

Repetition as a Communication Strategy in English as a Lingua Franca in a Political Discourse

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التكرار كاستراتيجية تواصل في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة في الخطاب السياسي

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Abstract

Interactants using English as a Lingua Franca (henceforth, ELF) encounter misunderstanding and communication difficulties because they have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It has been proven that communication in ELF is characterized by cooperation rather than non-understanding, where participants skillfully use strategies to prevent non-understanding and maintain a smooth flow of their talk.

These strategies are interactional practices referred to as communication strategies, which interactants adopt to address communication problems and achieve successful communication. This paper focuses on repetition, one of these communication strategies, as it is implemented in an ELF discourse by two interactants who use it to discuss a political issue. The paper consists of five sections. Section 1 briefly introduces English

as a Lingua Franca and Communication Strategies. Section 2 presents research on repetition as a linguistic phenomenon in general and as a communication strategy in ELF interaction in particular. Section 3 displays the data to be analyzed. The data analysis is presented in Section 4. Section 5 comprises the

discussion of the results arrived at in Section 4. Section 6 presents the conclusions drawn from analyzing and discussing the data.

Keywords: Repetition; Communication Strategies; English as a Lingua Franca (ELF); Political Discourse; Conversation Analysis (CA); Mutual Intelligibility

لمناقشة قضية سياسية. يتكون البحث من خمسة أقسام. يقدم القسم الأول مقدمة موجزة عن لغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة واستراتيجيات التحوار. يستعرض القسم الثاني الأبحاث حول التكرار كظاهرة لغوية بشكل عام وكإستراتيجية تحاور في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة بشكل خاص. يعرض القسم الثالث البيانات المراد تحليلها. تحليل البيانات موجود في القسم الرابع. يتضمن القسم الخامس مناقشة النتائج التي تم التوصل إليها في القسم الرابع. ويوضح القسم السادس الاستنتاجات التي تم التوصل إليها عن طريق تحليل البيانات ومناقشتها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التكرار؛ استراتيجيات التواصل؛ اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة؛ الخطاب السياسي؛ تحليل المحادثة؛ الفهم المتبادل

الخلاصة

يواجه المتحاورون الذين يستخدمون اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة صعوبات في الفهم والتواصل لأنهم لديهم خلفيات لغوية وثقافية مختلفة. وقد ثبت أن التحوار في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة يتميز بالتفاعل، وليس بسوء الفهم، حيث يستخدم المشاركون بمهارة بعض الاستراتيجيات لمنع عدم الفهم والحفاظ على سير حديثهم بسلاسة. هذه الاستراتيجيات هي ممارسات تفاعلية يشار إليها باستراتيجيات التحوار التي يتبناها المتحاورون للتعامل مع أي من مشاكل التحوار وذلك لتحقيق تواصل ناجح. تركز هذه الدراسة على التكرار، باعتباره أحد استراتيجيات التحوار، حيث تم الاعتماد عليه في جلسة تحاور باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة مشتركة من قبل اثنين من المتحاورين الذين استخدمهما

1. Introduction

Despite the claim stating that interactants using English as a Lingua Franca encounter misunderstanding and communication difficulties due to having different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Kaur, 2009, p. 107), it has been proved that communication in ELF, being an

intercultural communication, is characterized by cooperation rather than misunderstanding (Meierkord, 2000, p. 11) because in ELF interactions “participants show a skillful use of ...strategies to prevent non-understanding and ensure the smooth running of talk” (Cogo, 2010, pp. 255-256).

These strategies are interactional practices (Kaur, 2010, p. 108) that interactants adopt skilfully and automatically (Tannen, 1987, pp. 580-581) to handle communication problems (Dörnyei & Lee Scott, 1997) and thus lead to efficient and successful communication. These strategies are referred to by Giles and Erickson as Communication Strategies (henceforth, CSs). They include, but are not limited to, several strategies like convergence, divergence, maintenance, repair, repetition, etc. These CSs have been investigated in Conversation Analysis (henceforth, CA). Much concern has been given to their forms and functions in discourses in English as a mother language, international language, and lingua franca.

The concern of the CS addressed in this paper is repetition. Some linguists have ignored repetition as Shimanoff & Brunak, and Wong (2000, p. 408) state that it has been considered “redundant, imitative, sloppy, or even evidence of a speaker’s lack of good speaking skills”; however, it has been considered a significant communication strategy (Lichtkoppler, 2007, p. 40) since it can serve various communicative functions in live interaction, like “emphasis, intensification, and humor”, and others (Tannen, 1987, p. 578).

Repetition has many forms and assumes various functions whereby interactants can achieve mutual understanding and lead to successful communication; hence, much research has been made on repetition as a CS in discourse in general and ELF interaction in particular.

2. Repetition: A Linguistic Phenomenon and a Communication Strategy in ELF Interaction

Linguistically speaking, repetition is defined as the iteration or recurrence of a linguistic unit in a given context (Persson, 1974, p. 1). It also refers to “the consecutive usage of the same quasi-lexical or lexical item or items” (Rieger, 2003, p. 51). On a conversational level, repetition is “the practice of re-saying some or all the elements occurring earlier in an ongoing turn or in a preceding turn” (Kaur, 2010, p. 110). Regardless of the type of context, whether written or spoken, repetition forms a pattern that contributes to the coherence of discourse, for it serves as a linking device that relates a previous turn with a forthcoming one by repeating part of it or all of it (Tannen, 1987, p. 576). That is why repetition is recognized as an important mechanism in human conversation (Rieger, 2003).

Within the field of language learning, repetition forms a crucial resource by which learners of a second or foreign language “gain

increasing competence in the language of interaction” (Wong, 2000, p. 408). It plays a role in children’s acquisition of formulae and the “subsequent impact on rule formation” (Hatch, Peck, & Wagner-Gough, 1979, pp. 272-274). Children also use repetition as an “attention-getting strategy” as well as a means of achieving “definiteness” (Ochs, Schieffelin, & Platt, 1979, pp. 256-257, 259) besides using it as a “remedial tactic” in turn-taking trouble (Ervin-Tripp, 1979). Repetition has also been considered a managing tool that plays a significant role in the development of children’s second language learning because it functions in their discourse “as a social strategy for participating in play, as a linguistic means for achieving cohesion or relevancy, and as a language learning device” (Rydland & Aukrust, 2005, pp. 232, 235).

Research on repetition as a communication strategy has extended to investigate this phenomenon in ELF interaction. English as a Lingua Franca interaction refers to any conversation where no interactant is a native English speaker. It could be their second or a foreign language that they have studied or acquired. Although ELF “interactive mechanisms” can be similar to native conversation mechanisms (Mauranen, 2006, p. 123), when

interactants use ELF, they, in the first place, do not conform to the norms of native speakers; hence, they create their own variety which they can master and at the same time manage to communicate with successfully (Kaur, 2010, p. 107). For the speakers to achieve this successful communication, they deploy various CSs. Repetition is one of these strategies, which is the focus of this study.

Although repetition in learning is seen as a compensatory action adopted by learners to overcome understanding problems, in ELF interaction, interactants implement it to adapt to their interlocutors’ speech (Cogo, 2010, p. 259); hence, it is considered an accommodation strategy (Cogo & Dewey, 2006) that is used to achieve “efficiency” and to “show cooperation among speakers” (Cogo, 2010, p. 259). More importantly, repetition is identified as one of the “proactive communicative strategies used to ensure understanding and mutual intelligibility in ELF conversations” (Kennedy, 2017).

Although Ernst, Kühne, and Wirth (2017, pp. 3265, 3267) state that “the more a statement is repeated, the more credible it is perceived to be” however, “too many repetitions can decrease message credibility”, confirming that how often a message is repeated has a positive influence on message credibility in addition to

influencing the attitudes of the recipients. Therefore, it is assumed that persuasive impact and attitude change can increase with message repetition (Bartles, 2006).

In CA, repetition is regarded as a repair strategy (Kaur, 2010, p. 108) that ELF interactants employ to preempt problems of understanding (Mauranen, 2006, p. 123), whether on their part when they use it as a self-repair strategy (Rieger, 2003) or to initiate repair on their interlocutors' part (Stivers, 2004).

Mubarak (2019, p. 92) found that "most of speakers tend to repeat whether it is the word, phrase, or sentence with the same terms through the same item repetition." It is likely that "this kind of repetition looks easier. The other repetition is also found, that is rephrased repetition where only few data has been found this kind of repetition" (Mubarak, 2019, p. 92).

Repetition can be lexically identified in three forms: exact repeats, repeats with partial formal change, or repeats with total formal change but retaining the same idea. Yet, various variables are considered when classifying the forms of repetition. Tannen (1987, p. 586), for instance, suggests three variables for categorizing the forms of repetition: a variable related to the participants, a variable associated with the scale of fixity, and a variable related to the scale of time. Within each variable,

there are several forms of repetition; she summarizes them as follows:

1. Repetition as to the participants:

- Self-repetition: the repetition of the utterance by the same speaker
- Allo-repetition (or other-repetition, as Cogo (2010, p. 260) refers to it): the repetition of the utterance by the other speaker

2. Scale of fixity:

- Exact (the same words uttered in a similar rhythmic pattern), also referred to as full repetition
- Repetition with variation (grammatical or lexical changes), also referred to as partial repetition
- Paraphrase (similar ideas in different words, where interactants put their conversation another way to make them clearer without changing the content, but rather the form).

3. Temporal scale

- Immediate (in the same discourse or the same turn)
- Delayed ("delay within a discourse or delay across days, weeks, months, and years" (Tannen, 2007, p. 64).

After presenting these forms, repetition serves a wide range of functions in discourse, creating coherence and interpersonal involvement. Cohesion and interpersonal involvement are maintained across the two basic levels of discourse that Tannen proposes for her classification of repetition functions: the meaning

level and the interactional level. The former relates to the discourse itself and the latter to the interactants. Within the meaning level are three sublevels: production, comprehension, and connection, whereas within the interactional level, there is the sublevel of interaction.

On the sublevel of production, repetition enables speakers to produce language more efficiently and fluently while gaining time to think of what to say next; on the sublevel of comprehension, repetition facilitates understanding since it provides information with “a less dense discourse” and on the sublevel of connection, repetition “serves a referential and tying function” where it links new utterances and ideas with previous ones (Tannen, 2007, pp. 58-60). Whereas on the sublevel of interaction, repetition serves the following functions:

- “getting or keeping the floor,
- showing listenership,
- providing back-channel response,
- stalling,
- gearing up to answer or speak,
- humor and play,
- savouring or showing appreciation of a good line or a good joke,
- persuasion,
- linking one speaker’s ideas to another’s,

- ratifying another’s contributions, and
- including an interaction with another person who did not hear a previous utterance” (Tannen, 2007, p. 61).

In other words, Tannen (2007, p. 61) summarizes that on both levels of discourse, repetition serves as a linking device that ties “parts of discourse to other parts” on the meaning level as well as “the participants to the discourse and to each other” on the interaction level.

Cogo (2010, p. 260) also lists some functions for repetition, though somehow differently; she states that repetition serves to facilitate rhythm and group synchrony, provide time to “catch up on the missed discourse,” buy some time “to think of what to say next” and show “alignment and solidarity” through accommodation.

To sum up, besides being considered “a human, social activity” (Wong, 2000, p. 407) and “a resource by which conversationalists together create a discourse, a relationship, and a world” and being “the central linguistic meaning making strategy, a limitless resource for individual creativity and interpersonal involvement” (Tannen, 2007, p. 101), repetition as a communication strategy in ELF interaction has communicative importance that enables it to assume an effective role particularly when being deployed by

ELF interactants skilfully and efficiently to achieve comprehensibility and interactional involvement.

3. Data Description

The data collected to be analyzed is a discourse of 29 minutes and 35 seconds between two male postgraduate students of linguistics. One of them is an Arab, and the other is a Kurd. This discourse presents the first opportunity for both parties to establish contact. The shared language they can use for communication is English, for none of them can speak the other's mother tongue.

The participants were selected based on their distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds, which made their interaction in ELF particularly relevant to the study of communication strategies. The topic of discussion—Kurdish independence—was intentionally chosen because it is a politically sensitive issue that could challenge the speakers' ability to maintain effective communication. This procedure ensures a rich context for analyzing how repetition functions as a strategy to enhance understanding and manage discourse. Ethical considerations were followed, and participants provided informed consent for the recording and analysis of their conversations. Their identities remain confidential and are

identified only by their ethnic backgrounds (A for Arab, K for Kurd) in the transcript. The Arab's primary and secondary education has been in Modern Standard Arabic, which is closely related to the Quranic Standard Arabic. In contrast, the Kurd's primary and secondary education has been in Kurdish except for religion, which should be in the Quranic Standard Arabic, though he does not understand it well.

For ethical reasons, participants are referred to in the transcript, analysis, and discussion by the first letter of their ethnicity (A for Arab and K for Kurdish). The recording has been stored in a secure location that the researcher can only access for research purposes.

The topic chosen by the researcher for discussion with the participants is the issue of Kurdish independence from Iraq. The participants' viewpoints reflect their personal opinions about this topic.

4. Data Analysis

Repetitions are analyzed in this section in terms of the variable of participants: self-repetition and other-repetition. Within each form, reference must be made to the other two variables: fixity and time. Besides, the function of each form is

specified and explained. It is worth mentioning that only two forms within the variable of fixity are considered, namely full and partial repetitions; no reference is made to paraphrasing. In addition, the chosen extracts serve as examples of repetition that facilitate functions such as facilitating understanding,

ratification, expansion, linking, repair, maintaining the floor, emphasis, alignment, support, and humor. Due to study retractions, the analysis shall contain one or two examples for each function. Notations used in the script are based on Antaki (2017), as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Notation Convention

.pt	a conventional representation of a slight lip smack
(word)	the brackets show that the words are something of a guess
wor-	the dash represents a ‘cut-off’ sound
(.3)	timing
wo:rd	the colons show an elongation of the sound
>word<	the inward arrowheads mean the word is spoken fast
heh heh	the ‘hehs’ are conventional little laughter sounds
word=	the equal sign shows that this runs onto the next equal sign
= word	the equals sign shows this runs on from a previous turn
[	The square brackets, aligned with the turn below, show that they overlap.
WORD	the capitals indicate a higher volume
?	an upward question intonation
.hh	in-breath
°word°	the material between “degree signs” is quiet
word↓	pitch fall

4.1 Self-repetition

Extract 1

4 K: e:h the question is e:h **why**
(.3) **might you want to be**
independent? and (.3)

5 maybe you **why you don’t**
want us to be independent right?

6 A: well this is only a
hypothesis

The form of repetition in line 5 is partial and immediate. K repeats his utterance with variation to serve the function of facilitating understanding. He first poses the question as if his interlocutor says it, then changes the pronoun to readdress the question towards his interlocutor, requiring a response from him.

Extract 2

6 A: well this is only a hypothesis

7 K: aha

8 A: what

9 K: **yeah yeah**

The form of repetition in line 9 is full and immediate. K repeats 'yeah' in line 9 to show agreement with his interlocutor's contribution. Repetition here serves the function of ratification (Tannen, 1987, p. 590).

Extract 3

20 A: lets lets analyze **these problems** because =

21 K: [okay

22 A: = **problems is a general terminology**=

23 K: [aha

24 A: = so let's go through **these problems** one by one=

25 K: [aha

26 A: = let's start with **the political problems**↓

27 K: [aha

28 A: what is **the major political problem** that prevent Kurdistan from

29 declaring independence?

This extract illustrates two forms of repetition: full and delayed, as well as partial and delayed. In line 24, A fully repeats his utterance in line 20 after partially repeating his utterance in line 22, where he defines the term 'problem' to serve the function of "expansion," and in lines 26 and 28, A specifies the general type of problems that they can start with and asks his interlocutor to mention one major concern from this type; it is also "expansion" that these repetitions serve to function (Tannen, 1987, p. 75).

Extract 4

10 A: the first question is that .pt a::hh do you really want to have independence or not?

11 K: e::h i think e:: .pt it is the will of i mean **every nation** i think e: to **have the right to**

12 **determine thei:r their future?**[=

Extract 5

100 A: =what do you have?

101 K: e::h by the way as I told you at the start e:: it is **our rights to determine our own**

102 **future**

The form of repetition in lines 101-102 is partial and delayed. K repeats his utterance in lines 11-12 with variation; he changes the third-person pronoun into the first-person pronoun. K wants to relate what he will say to what he has said at the beginning of the discourse; hence, repetition in this extract serves a

linking function (Tannen, 2007, p. 60).

Extract 6

107 A: do you feel that .pt the people of iraq=

108 K: yeah

109 A: =and the government in baghdad=

110 K: aha

111 A: =is a good in a good state=

112 K: aha

113 A: =or in a good status=

114 K: uhum

115 A: =to prevent your rights?

116 K: e:::h yes of course

The form of repetition in line 111 is partial and immediate, and the one in line 113 is partial and delayed. Both repeats serve self-repair (Rieger, 2003, p. 47). In the first repeat, A repairs 'in a good state' by inserting the preposition 'in', which is a grammatical repair, whereas, in the second repeat, A replaces 'state' with 'status', which is a lexical repair.

Extract 7

136 A: [okay

137 K: =for example

138 A: okay okay

139 K: =we by the way we want to run our

140 A: **let me let me please let me** explain=

141 K: okay

142 A: =e: w: one point (.3) what you are speaking now is perhaps theoretical rather than

143 practical↓

The form of repetition in this extract is full and immediate. This extract occurs after a lengthy turn by K; hence, A repeats 'let me' to regain the floor and initiate another discussion, which he does (Tannen, 1987, p. 583).

Extract 8

186 A: for sometimes if you want **to have your rights** [i am speaking some of the other

187 nations experiences[

188 K: [uhum [uhum

189 A: =in order **to have your rights** you have **to sacrifice some of these rights**=

190 K: uhum right

The repeats in line 189 have the forms full and delayed and partial and delayed, respectively. The first serves the function of emphasis, and the second of expansion.

Extract 9

193 A: =you see the borders that separate kurdistan form the other iraqian lands >most of

194 these borders< are inhabited with people from mixed races=

195 K: [uhum

196 A: =so **you see arabs**=

197 K: yeah

198 A: =**you see turkmen**=

199 K: yeah

200 A: =**you see yezidis**=

201 K: yeah

202 A: =**you see e:: e:: assyrian**=

203 K: uhum

Extract 10

239 A: **=they dont blame °turkey°**=

240 K: uhum

241 A: **=they dont blame [the united states=**

242 K: yeah they do [they do

243 A: **=they dont blame iran=**

244 K: they do

The form of repetition in these two extracts is partial and delayed. A sets up a paradigm and slots in new information; the pattern that A establishes in both extracts enables him to utter new sentences while adding only the names of nationalities as new information in Extract 9 and the names of countries in Extract 10 (Tannen, 2007, p. 58). Repetition here serves the function of emphasis.

Extract 11

500 A: there are service contracts=

501 K: uhum

502 A: i mean the government is paying **less than one dollar less than one dollar for each**

503 **barrel of oil**

504 K: uhum

The form of repetition in line 502 is partial and immediate. A repeats his utterance with variation to serve expansion.

Extract 12

533 A: its for the purpose of of x or y or z of people

534 K: aha e::: okay e::: **wallahi**

535 A: but

536 K: **wallahi ya akhy wallahi akhy**

537 A: it could=

538 K: akhy

539 A: =it could guarantee=

540 K: okay

The form of repetition in line 536 is partial and delayed. K repeats his utterance in line 534 (which is a form of swearing God to show agreement) with variation; his repetitions serve alignment (Cogo, 2010, p. 262).

4.2 Other-repetition

Extract 1

10 A: the first question is that .pt a::hh do you really want to have independence or not?

11 K: e::h i think e:: .pt it is the will of i mean every nation i think e: to have the right to

12 determine thei:r____their future? [=

13 A: [**their destiny**

14 K: = the way they are ruled yeah **their destiny** e::h but NOW e::h i think it is in our

15 interest to stay within the framework of iraq of what we call a federal iraq e::h

16 because thinking of independence i mean in the present ti- the present time e: might

17 mean facing more problems more troubles in the middle east you know?

The form of repetition in line 14 is full and delayed. It is precisely referred to as “shadowing” and is considered the most automatic type of repetition (Tannen, 2007, p. 93). K’s repeat serves the function of

alignment and support (Cogo, 2010, p. 262) for the repair that A makes for him. Later in the discourse, in another turn, K continues to use his own 'future', not 'destiny'.

Extract 2

52 A: =it just continues for only **few months**=

53 K: [**eleven months** right ↓

The form of repetition in line 53 is partial and immediate. K repeats A's utterance with variation to contribute to the meaning of the utterance (Tannen, 1987, p. 583). Repetition serves in this case the function of expansion.

Extract 3

120 K: =there is there is been a new constitution↓ that eighty percent of iraqis have voted

121 for **right**?

122 A: **right**

The form of repetition in line 122 is full and immediate. K shows agreement with what A is saying. Repetition in this extract serves the function of alignment (Cogo, 2010, p. 262).

Extract 4

172 A: =and kirkuk was the perhaps the **the vital**=

173 K: [uhum

174 A: =**issue** between bagh[dad=

175 K: [**a long standing** **issue**

The form of repetition in line 175 is partial and immediate. K repeats A's utterance with variation. K agrees with A on the issue they are talking about and he uses his adjectival

expression 'a long standing' to expand on the description of the issue given by A.

Extract 5

264 A: [you you are speaking about the changing of **the demography**

265 K: [**the demography of the these areas** [you see?

266 A: [yeah

The form of repetition in line 265 is partial and immediate. This type of repetition is called anadiplosis, where an utterance's end is repeated in the next beginning. K repeats A's utterance with variation to serve the function of expansion.

Extract 6

378 A: dont forget that french are living in canada in a very HUGE territory [which is

379 quebec

380 K: [aha

381 K: but **they are free**

382 A: **they are free** so **you are not free**?

The forms of repetition in line 382 are full and immediate and partial and immediate, respectively. Both repeats serve the function of humor (Tannen, 2007, p. 61).

5. Discussion

Although repetition is not a much-desired phenomenon in speech, it still plays an effective communicative role in conversation especially when approached under the CA methodology, in order to understand its significance and purposes.

Repetition assumes various forms and functions that make it worth studying, particularly recently in the field of ELF research. It has contributed to the fact that ELF interaction is no longer characterized by understanding problems due to diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as it plays a role in creating mutual understanding and participating in pre-empting understanding problems and thereby preventing them (Kaur, 2010).

Repetitions found in the data of this study are analyzed based on three dichotomies of forms: self- and other-repetitions, full and partial repetitions, and immediate and delayed repetitions. For the first dichotomy, self-repetitions refer to those uttered by the same speaker, and other repetitions refer to those uttered by the other speaker. Regarding the second dichotomy, full repetitions refer to the exact repetition of the same utterance without any formal changes, whereas partial repetitions refer to the repetition of the utterance with some formal changes, also referred to as repetition with variation. For the third dichotomy, immediate repetitions refer to the utterances repeated in the same turn or the juxtaposed turn, whereas delayed repetitions refer to the utterances repeated elsewhere. Repetitions with these two forms serve many functions that lead to achieving the

goal of using them, which is mutual intelligibility.

The interactants in the data of this study have successfully implemented the CS of repetition on both levels of the discourse: meaning and interaction. They have implemented forms of repetition to emphasize, expand on, and link ideas, which have been effective in conveying the meaning of the discourse. They have also implemented self-repair or other-repair, ratified the other interlocutor's contribution, shown alignment and support, and taken or maintained the floor, which has worked well at the level of interaction. Mutual understanding and interactive involvement can be clearly discerned throughout the discourse.

Besides being a characteristic CS of this ELF interaction, repetition also characterizes the style of the interactants themselves, which is not typical of ELF interactants. Tannen (2007, p. 85) states that the degree and type of repetition differ culturally as well as individually; hence, it is worth noting that both interactants in the data of this study have employed the CS of repetition based on their speech styles, whether cultural or individual. For K, repetition is an individual style; he implements it as part of his everyday life talk style when he wants, for instance, to interrupt someone or keep the floor, particularly by using

‘look, look, look.’ Regarding A, he adopts repetition because it is a cultural style for him, as repetition is a characteristic feature of Arabic grammatical structure; this is clearly demonstrated in the paradigms that A implements to achieve emphasis and expansion.

To sum up, repetition has been effective in two perspectives in this study: one related to the discourse itself, as it is an interaction in ELF, and the other related to the interactants themselves, who have implemented it effectively, whether as ELF interactants or as part of their speech style.

6. Conclusions

Interactants in ELF discourse can share the common sense that their command of the language they use to interact is not perfect; hence, there may be some understanding problems that they need to address to achieve mutual intelligibility. The question is how they overcome “comprehension problems in communication” (Mauranen, 2006, p. 123).

It is claimed that interactants implement interactional practices to achieve mutual understanding, but what are these practices? These are the CSs that ELF interactants implement to accomplish this goal. There are many CSs; one of them, which is the focus of this paper, is repetition. This CS proved to be an efficient interactional practice that has many forms and serves various

functions.

The variation in functions assumed by repetition as a CS makes it an effective strategy for overcoming potential difficulties in naturally occurring interaction. Repetition shows the interactants’ ability to produce more language and to formulate what to say next; hence, it facilitates “comprehension by providing less complicated discourse and establishes connection with earlier discourse” (Rydland & Aukrust, 2005, p. 233).

The interactants in the data of this study have shown skillfulness in using repetition as a CS, particularly with the set of functions it has assumed in order for them to achieve mutual understanding and fluent conversation.

The discourse is primarily characterized by the use of repetition, in full or partial forms, to facilitate understanding, ratification, expansion, linking, repair, maintaining the floor, emphasis, alignment, and support, as well as humor.

Besides serving these functions, the repetitions that the interactants in this data have deployed also depend on their speech styles. Since A belongs to a culture that considers repetition as a beneficial strategy that enhances understanding, he uses it out of his cultural speech style, whereas K uses repetitions in his everyday conversations as part of his

own style; accordingly, he uses repetition out of his personal speech

style (Tannen, 1987, p. 599).

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