Legal English as a lingua franca in academia: The strategic use of repetitions in lectures

Patrizia Anesa

University of Bergamo

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the functions of repetitions in ELF academic discourse, exploring the complex nature of their realizations. The data presented originate from a corpus of Law lectures in which English is used as a lingua franca. Special attention is given to the identification of the specificities and the functions of repetitions which may typify these events from a disciplinary perspective.

The main hypothesis is that the realization of repetitions in an event which lies at the crossroads between legal and academic discourse is influenced by the lecturers' cultural allegiance to the use of normative and semantic repetition. Data show that repetition displays a tendency, on the one hand, to enhance formal correctness, and, on the other hand, to favor intelligibility and mutual understanding. The discussion in this paper contributes to an ongoing debate on the extent of the use of English in English-medium tertiary-education settings at a global level, and more specifically, on the use of specific pragmatic devices in this context.

Keywords: legal English, legal English as a lingua franca, EAP, Law lectures, repetition.

1. Introduction

Given the widespread use of English in academia across fields and countries, studies focusing on the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF)[1] in tertiary-education settings represent a particularly vibrant field for investigation (e.g. Björkman 2011; Jenkins 2014; Kaur 2011; Mauranen 2016; Murata 2018).

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[1]   Here ELF is intended as a "site of complex language contact" (Mauranen 2018: 107), which involves language users rather than language learners (Mauranen 2018: 113).

This work focuses on lectures, which epitomize a central site of knowledge-disseminating practice. In particular, Law lectures constitute the privileged locus of analysis. Indeed, the usage of ELF in academia is becoming increasingly important even in Law studies, in which the adoption of a lingua franca has traditionally been hindered by the fact that the specificities of a legal system or culture are generally considered inseparable from the usage of a given national language.

Within ELF studies focusing on academic settings, the investigation of pragmatic devices has received considerable attention. In particular, research has confirmed that ELF users in academic contexts show a high pragmatic competence and employ a variety of strategies, such as repetition, to achieve specific objectives, namely signaling misunderstanding (e.g. repetition of problematic items) or preventing misunderstanding (e.g. confirmation checks, interactive repair, and self-repair) (Cogo 2009; Cogo – Dewey 2006; Mauranen 2006; Taguchi – Ishihara 2018). In this respect, both other- and self-repetition represent proactive tools which contribute to improving understanding and mutual intelligibility in ELF (Cogo 2009; Kennedy 2017; Lichtkoppler 2007).

The use of repetition in ELF academic interaction varies considerably in relation to the type of communicative situation. For instance, in conversations between faculty members and students, Lichtkoppler (2007) identifies different categories related to the functions of repetition, including time-gaining, utterance-developing, prominence-providing, ensuring accuracy of understanding, showing listenership, cohesion[2], and borrowing. In the case of lectures, however, self-repetition generally predominates. For instance, self-repair aiming at rephrasing content, wording, or grammar, is employed in order to secure comprehension (Mauranen 2006) or to increase explicitness (Kaur 2011).

Clearly, repetitions may also have a negative impact on the fulfilment of given communicative objectives. Some of these aspects are addressed in Relevance Theory and, within this framework, repetitive, redundant utterances are believed to go against the principle of optimal relevance, since such language features require extra processing effort (Sperber – Wilson

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[2]   For a discussion of repetitions and their role in establishing cohesive relations in the text see de Beaugrande – Dressler (1981) and Halliday – Hasan (1976), with particular reference to the concept of reiteration. In particular, reiteration represents a broad form of cohesion which involves "the repetition of a lexical item, or the occurrence of a synonym of some kind, in the context of reference; that is, where the two occurrences have the same referent" (Halliday – Hasan 1976: 318-319).

1986). Another drawback of repetition is pointed out by de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), who claim that excessive use of lexical recurrence might lower the informativity of the text.

This study focuses on the functions of repetition, by observing its usage in a circumscribed context, i.e. Law lectures, in which ELF is employed. More specifically, this analysis aims to gain a finer understanding of how repetition works in ELF Law lectures by answering the following research questions: 1) What types of repetition are identifiable? 2) What purpose do they serve in the Law lectures under investigation? 3) Does the specificity of the discipline affect the way repetitions are employed?

Thus, the present work attempts to verify whether the pragmatic functions that repetition assumes in ELF lectures *tout court* also emerge in ELF Law lectures or whether disciplinary specificities become manifest. It is plausible to assume that repetition is a common pragmatic device in lectures regardless of the type of discipline involved. However, in the field of Law, repetition ontologically plays a crucial role in that it is a constitutive element of the law itself. In this respect, we can reason with Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2011: 49) that "only through law's obsessive normative repeating can justice spring forth". Indeed, normative repetition is not simply a form of recollection, but is an immanent and instrumental feature of the law, one often deemed necessary in order for the law to be faultless and unambiguous in its verbal realizations. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that the process of normative repetition also implies that every repetition entails variation, a form of transcendence from the original item. Thus, it is not mere duplication, but can have specific legal value as it is placed within specific legal practices.

Starting from this theoretical premise, it can be hypothesized that lecturers discussing the law use repetition in a way which is influenced by the awareness of the necessity of repetition as a constitutive element of the law. Thus, normative repetition may translate into a semiotic and semantic repetition which is employed in the discussion of the law itself.

2. Legal English in academia

Traditionally, legal language has been divided into subcategories including different genres. For instance, Kurzon distinguishes between 'language of the law' i.e. the language used "in documents that lay down the law", and 'legal language', i.e. the language "used when people talk about the law",

but with a specific usage, as happens in the case of judges' opinions, legal textbooks, or lawyers' speeches in court (Kurzon 1997: 120). In this interpretation, the notion of legal language seems to be a prerogative of the legal profession. Conversely, Trosborg's (1995) well-known categorization includes five subcategories: language of the law; language of the courtroom; language in textbooks; lawyers' speech; and people talking about the law. Thus, Trosborg paved the way for a more inclusive conceptualization of legal language, given that situations in which people talk about the law (and so meaning professionals, but also other potential participants) are taken into account.

This work focuses on the use of Legal English in the academic context. Particular attention is devoted to Law lectures, which may be seen as belonging to a particular subcategory of 'people talking about the law'. The field of analysis is even more specific in that the emphasis is on those communicative events where English assumes the contours of a lingua franca, in that speakers and audience are predominantly non-native users of the language.

Considerable research has been carried out on the features of English-medium lectures. Insights have been offered, *inter alia*, on cultural diversity, focusing for instance on genre-related issues (e.g. Thompson 1994), cultural matters (e.g. Flowerdew – Miller 1995), interaction dynamics (e.g. Bligh 2000), and pragmatic considerations (e.g. Björkman 2011; Crawford Camiciottoli 2004; Molino 2015). As early as 1967, Garfield stated that English should be employed by researchers as the language of academia because of its accessibility (Garfield 1967). Undeniably, the appropriateness of ELF in the academic sphere has been subject to lively debate between those who see it as a fundamental tool for international communication and those who fear homologation and lack of diversity.[3] Without entering into the debate on the role of English-medium lectures in tertiary education, the objective of this analysis is to focus on a specific type of academic ELF event. This will be done by adopting an approach which can help us to reflect on the complexity of the processes of knowledge dissemination and negotiation of meaning in occurrences which lie at the crossroads between the academic and legal worlds.

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[3]   For a discussion of the ideological implications of the spread of English as the language of academia, and a reflection of its potential effects in terms of marginalization or obliteration of existing differences, see Gotti (2012).

3. Research framework

The material for analysis is based on fifteen Law lectures given in English. All communicative events were transcribed broadly drawing on MICASE conventions; however, in the inevitable trade-off between accuracy and readability, the latter aspect was privileged, given that prosodic features are not investigated in this work. The transcripts have been coded by two coders[4] using *QDA Miner Lite* (Provalis Research 2011) in order to conduct a qualitative analysis of the main discursive devices emerging. Among the different codes identified, repetition (and its subcodes) will be described in the analytical section.

The choice to include Law lectures exclusively is to allow a focus on one specific academic field. Although it is plausible to assume that similar pragmatic features emerge in lectures dealing with other disciplines, the homogeneity of the corpus is deemed necessary in order to gain a finer understanding of the specificities of a sociolect in a given context. In this respect, it should be kept in mind that different disciplines imply "a certain degree of interdisciplinary diversity and a degree of intradisciplinary homogeneity" (Hyland 2000: 10), and the notion of "disciplinary culture" (cf. Bondi 2005: 6) is the result of a dialectic process which develops across disciplinary variation.

The corpus under investigation consists of lectures dealing with contract law, corporate crimes, ethics, and arbitration. All the events took place between 2012 and 2016 in Italy, Malaysia, and Brazil. This choice derives from practical reasons related to the accessibility of the material, as well as from the desire to include samples of lectures from different continents, in line with the cross-national nature of legal English in academia, which is postulated in this paper.

Some participants are present in more than one recording and the nationalities involved are Italian, Malaysian, Indian, French, Spanish, German, and Brazilian. Table 1 summarizes the corpus details.

This analysis focuses on an area where academic and legal communication intersect, in that it is based on the observation of lectures given in the area of Law, primarily delivered to postgraduate students and legal training experts. Most of the speakers recorded have an advanced level of English, although the extensive range in levels of proficiency available in

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[4]   The final level of inter-coder agreement was 85%. In the case of discrepancies, a third
       coder was consulted.

ELF studies may be substantial and is one of its intrinsic features. Indeed, ELF is inherently characterized by enormous diversity (Mauranen 2007, 2016), even within specific subject fields such as Law.

Table 1. Corpus details

Lecture code	Number of speakers involved	Approximate number of participants	Approximate number of words	Length (minutes)
L1	1	90	5365	35
L2	1	100	4025	31
L3	1	100	4128	28
L4	1	100	7016	50
L5	1	100	3984	27
L6	1	50	10045	45
L7	2	20	13615	65
L8	8	100	14150	60
L9	7	110	12613	51
L10	4	125	12398	45
L11	1	82	6840	23
L12	1	84	8252	38
L13	1	50	9088	48
L14	3	76	9539	33
L15	5	24	8076	44

The style of the lectures investigated is heterogeneous and varies from formal to more "conversational" (Dudley-Evans 1994), and thus from purely monologic to more dialogic forms. In this respect, we can reason with Bamford and Bondi (2005: IX) that "[a]lthough all texts are interactive, some are more interactive than others". The majority of the events analyzed show a predominance of a monologic style, and only in few cases is the audience actively involved in the interaction. Generally, lecturers lead the conversation, but they may elicit answers or comments from the audience, and in the corpus under investigation this happens in six lectures (out of the fifteen). All the same, in this paper, interaction is not seen exclusively as the presence of dialogic elements but, more broadly, as a process displaying devices which favor the negotiation of meaning (see Crawford Camiciottoli 2004; Sinclair – Coulthard 1992), regardless of the distribution of turns.

4. Interactional dynamics in ELF Law lectures

Pragmatic strategies are essential to negotiate meaning in interaction (De Bartolo 2014: 453) and in ELF they can enhance comprehension and intelligibility (Cogo – Dewey 2012), and the co-construction of meaning.

Among the several elements observed within an interactional framework we can find repetitions, reformulations, clarifications, comprehension checks, and clarification requests, all of which can be adopted in order to improve communication success and to signal cooperation and involvement (cf. Mauranen 2006). Obviously, different interactional devices are used in combination. Without attempting to describe all possible functions related to these linguistic practices, the aim is to focus on one recurrent phenomenon, that of repetition, which is investigated as an effective linguistic resource which contributes to communicative success in ELF. Thus, it is a tool which may be seen to function as an enhancer of all levels of understanding.[5]

4.1 Forms of repetition

Different classifications of repetition have been offered, and Table 2 presents an overview of the main categories according to the following criteria: speaker, exactness, time-lapse, and intentionality.

As regards speakers, repetition is classified as same- or other-speaker repetition (Schegloff 1996: 177). While other-speaker repetition as a strategy for negotiating meaning has often been investigated (Cogo 2009; Mauranen 2006; Watterson 2008), monologic repetition has received less attention

Table 2. Types of repetition

Criterion	Type
Speaker	Same Other
Exactness	Exact Quasi-exact Reformulation
Time-lapse	Immediate Delayed
Intentionality	Spontaneous Deliberate

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[5] The multifaceted idea of understanding, which comprises understanding accent, propositional content, and pragmatic sense, is to some extent aligned with the components of Smith's model of understanding, namely intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability. According to Smith's seminal work, which developed within the field of cross-cultural communication, intelligibility relates merely to the recognition of words and utterances, comprehensibility involves the understanding of the meaning of words and utterances, and interpretability goes further and includes the implied and pragmatic meaning (Smith 1992: 88).

(as in this case processes of co-construction of meaning are less evidently verbalized) and it represents the privileged (but not exclusive) object of this study.

The level of exactness will also be taken into account. In this work, following a well-established tradition, reformulation is treated as a form of repetition displaying lower exactness (e.g. Johnstone et al. 1994). In this respect, reformulation, or paraphrasing, inherently implies the repetition of a certain concept, however using a different linguistic formulation. It thus differs from repetition in terms of structure, although it may be seen as being placed at the end of a continuum ranging from exact repetition to quasi-exact repetition to reformulation, which may potentially be intended as a semantic form of repetition.

Repetition has been described in relation to the time which elapses between the production of an element and the repeated one. The focus here is predominantly on immediate repetition, although the delayed type is also investigated. Repetition is also distinguished by spontaneous/unintentional vs deliberate forms (Biber et al. 1999). The former includes unintentional repeats and reformulations, while the latter is mainly based on rhetorical devices, for instance with the aim to increase clarity or involvement.

4.2 Functions of repetition

Studies on repetition have pointed out its ability to improve communication (Kaur 2012), its spontaneity (Tannen 1987), and its necessity within the conversational flow (Johnstone 1987). Repetition represents a commonly-used rhetorical device which mainly fulfils emphatic purposes or is an organizing tool. The functions of repetitions are diverse (as illustrated in seminal studies such as Norrick 1987 and Schegloff 1996) and vary in case of self- or other-repetition, as illustrated in Table 3 (broadly adapted from Norrick 1987).

The functions lying behind the use of repetitions are innumerable (see e.g. Tannen 1987), both in the case of native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs), and it should be pointed out that this list is not exhaustive. Additionally, the same repetition device can clearly fulfil a variety of objectives simultaneously.

One objective is to enhance understanding as repetition favors "semantically less dense discourse" (Tannen 1987: 582). Along the same lines, Lichtkoppler (2007) also stresses that repetition can favor mutual understanding among participants. The function related to the improvement of correctness is also applicable to ELF interactions, especially in the case

of other-repetition repair (see e.g. Lichtkoppler 2007: 59). Repetition is often noticeable in sequences where understanding needs to be enhanced, checked, or confirmed. The co-construction of understanding can take place both in self- and other-repetition: in the first case the speaker assumes that the repetition device can facilitate the recipient's understanding, while in other-repetition the interlocutor can use it to check understanding or prompt the repetition he/she may need. In this respect, as Kaur notes, "[i]t is perhaps easier to ascribe the function of promoting recipient understanding to dialogic repetition given the negotiated nature of the phenomenon" (Kaur 2012: 597). Indeed, the development of the exchange can facilitate the identification of the function assumed by a repetition device. As will be seen (in Section 5), this function plays an important role in the events analyzed.

Table 3. Functions of repetition

Self-repetition	Other-repetition
hold the floor; gain planning time; bridge interruption; enhance textual coherence; facilitate understanding; improve correctness; …	show attention; show participation; signal receipt; signal agreement/disagreement; initiate repair; check understanding; improve correctness; …

Other-repetition can often express alignment and solidarity. However, self-repetition can also be an implicit form of solidarity, especially if used in order to facilitate comprehension on the part of the interlocutor. Another function of repetition in conversation is the guaranteeing of a certain rhythm between turns from a prosodic perspective. However, in the case of lectures, the assigning of turns is not spontaneous in that it is the main speaker who generally leads the conversation and decides the intervention of other interlocutors. As shall be seen, this function is not manifest in the cases analyzed.

5. Repetition in lectures

In this study the main object of analysis is represented by those segments which include the repetition of one or more elements. The focus is on exact repetition and repetition with little variation (no more than two words

reformulated within a segment). These include parallel phrasing, key word repetition and repetition of lexical bundles, as well as repetition of repaired segments.

5.1 Self-repetition or other-repetition

As mentioned above, repetition can assume the form of self- or other-repetition. In particular, self-initiated repetition is important in pre-empting potential communicative problems. Lectures generally present self-repetition, given their predominantly monologic nature, but cases of other-repetition are also present when the lecturers are particularly active in eliciting interaction, as illustrated in the case below:

(1)   S1:   Are you saying that taxing Jordan say at three percent tax rate for good causes to feed the hungry *is theft*?

       S3:   I think it's unjust, yes I do believe *it's theft*, but perhaps it is necessary to condone that theft.

       S1:   But *it's theft*. [S3: Yes]. [SS LAUGH] Why *is it theft* (DEIDENTIFIED)? <AUDIO DISTURBANCE>

       S3:   Because *It's theft* because ehm, at least in my opinion and by the libertarian opinion he earned that money fairly ehm, and it belongs to him and so to take it from him is by definition theft.

The term *theft* identifies a specific crime within a definite legal apparatus. The discussion in this case focuses on its definition and thus no speaker deviates from the use of the same term. The presence of lexical repetitions is in line with the preservation of the established terminology and the degree of precision that could be lost with the implementation of other linguistic choices. It also allows compliance with the requirements for precision and unambiguity.

         Both self-repetition and other-repetition can be immediate and delayed (see Table 2). In the following excerpt, delayed repetition is used within the logical reasoning to demonstrate a thesis syllogistically:

(2)   So taxation, actually, *is morally equivalent to forced labor* because forced labor, involves the taking of my leisure, my time, my efforts... just as taxation takes the earnings that I make with my labor... and so, for Nozick and for the libertarians taxation for redistribution is theft as (DEIDENTIFIED) says. But not only theft it is morally equivalent

to laying claim to certain hours of a person's life... and labor so: *it's morally equivalent to forced labor.*

The moral equivalence between taxation and forced labor is expressed at the beginning of the paragraph, and then reiterated at the end of the logical argumentation, in order to reinforce the validity of the statement.

5.2 Parallel phrasing

Parallel phrasing is defined by Norrick (1987: 254) as a form of repetition that is typically encountered in listing elements. The parallelism makes use of not-exact repetition, where one or more elements vary within the same construction.

(3) *every person*, *every market*, *every industry*, *every organization* has a back story

(4) *There's a thing called the Rome Convention that* talks about private international law as you all call it here, we call it conflict of laws in the United States. But *there's this thing called the Rome Convention that* says that wuh wuh what law do I recognize as governing law and is enforceable?

(5) *There was a concept of arbitration*, *there was a concept of mediation*, *there was a concept of conciliation* that existed in most of the civilized world, by the way what was the civilized world, a thousand years ago?

The replication of a specific pattern is often employed rhetorically in academic events. Parallel phrasing is generally used for emphatic purposes, while also favoring explicitness and understanding. Indeed, it allows the speech to be less dense from an informational perspective and also attempts to overcome the difficulties inherent in the explanation of complex legal concepts.

5.3 Keyword repetition and repetition of lexical bundles

Exact or quasi-exact repetition of keywords, especially in the case of specific legal terms, emerges frequently in the corpus analyzed, as exemplified by the passage below:

(6)   And, *Sharia* to the extent not inconsistent therewith there are different
       ways of drafting this. But something else that's very useful because
       the courts are unclear themselves as to what *Sharia* means. *Sharia* to,
       and you know this, *Sharia* to a Malaysian is a little bit different than
       Sharia to a Saudi. It's a little bit different than *Sharia* to a Pakistani,
       mean this is my own experience. As a professor in the United States
       once said, we should use plural, *Sharias*. He's overstating it of course.
       He says there are five *Sharias*.

The substitution of the term *Sharia* with a synonym appears impossible, given
the conceptual importance of this keyword within the lecture. Similarly, the
use of a pronoun may impede clarity. Indeed, the law is often characterized
by lexical precision and a Law lecture cannot abstain from the preservation of
this feature. The following excerpt also shows the need to express this form
of accuracy through the repetition of specific lexical bundles and phrases:

(7)   if the laws of Malaysia are the proper law to be applied by the arbitral
       tribunal, then the reference to *the Sharia Advisory Council or Sharia
       expert* is a must. Also not expressively articulated in article eleven para
       one the arbitral tribunal is well-advised to consult with and seek the
       assistance of the parties and their council in formulating the questions
       and issues to be referred to *the Sharia Advisory Council or the Sharia
       expert*. The same applies to the preparation of the reference including
       the relevant facts to the extent that they are not in disputes or have
       been agreed by the parties as stipulated in rule eleven para three. Rule
       eleven para two speak of a decision of *the Sharia Advisory Council or the
       Sharia expert*.

The use of the phrase *Sharia Advisory Council or Sharia expert* emerges
recurrently, and the same lexical bundles are used without any modification,
as even minor changes could lead to conceptual inaccuracies. Although the
repetition of the same segment, and in particular the multiple repetition of
the word *Sharia*, may appear redundant and could potentially be considered
implicit, it is instead explicitly verbalized in all cases, in order to conform
with the need for clarity and precision.
       Legal vocabulary is traditionally described as stable and inflexible,
and such features are clearly visible in 'the language of law'. The genre of
a Law lecture, being inherently hybrid, potentially presents a higher level
of flexibility and dynamicity from a lexical perspective. However, it displays

a tendency to preserve technical precision and accuracy. In this respect, the reiteration of a specific item is often merely a natural process but, at the same time, it can contribute to enhancing clarity, as happens in the case below:

(8)   […] its enforcement under *the New York Convention. The New York Convention* is the most successful convention.

Synonymy varies in its susceptibility to alteration; however, as a tendency, technical terms are generally repeated rather than paraphrased. Indeed, repetition may assume the form of a formulaic device which forestalls possible ambiguity. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the same expression can help the listener to follow the logical pattern envisaged by the lecturer.

5.4 Repaired repetition

Repaired repetition is defined as repetition with a modification, which is found immediately after the pronunciation of the first segment. Similarly, the "reformulation repetition" is described by Murata (1995: 353) as a tool typical of NNSs which is used to offer a more accurate utterance. In the locutionary process the speaker tries to find the exact word, thus partially repeating certain segments:

(9)   the Jewish in terms of religion has long tradition than than Islam in terms of legal and uh uh uh *regulation framework regulatory framework* for for for their community

A segment is repeated in another form devoid of deviation from those patterns which are deemed correct, or in order to guarantee exactness, which is generally considered as an indispensable requirement in legal discourse.

6. Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to observe the multifaceted role of repetition in an event which is an expression of legal and academic discourse and, more specifically, to describe how it is employed in ELF Law lectures by adopting a qualitative approach. Consequently, from a theoretical perspective, this study also attempted to frame the Law lecture not only as a locus of analysis which represents an instantiation of academic discourse but, drawing on

the concept of interdiscursivity, as a genre which lies at the interconnection between the academic and the legal world and is based on their mutual hybridization in terms of discursive practices.

A communicative event such as the lecture locates participants at the heart of knowledge dissemination practices. Even in the case of monologic events, the constitutive relationship between the lecture and the audience is an integral element of the event, which is interactional by its nature. This analysis suggests that repetition represents an interactional device which enhances the construction of negotiated meaning, and is used especially when dealing with specifically legal concepts. Moreover, repetition is a characteristic of legal language and assumes a series of functions, such as guaranteeing lexical precision or improving clarity, which may be reflected in the usage of repeated elements.

More specifically, strategies such as parallel phrasing, keyword repetition, and repaired repetition can be usefully employed to emphasize the significance of a certain lexical element, or to pre-empt potential misunderstanding. The repetitions identified in these events are generally verbatim, and this choice contributes to preserving lexical accuracy and precision. Keyword repetition, in particular, often refers to precise legal concepts whose meaning is explicitly contextualized within a certain legal system. Parallel phrasing, instead, usually regards less specific legal terms, and the parallelism serves to improve clarity, as well as for rhetorical purposes, and to produce a certain prosodic rhythm. The repetition of a repaired segment may be used to introduce a concept and specify the exact term when lexical precision is needed, pursuant to the desire to provide accurate speech.

Repetition in ELF Law lectures is in line with Mauranen's (2006: 146) idea that ELF is characterized by "considerable effort invested in preventing misunderstanding". Especially in other-repetition, the final aim is not only to signal non-understanding but rather to confirm understanding in order to favor the continuation of the discussion. It is a multiple dialogic repetition which also allows the negotiation of meaning. As Schegloff (1997: 527) points out, "many repeats are not used for repair, but to implement other actions, and particular, desirable ones". Therefore, the smooth running of the conversation, and the involvement of the interlocutors, are some of the objectives that repetition fulfils. However, in the events analyzed, self-repetition is predominant and seems to indicate a tendency towards formal correctness rather than efficiency.

Irrespective of the academic discipline, repetition is a common feature of lectures at large, be it for informative, educational, or persuasive purposes. However, its role in Law lectures in which English is used as the lingua franca seems to be deserving of particular attention. Indeed, when the construction of meaning happens across languages, legal systems, and professional cultures, the sapient use of discursive devices drawn from a user's pragmatic repertoire, of which repetition constitutes only one example, may prove essential to improve understanding and guarantee accuracy.

Given the variability and the contextuality that characterize the use of English, and in order to limit the risk of oversimplification, the analysis was limited to a specific context of usage, the Law lecture. Further avenues for research could adopt a more contrastive stance in order to gain a deeper understanding of the disciplinary divergences as regards the usage of pragmatic devices in lectures.

From a broader perspective, we may argue that, fundamentally, the law may be international, but it is not universal, and neither is the use of English as a legal lingua franca in academia, which needs constant problematization. Thus, even in the case of internationally recognized practices, the complexities of specific pragmatic dynamics cannot be ignored, and should also be analyzed from a cross-cultural perspective. In this respect, quantitative analyses could also be conducted in order to explore variations in the use of pragmatic devices across countries.

On a final note, it should be pointed out that the impact of the discussion on the nature of English on teaching practice has largely been marginal in legal academic endeavors, but its conceptualization as an international language calls for a reflection on its implication in teaching and training. Most materials focus on Legal English by adopting an Anglocentric standpoint, often with exclusive reference to legal systems used in countries such as the US, or England and Wales, while only a few available teaching resources are slightly more in line with the nature of English as an international language (see Campos 2010). Moving beyond the idea of Legal English as the language of Anglophone countries, and adopting a more encompassing analytical lens, the investigation of settings in which Legal English is used a lingua franca can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the function that English assumes in legal communication in different contexts on a global scale.

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Address: Patrizia Anesa, Room 206, University of Bergamo, Piazza Rosate 2, Bergamo 24129, Italy.
ORCID code: orcid.org/0000-0002-0795-745X.