terms of culture shock so when you came here okay i guess we all experienced to some extent a culture shock so what do you do in these situations i know that you had a culture shock
S3: yeah
S1: that you started to feel ill and yeah okay
S3: yes
S1: what do you do in those situations do you
S3: well (1) my immune system totally collapsed because i found myself surrounded by people who i never talked before with and erm i was crying all the time that was my reaction and i was just constantly on the phone and er speaking with <4> my family </4> and friends so
S1: <4> you missed home okay </4>
S3: yeah yeah but that was probably because i was alone for the few
S4: yeah probably xxx yeah
S3: for the few first weeks
S4: i came with juraj so it’s a different situation
S3: yeah yeah then i met people and then but i met people from my country so
S4: yeah
S3: my kind of people so
S4: yeah
S1: so in your own opinion how could you cope with this transition so you tried to find
S3: just don’t don’t bother yourself with that a lot
S4: yeah
S3: because that’s the usual thing that has to happen
S1: mhm mhm
S3: that’s normal thing
S1: but do you stick to your own habits the things that you did back home
S3: yeah
S1: mhm
S3: of course yeah
S1: mhm mhm for example try you’re trying
S4: like which habits
S1: like habits like for example doing exercises doing the same things that you did
S3: the same things
S1: that you did back home well just do that
S3: well yeah
S1: those things here in graz
S4: that as well but you should try to do new things
S1: okay okay
S3: that’s true
S4: but you’re not advised to completely change your life if you like
S3: yeah
S4: if you like exercise like juraj does
S3: you can’t do it
S4: it wouldn’t be normal for him to stop doing it
S3: mhm
S4: just because he came here
S1: mhm mhm you

S2: i was actually maybe a little bit depressed at beginning because i thought that that they have no nature. no parks cause i am really i am really used to going to the woods every day with my dog and i don’t have a dog here so i don’t have anybody to go hiking with or anywhere and then i found there is a huge forest really actually close to my place. so i was really happy about that
S3: mhm

S2: and i had my rollerblades with me so that was definitely a plus too erm cause i am not really living in a city i am used to a lot of nature erm yeah otherwise it was ok also things they were fine just language i thought that i will understand people cos i do understand a lot of german but austrian people are that is a special kind of people really the dialect is crazy
S1: easy
S5: crazy
S1: crazy okay
S2: i cannot understand it really
S4: @@@
S1: of course okay the last section of questions okay so what do you miss most from your home country now at this point what do you miss most
S3: sea
S2: nature
S4: my friends and my parents
S3: yeah parents
S1: mhm
S4: and except for that and the sea practically nothing if i if my parents were here and if my friends were here
S3: yeah you would have all you need okay
S4: i wouldn’t want to go ever
S3: yeah
S4: i wouldn’t want to go home ever again
S3: yeah yeah me too yeah
S2: if i
S4: maybe in the summer like but @@@@@
S3: yeah
S4: but but like generally no
S2: if i could move my boyfriend and my dog then i would just stay here (.) it’s okay
S1: okay so what do you bring along which is typical for your culture what do you bring along here what is the thing that you thing that you er
S4: in which sense
S1: for example how do you see yourself different from austrian people what is the thing that it is so so
S4: everything
S3: we are too loud
S2: <6> yeah </6>
S4: <6> we are too loud </6> we dress <un> xxx </un> too much
S2: exactly
S3: yeah
S4: we wear too much make up
S3: that’s true
S1: are there any good things <7> are there any good things </7>
S4: <7> party in a different </7> <un> xxx </un> @@@
S4: i don’t know
S1: party maniacs okay party maniacs
S2: we like to hang out a lot
S4: tho these things could be good and bad it depends on the point of view
S2: yeah exactly
S1: okay
S3: <8> i think we show our feelings </8>
S2: <8> and when we talk to each other </8> we we touch a lot
S3: yeah we touch each other a lot and we show our feelings i think we are more open <9> minded maybe </9>
S2: <9> yeah </9>
S4: i don’t know if open minded but there we are definitely more open when it comes to open mindedness i see that <1> they are really tolerant here </1>
S2: <1> yeah yeah yeah </1>
S4: for example in croatia the people are not that tolerant because they have never <2> seen the black </2>
S2: <2> <L1sl> konzerva </L1sl> </2>
S3: yeah
S4: person they have never seen like <3> i don’t know </3>
S3: <3> mhm mhm </3>
S4: indian <4> person or whoever </4>
S3: <4> gay people being together </4>
S4: gay people i think in rijeka is the state with that is really good because we are kind of a tolerant city
S3: mhm
S4: but the rest of croatia is horrible
S3: yeah
S4: i won’t even comment that because i am kind of ashamed of it @@@ country because of that so (2)
S1: okay and what will you miss when you go back home what will you miss
SS: o::h
S3: i was so afraid at the beginning that nobody would accept me and now i met such a good people and i really i can’t believe i i will have to live without them
S4: yeah
S3: i mean that that scares me really really really
S1: so you will miss people
S3: i will miss people
S2: i will just miss lovely people @ but you will come to visit
S3: yeah
S2: it’s ok
S4: people definitely and my independence probably
S2: yeah
S4: because at home i live with my parents
S1: mhm mhm
S4: and i am already started to talk with them about not moving in with them any more @@@
S2: yeah yeah
S4: because they are thinking of moving out from <un> xxx </un> so yeah i think <5> that is not going to work </5> any more @@@
S2: <5> yeah you will see </5> it happened to me last year when i returned i had a real crisis for i think over a month it was <6> so quite bad </6>
S4: <6> don’t scare me in</6> advance please @@
S2: yeah i don’t know what will your situation look like but probably you will have to
S4: adjust
S2: yeah
S4: like to everything
S3: it will take some time
S1: do you think do you think you will be sad
S4: <7> definitely definitely </7>
S2: <7> that we are leaving </7>
S3: i try no to think about that
S4: mm i try not to think about that too but then when it happens it hits me even harder so
S3: yeah i think i think <un> xxx </un>
S4: i think it’s better to think about it @@@
S3: really really
S1: okay good okay good that will be the end of the interview thank you so much
<end 49:48>