Università degli Studi di Padova

Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in
Lingue Moderne per la Comunicazione e la Cooperazione Internazionale
Classe LM-38

Tesi di Laurea

Signposting language in English-medium instruction: a corpus-based analysis of Italian university lectures

Relatore
Prof. Katherine Ackerley

Laureanda
Sara Nardo
n° matr. 1109307 / LMLCC

Anno Accademico 2016 / 2017

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Introduction

The aim of the present dissertation is to investigate the use of signposting language in EMI university lectures at the University of Padua. It is important to explain the two main focuses of this dissertation, namely signposting language and English medium of instruction (EMI). Firstly, English medium of instruction is the teaching of subjects in English in a university context, but in a country where the English language is not the first language. Secondly, signposting language is composed by words, phrases or sentences that help students to follow the lecturer's line of thought. In this work, I have investigated how ten lecturers at the University of Padua make use of signposting, analysing all the several categories of signposts found in the corpus that I have created, transcribing ten EMI lectures. I have focused my attention on the patterns and frequency of each signpost, highlighting the main features of each signpost and in which way they are used.

This dissertation is divided in two parts: the first three chapters are mainly theoretical section, where I have explained the English as medium of instruction and its spread; features of academic lectures and then second language lecture comprehension, emphasising its features and problems. Finally, I have talked about signposting language and the last chapter deals with the study I have conducted at the University of Padua.

In the first chapter, I describe the global spread of the English language due to the recent phenomenon of globalization. As universities are part of the globalized market, they are introducing English as medium of instruction. The first European university that decided to adopt an EMI programme was Maastricht University in the mid-1980s. After their initial success, other European universities started to introduce EMI degree programmes, bringing a wide range of advantages both to institutes and to the students. Several experts such as Björkman (2010), Coleman (2006) and Wilkinson (2013) demonstrated these advantages to introduce EMI in the universities, for instance they highlighted how institutes of higher education increase their profile recruiting international students. Furthermore, EMI programmes could help domestic students to fit in the global or international market.

Later, I focus on EMI in Europe, which is more developed in the north according to Campagna and Pulcini's study (2014). I highlight how it is widespread in Finland, France and Germany. Nevertheless, Southern Europe is some steps behind, consequently I have

decided to describe the situation in Italy, showing how EMI has grown slowly. First of all, I discuss the English language in the Italian school system, showing the several reforms they have done. For example, Campagna and Pulcini (2014) explained the introduction of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in secondary education, which is the integration of the contents with the foreign language. Then, I illustrate the spread of EMI in Italy, highlighting the reasons to introduce it. According to Costa and Coleman (2012) the three main motivations are: to improve the international profile of the university, to prepare Italian students for the global market and to attract foreign students. In their study, they (2012) underlined the difference between the North and the South of Italy, where EMI is not widespread as in the North. Later, I focus on my university, which is the University of Padua, which offered 527 courses held in English in the academic year 2016-2017 and explaining the University Language Centre's LEAP project, an acronym that stands for Learning English for Academic Purposes. According to Helm and Guarda (2015) the three main goals of the LEAP project are: to discover the needs and concern of professors involved in EMI; to offer support and professional development to those lectures and to assess the quality of support courses. As for support courses, Dalziel (2017) has illustrated the options delivered by the University Language Centre, for example an intensive two-week summer course in Dublin and nine-day summer school in Venice. Finally, in the last part of this chapter, I present the critical views of EMI, such as the fear of domain loss of the national language of the country.

In the second chapter of this dissertation, I describe several features of academic lectures, which are "the central ritual of the culture of learning", (Benson, 1994). I show the different styles of lectures, dividing them in three main styles: reading, conversational and rhetorical. However, it has been demonstrated that the conversational or interactive style is the most used in the academic context, because lecturers deliver the lecture with a lot of interaction with the students and with an informal style. Based on the style of a lecture, professors decide which is the personal pronoun that is more suitable. Some experts such as Morell (2004), Brown and Levinson (1994) and Kamio (2001) note that professors tend to use the first person plural pronoun. Based on these features, it is important to underline that academic lectures are a "hybrid" register, as Csomay (2002) defined them, for the reason that lectures have the typical characteristics of a face-to-face conversation, but they contain high informational contents typical of the academic prose. Then, I emphasise the structural features of academic lectures, which play an important role in the

listening comprehension process. Young (1994) conducted a study about the structural features of lectures of university lectures. She portrayed the macro-structure of lectures in terms of "phases", which can be defined as the typical words and phrases of signposting language. She highlighted six phases: discourse structuring, conclusion, evaluation, interaction, theory and examples. Using these phases, it is possible to create a more accurate schema of the university lectures. The last aspect of academic lecture that I have analysed is the delivery strategies, emphasising how to begin a lecture, how to present the main topic and how important is the interaction part.

The second part of this chapter deals with the topic of lecture comprehension. First of all, I provide a general overview of the comprehension process, stressing the second language listening comprehension process. However, listening to an everyday conversation in a foreign language is different from the listening to a lecture delivered in a foreign language. For instance, the background knowledge required is different, but also the turn-taking conventions are different, as Flowerdew (1994) pointed out. Nevertheless, the second language listening comprehension is still a problem for L2 students, therefore I decide to illustrate all the main problems regarding the listening comprehension in EMI lectures. Several experts such as Goh (2000), Hasan (2000), Flowerdew and Miller (1992) and Evans and Morrisons (2011) conducted some research in order to discover those issues. For example, students miss part of the speech without a full comprehension of the global meaning. The rapid speech rate could create difficulties as well as the unclear pronunciation of the lecturer. Moreover, the use of new words could create a breakdown in the global comprehension. Finally, I describe students' perceptions of EMI lecture comprehension, where it has been argued that students understand better with a background knowledge. Furthermore, Kym and Kym (2014) demonstrated that students' English proficiency plays an important role in the comprehension process.

The third chapter deals with the main topic of this study, which is signposting language. As mentioned above, signposting language concerns the parts of discourse that help students to follow the lecturer's line of thought. Chaudron and Richards (1986) subdivided them in "macro-markers", which signal the relationship between higher order information and "micro-markers", which connect lower level information. Then I describe the early studies on signposting language in the EMI context, showing their limitations, which were emphasised by Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995). The first study (Chaudron and Richards, 1986) demonstrated that students' lecture comprehension was not facilitated

using micro and macro-markers. The second one was Dunkel and Davis' study (1994) which claimed that ESL listeners' comprehension was not improved by the addition of markers. On the other hand, later studies highlighted the positive effects of markers on second language students' comprehension. Several experts such as Jung (2003 and 2006), Medawattegedera (2003), Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007) and Kuhi, Asadollahfam and Anbarian (2014) supported the positive role of markers in the lecture comprehension of English non-native speaker students in the EMI context. Finally, I provide two classifications of the macro-markers that characterise a university lecture. The first one is Nattinger and DeCarrico's one (1992) in which they decided to subdivide the macro-markers in two main categories: the global markers and the local markers. The former highlight the introduction of a topic, the shift to a new argument and the summary of a topic. The latter mark examples, relations between topics, evaluative comments and qualifications of previous materials. However, I provide also Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha's classification (2010), because it is a more recent classification of macro-markers, which I have used as the starting point of the analysis conducted in the present study.

In the last chapter of this work, I illustrate the analysis of signposting language at the University of Padua. First of all, I describe the tools of this research, namely the corpus I have created and the concordance program *AntConc*. Secondly, I introduce my study, showing how I have carried out the research. I outline all the features of the five lectures that I have recorded and transcribed, adding five other classes that Michela Meneghetti (2016), another student at the University of Padua, recorded and transcribed for her MA dissertation. Two of my lectures belonged to the School of Human and Social Sciences and Cultural Heritage and the other three classes belonged to the School of Economics and Political Science. Two of Michela Meneghetti's lectures belonged to the School of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine; two classes belonged to the School of Economics and Political Science and one belonged to the School of Engineering. Moreover, I provided a table with all the transcription and mark-up conventions I have used in order to transcribe the lectures I recorded. Finally, I subdivide all the signposts I have discovered in this analysis, looking at frequency and patterns. At the beginning of this study, I was not sure to find many signposts. I thought that it would be a small analysis, which illustrated only a couple of categories of signposts or any of them. The main reason why I had this idea was because all the professors asked me what the signposting language was. The clear majority of the lecturers I recorded told me that they had never heard about

signposting language and they asked me some explanations of signposts and why I was investigating these parts of discourse. Moreover, all the professors I recorded were Italian native speakers, consequently I thought that they would not use signposts as they were not aware of the importance of signposting language. All these reasons led me to suppose that lecturers at the University of Padua did not use signposting language.

Chapter one

EMI: English Medium of Instruction

In my first chapter, I will provide a brief overview of the global widespread of the English language due to the recent phenomenon of globalization. Secondly I shall explain what English medium of instruction is and I will highlight the benefits to introduce it in the institutes of higher education. Thirdly, I will focus on the development of EMI at the European level, showing some example of universities which adopt the English-taught programmes. I will illustrate the Italian situation of EMI, emphasising the difficulties to introduce it in the education system. Later I will describe English as medium of instruction in my own university, the University of Padua. Finally, I will show the concerns and doubts about this new approach of teaching.

1.1 The English language and globalization

In recent years, the English language has become a global language in many fields, especially in communication between people of different linguistic backgrounds. This is the reason why linguists have started to deal with the phenomenon of "English as Lingua Franca" (ELF).

Firth (1996: 204) defines ELF as a contact language between people who share neither a common native tongue nor a common national culture, and for whom the English language is the chosen foreign language of communication. Briefly, it can describe communication between speakers who have different first languages and have to resort to English as means of communication. However, it is important to discover the reasons why English has become a global language and which are the most important factors that lead to this worldwide spread.

According to Hüppauf (2004: 4) one of the key aspects of the spread of the English language is the colonization. He argues that colonizers imposed their mother tongue, suppressing the indigenous languages. Consequently, the roots of the spread of the English language date back to the discovery of America when the British Empire started to colonize

new territories. Focusing on the modern world, it is important to highlight how a new phenomenon helps the spread of English.

Nowadays, the main driving force of this global spread is globalization, "a complex phenomenon, with positive and negative social impacts", as Block and Cameron observe (2002: 2-5). It embraces several fields, from economics to technologies, from politics to culture. Giddens (1990: 64) explains globalization as: "the compression of time and geographical distance, the reduction of diversity through intensified trade". This is the reason why some people oppose globalization, because it creates a homogenous world with no more differences which shares the same language. Another explanation of this phenomenon is provided by Gardt and Hüppauf (2004: x) who describe the globalization with these words:

> "globalization manifests itself in the increased use of English as a second language world-wide, [..] and in the increasing presence of English in everyday life in non-English speaking societies".

Analysing this explanation, the English language is present in the daily life of non-native speakers, whose number is higher than that of native speakers. The scholar Crystal (2003 in Seidlhofer 2005: 339) observes that: "only one out of every four users of English in the world is a native speaker of the language". Consequently, English as a global lingua franca starts to appear in a wide range of domains, including higher education. In Coleman's opinion (2006: 3) it is important to emphasise that nowadays universities are part of the globalized market. Therefore, these institutes could not avoid responding to this new linguistic reality and this is the reason why they started to adopt English as a medium of instruction (EMI).

1.2 What is EMI?

By the early 1990s, the adoption of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) spread in universities where English is not the first language of the country. In other words, institutes of higher education provide programmes taught in English which can be both at postgraduate and undergraduate level.

The scholar Robert Wilkinson (2013: 3-4) emphasises the possible benefits of the introduction of EMI could be for universities. He points out that students are the main core of universities and without them those institutions would not exist. Hence, higher institutions are looking for the best students and this research can be extended to other countries, not only to the first language area. This is the reason why they try to attract foreign students and the only and possible way to entice them is through EMI programmes.

Teaching content through the English language that it is not normally used by the students is known as English-medium instruction, a different approach compared to CLIL, which stands for Content and Language Integrated Learning. CLIL project has developed at the school level providing several positive aspects on learning. Its main feature is the integration of content with language. In Coleman's words (2006: 4) CLIL resembles the North America approach called "immersion", in which only some parts of the curriculum where delivered through a foreign language. Therefore, students acquire the English language by studying the content.

In the last 15-20 years, CLIL has developed in Europe in primary and secondary schools, but it has been seen a similar boost in tertiary education. Costa and Coleman (2013: 5) highlight that CLIL instruction is not a "bottom-up approach, but a top-down one". This means that the idea to teach in another language is not felt as a need by the professors, but it is basically a choice of the university, which can have economic and political reasons. A negative aspect of CLIL at the tertiary level is its perception as a threat to the native language of the students. However, these scholars declare that it can be not a threat stressing the age of the students. Their age is fundamental as they reach a moment in their life when they are completely competent in their native language.

Despite the threat to the first language of some non-English speaking countries, most agree that institutes of higher education not providing English courses to their students risk the exclusion from the scientific worlds. Most up-to-date text books and research articles are written in English because it is the global language, which can be understood

by the vast majority of people. It is also easier for research to write and share their articles in English than in their mother tongue, for the reason that it has become the primary means of communication in the scientific area. Therefore, students who decide to begin a scientific career are in a positive way obliged to study in English. As Kruseman (2003: 7) claims: "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".

In the following section, I will analyse first the origin and early development of EMI and later the further reasons for introducing EMI in the universities.

1.2.1 The case of Maastricht University

The first European university which decided to provide a degree programme in International Management in English was the Maastricht University in the mid-1980s. A brief overview of the roots of the development of EMI in the small Dutch university is explained by Wilkinson (2013: 4-7) in his study. Firstly, Wilkinson (2013: 4) shows concern about the ability of Dutch students to follow lessons in English. Consequently, they had been tested in order to verify their English level. This International Management course had a first phase taught in Dutch, then it was mainly taught in English, but there were some parts that were taught in French and German. During the initial Dutch phase of the programme, the majority of the students interested in the International Management in English took a screening test in English. Those students who had a low mark were advised to avoid joining to the degree. In order to help the students to follow this programme, they could attend English skills training courses to improve their presentation and writing skills. Furthermore, Wilkinson (2013: 5) points out that during this meeting the professors always met with an English teacher "beforehand and afterwards to ensure agreement on purpose, accomplishments, learning tasks, and classroom management". Moreover, English teachers observed content tutorials for the first two years providing advice and feedback to the students the last fifteen minutes of a lecture. Feedback to the content teacher was provided privately. Wilkinson (2013: 6) states that one of contributory factors of the success of this programme was the involvement of the English staff.

In the early 1990s, the University of Maastricht noticed that the number of student in this International Management programme had increased to over 200 compared to the first year (Wilkinson, 2013: 6). They decided to stop with the screening tests, because the

weaker students would drop out the course anyway because of the language and content difficulties. Furthermore, Maastricht University showed the success of EMI thanks to a high percentage of non-Dutch students who decided to enrol in the programme. Due to this big success at the Maastricht University, other institutes in the Netherlands introduced EMI programmes in business and economics. In his study, Wilkinson (2013: 7) emphasises that the School of Business and Economics decided to abandon offering programmes in the Dutch language due to the growth of EMI at Maastricht. Finally, he highlights the importance of the Bologna Process, because several universities chose to deliver more programmes in English, in particular due to the student mobility.

1.2.2 Reasons for the introduction of EMI

The introduction of EMI programmes in the European universities has brought a wide range of advantages both to the institutes and to the students.

Firstly, universities can be considered as "profitable enterprise" (Björkman, 2010: 77). So, their first aim is to recruit all the possible students, both domestic and international. A direct consequence of attracting international students is that the prestige of the institution will increase. Its worldwide image will improve and it will become more competitive in the education market. This concept is also explained by Graddol (2006: 74) who argues that the construction of academic prestige is connected to the promotion of the international agenda through EMI. Focusing on the words "international students", it is important to underline that does not only mean people who attend the institutes through organized mobility, but also "fee-paying individuals" as Campagna and Pulcini affirm (2014: 176), the ones who spontaneously decide to have their university career abroad without taking part into exchange programmes. A clear example of organized mobility is the Erasmus project that involves 19 countries where English is not a native language. Thanks to this project, students become international students who move to other universities for a specific period of time in order to enrich and complete their studies. Both cases increase the institutional prestige guaranteeing "a success in attracting research and development funding", as Coleman (2006: 5) says. Nevertheless, Wilkinson (2013: 8) underlines that these mobility programmes and EMI programmes help to "counterbalance the lack of enrolment of domestic students". This is an important issue for some universities

as they will not survive without the attendance of international students, because the local sphere can be saturated or too small.

Furthermore, Björkman (2010: 77) highlights the importance of sharing a common language at the tertiary level. First of all, the mobility of students and of the academic staff is easier, but also the collaboration between universities. Then there is an increase in the job opportunities. A student who undertakes an EMI degree course accesses to a higher number of good employment opportunities at the international level than a student with a similar degree course, but in his own mother tongue. That is the same for academic staff such as the professors as they can apply for international careers if they show their ability to teach and publish articles in English.

Secondly, English as medium of instruction can be introduced at tertiary level for an educational motive. According to Wilkinson (2013: 9), EMI can offer new degree programmes, which does not mean that they convert a normal programme into an English one. They have to provide courses where they will use English in order to carry special valuable content. Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 178) provide a clear example in order to explain the educational value of EMI. They present Ljosland's study about the choice of the Industrial Ecology Department of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim to introduce EMI in all the postgraduate studies, because they want to promote ecological values and sustainability. Consequently, the idea to connect these cutting-edge programmes with the English language can be seen as a new trend.

Thirdly, English as medium of instruction can promote multilingualism and shape the profile of the institution as a bilingual one. In Coleman's (2006: 11) words:

> "the world's peoples use one or more native languages for local and cultural communication where their personal identity is engaged, and another for international, formal, practical communication".

EMI degree programmes can lead students into a bilingual existence, for the reason that they will use their mother tongue in their everyday and social life, but they will use the English language almost like an English native speaker in their international and academic life. Consequently, Coleman (2006: 11) strongly affirms that "English will definitively become the language of higher education".

A considerable boost to the growth of EMI was the Bologna Process in 1999. Costa and Coleman (2013: 4) state:

"it was designed to harmonise higher education across Europe, to provide mutual recognition of qualifications, to enhance mobility among students and graduates and to enable European higher education institutes (HEIs) to attract international students more easily".

Analysing these words, the Bologna process supports the modernisation of tertiary institutes in order to satisfy the needs of a changing labour market. All the several universities around Europe offer a completely different education system. This creates several problems, in particular to people who apply for a foreign job with their local qualification. However, those problems can be solved through EMI programmes because students will acquire their knowledge already in English, the principal language uses in the labour market.

Wilkinson (2013: 7-8) shares a pan-European survey on EMI in those universities involved in the Erasmus project conducted by Wächter and Maiworm in 2007. They highlighted nine different reasons to introduce EMI programmes at the tertiary level:

- the attraction of international students;
- domestic students will fit for the global or international market;
- the profile of the institute will be sharped compared to the others in the country;
- foreign students will become part of the workforce of the country;
- foreign student will counterbalance the lack of enrolment of the local students in specific degree courses;
- the university will run specialised courses though there is an insufficient number of enrolment of local people;
- the increase of the income base of the university;
- in research-oriented universities it is fundamental in order to attract future PhD students to guarantee the research base;
- a high-level education can be offered to students from the Third World.

1.3 EMI in Europe

Phillipson (2006: 72) deals with the concept of "European paradox". He shows that providing English-only courses at tertiary level can be perceived "largely in contrast with the long-hallowed EU tradition of preserving linguistic and cultural diversity through the adoption of multilingual policies" (Campagna and Pulcini, 2014: 176). On the other hand, Europe cannot avoid the process of internationalisation and globalisation, hence the English as medium of instruction has begun to be a current practice.

A first feature of the growth of EMI in Europe is location. In Campagna and Pulcini's view (2014: 176), English-taught programmes tend to be located in the north of Europe, in particular in the Netherlands, Norway, Finland and Sweden, rather than in the south like in Italy and Spain. They support this idea arguing that "this divide reflects unequal levels of language proficiency as a consequence of different linguistic policies adopted at the national level" (Campagna & Pulcini, 2014: 177). Furthermore, it is important to consider that in the Southern European countries the English language is limited to the school and university environment. On the other hand, Northern European countries use English as a means of communication in everyday life and it has become a "routine" in Campagna and Pulcini's words (2014: 177).

Finland can be the most suitable example in order to underline this difference. According to Saarinen and Nikula (2013: 134) institutes of higher education provide EMI programmes for the strong role that the English language has in Finnish society. In general, Finnish people have a good level of English, in particular the young generation. These scholars notice that Finns are exposed to English in daily life through the media, for instance through TV series and films, as they prefer to maintain the original language and subtitle them rather than to dub them. Consequently, Finnish students possess a good proficiency in English before their studies rather than develop along their studies (Saarinen & Nikula, 2013: 141). This spread of the English language can be observed in the Netherlands. Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 177) explain:

> "The Dutch are exposed to English much earlier at school, and have more opportunities to listen to spoken English through cinema and television than French, German, Italian and Spanish citizens".

Hence, both Dutch and Finnish people in general encounter English not only the students. Saarinen and Nikula (2013: 134) indicate that Finns have a completely positive attitude to

the English language and this is demonstrated by a recent national survey on English in Finland, which showed that people are favourable to the idea that Finnish children attend English-medium schools.

Finns are so open-minded to English taught since the childhood, it is clear that EMI has developed very fast in Finland. Speaking in terms of numbers, in December 2010, Finland offered 335 international programmes at Master's and Bachelor's level in English. Wächter and Maiworm (2008, in Saarinen and Nikula 2013: 135) claim that Finland is the second country after the Netherlands to share English taught programmes against all the other ones, but it is in the first place in all Europe providing English language programmes. In Coleman's words (2006: 8) this country is one of the biggest countries that provides English degree courses at the tertiary level and "Finland is spoken of as 'Little England' in CLIL circles" (Coleman, 2006: 8). In addition, the scholar Lehikoinen (2004: 46, in Coleman 2006: 8) claims that this country has become the second choice for those students who do not obtain an exchange with the UK.

To sum up, Finland can be considered one of the best example in Northern Europe to accept English as medium of instruction. Taking into consideration another north European country, O'Driscoll (2004, in Coleman 2006: 8) cites that Norwegian institutes of higher education have taught some degree programmes through EMI for at least 15 years, especially computer studies, fisheries and electrical engineering.

Even France, a country that fought to keep French as a principal language in the universities and as a lingua franca, has started to admit "the need for more English-medium university courses, and even to accept English as a lingua franca" (Coleman, 2006: 8). This is almost a revolutionary fact in the French history for the existence of the *Commissions ministérielles de terminologie.* As Furiassi, Pulcini and González (2012: 10) illustrate, this institute tries to defend the national language, encouraging the adoption of translation equivalents rather than direct borrowing from the English language.

Another significant instance is Germany. This country has begun to offer entire degree programs in English in order to maintain their educational programs internationally attractive (Gardt & Hüppauf 2004: xi in Coleman, 2006: 8). Overtaking France, nowadays Germany is the third global recruiter of international students at its universities. To achieve the third place in rankings, the country supports a 15-million-euro advertising campaign, gaining 163,000 international students in six years (Coleman, 2006: 8). English-taught programs are predominantly at postgraduate level, across to the natural sciences and other domains such as Economics and Linguistics. Meyer (2004: 76, in Coleman 2006: 8) claims

that the University of Bremen offers also Humanities programs, which is the institution that "uses English as the language of instruction and regards itself as a model for higher education in Germany".

Therefore, English as medium of instruction has spread in the North European countries in a completely positive way. Nevertheless, Southern Europe is some steps back from the North, as Mediterranean countries has not completely accepted English as a medium of instruction, preferring their national languages, though the situation is changing. In the following section I will investigate Italy, my country, showing how EMI has grown slowly compared to the northern countries.

1.4 The English language in Italy

1.4.1 English in the Italian school education system

Italy is one of the youngest countries in Europe, because it became a single country only in 1861. However, it is not yet a united country metaphorically speaking, for the reason that the differences in terms of culture, identity and wealth still exist, especially between the north of Italy and the south. Looking at the Italian history and the current situation, the northern regions are the most industrialised compared to the southern ones, which are still largely agricultural.

The Italian peninsula is mainly monolingual country with some cases of bilingualism only in the regions bordering on the other countries such as Trentino Alto Adige and Val d'Aosta. Despite the international growth of the English language since the Second World War, Italy is still far in terms of multilingualism and learning the English language compared to the other European countries, (Costa and Coleman, 2013: 6). Even Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 180) stress: "the level of English proficiency among Italians is not very high in comparison with other Europeans". Further confirmation is provided by the Special Eurobarometer Report 386: "Europeans and their languages" demonstrates that only 34% of Italians affirm that they can speak English "well enough to be able to have a conversation". Therefore, over the last twenty years, several education reforms have been introduced in order to improve the English language proficiency of Italian people and try to bring Italy to the same level of English learning skills of the other European countries.

The first reform concerns elementary schools in 1990. It was decided to introduce one foreign language in primary schools, but Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 180) show that although there was the possibility to choose among other foreign languages, the vast majority of the parents chose English as foreign language to be taught. Lombardy region, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the British Council, launched a pilot project in order to develop bilingual primary state schools[1].

In March 2010, Italy's *Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca (MIUR)* introduced CLIL to the Italian school system as part of a reform of the secondary education. Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 180) explain that CLIL approach was introduced for two modern languages in the *licei linguistici*, but institutes preferred to use English as the teaching language.

As I mentioned previously, CLIL's major characteristic is the integration of the contents with the foreign language. In other words, school non-linguistic disciplines like mathematics, chemistry, biology and social studies are taught in English. According to Wolff (2007: 23, in Costa and Coleman 2013: 5) there are several positive aspects of CLIL, for example:

- it produces better language learners;
- it produces better content learners;
- it creates motivation for teachers as well for students.

Another important reform was *Legge Moratti 53/2003* that brought some innovations into the Italian secondary school system. Costa and Coleman (2013: 6) illustrate this law in detail, which regards the compulsory teaching of one subject in English during the last year of *Liceo, Istituto Tecnico non Professionale* and from the third year of *Liceo Linguistico*.

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[1] http://www.britishcouncil.org/it/italy-bilingual-education.htm

## 1.4.2 English as a medium of instruction in the Italian universities

The clear majority of Italian higher education institutes are public and only a small percentage is private, which means that students have to pay higher fees. In terms of numbers, Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 182) show that Italy has 95 universities, "of which 61 are state universities or polytechnics, 17 non-State universities and 11 'distance education' universities". Some of them have an ancient and prestigious history, for instance: the University of Bologna was founded in 1088, the University of Padova in 1222, the University of Naples "Federico II" in 1224 or the University of Rome "La Sapienza" in 1303. All the students can have access to these institutes of higher education when they have completed their studies at the secondary school.

In the 1990s, internationalisation started to develop slowly in the Italian context. Costa and Coleman (2013: 7) demonstrate that in the internationalisation of the Italian universities, "the South falls well behind the North and the Centre". In 2012 the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI) demonstrates that one of the key element to promote internationalisation is English as medium of instruction. Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 181) report why EMI should be introduced according to what the CRUI states:

> "The use of the English fulfils a twofold objective: to make the Italian university more attractive to foreign students but also to prepare and train Italian students to open up the labour market and/ or the scientific world at international level. Let us keep in mind, in fact, that especially for scientific research the English language is, at least for the time being, the passport to making oneself eligible for or known by an international scientific community".

In order to understand all the main reasons for the introduction of EMI programmes in the Italian universities and its development, Costa and Coleman (2013) carried out a national survey between March and May 2010. It was sent to 76 higher education institutes, but only 38 of them (50%) answered. Among these 38 institutes, 7 were private and 31 were public. Furthermore, 21 responses came from universities of the North, 8 from the Centre and 9 from the South. Figure 1 illustrates all the principal reasons for the introduction of EMI in the Italian university.

Figure 1. Reasons for introducing EMI programmes (Costa and Coleman, 2013: 12)
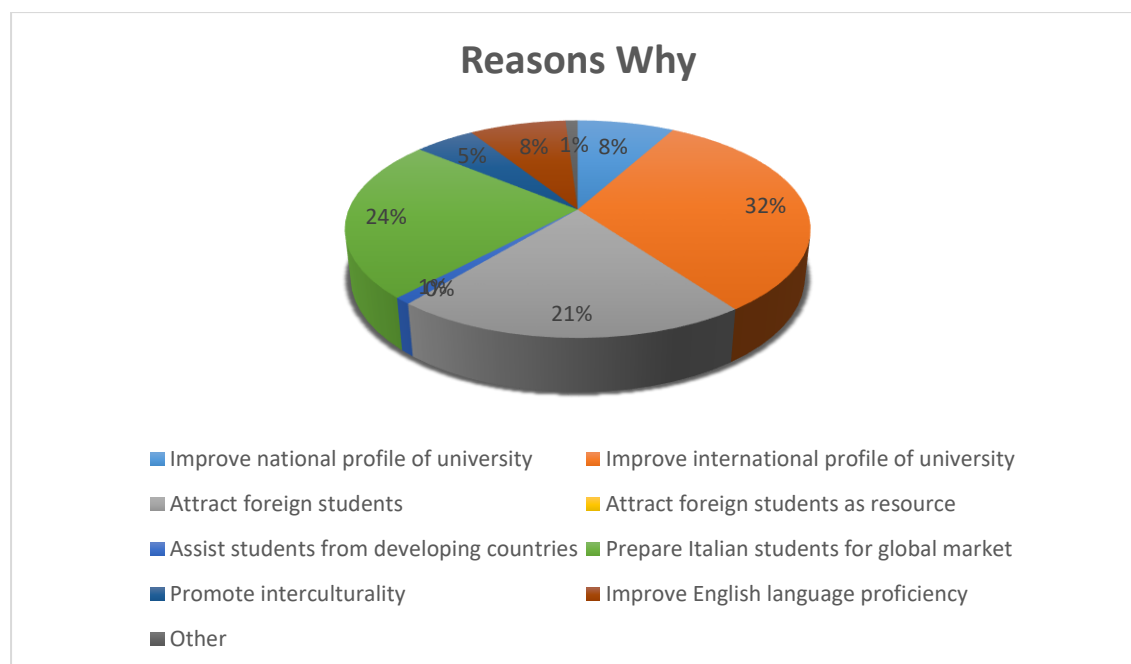
As can be seen, the three main reasons are: 32% to improve the international profile of the university; 24% to prepare Italian students for the global market and 21% to attract foreign students. Focusing on these motivations, it is important to underline their will to open up to the international world. Therefore, launching EMI degree programmes can be the best solution Italy reaches. Furthermore, it can lead to an economic consequence for Italian higher education institutes. According to Costa and Coleman (2013: 12-13), attracting a big number of fee-paying students can increase universities' funding, because most universities have to self-finance their EMI programmes.

Looking at Figure 1, it is interesting to notice that only 8% of answers are for the improvement of English language proficiency. This means that EMI degree courses do not have as an essential aspect the improvement of students' English skills, giving more importance to the content. Finally, there is only a single response, that in the chart is shown with a 0%, which indicates Erasmus students as a good reason to teach in English.

In their study, Costa and Coleman (2013: 10) highlight other features of EMI in Italy. Firstly, they observe that English-taught courses can be found in Economics and Engineering faculties. They reflect on this aspect saying: "this is what we would expect, since ETPs, first introduced in 1992, are quite common for those disciplines which by

nature are more international". Furthermore, the vast majority of the courses are at a Master's level, followed by Doctoral and Bachelor's levels.

Analysing the geographical areas where these programmes are taught, Costa and Coleman (2013: 10) find a great difference between Italian institutes of higher education in the North of Italy and in the Centre and South. They notice that the first Italian universities which provided EMI degree courses were three private universities of the North and nowadays the North still provides the major number of EMI programmes at universities both public and private. On the other hand, the situation in the Centre and in the South is different, as only seven public universities in the Centre and two public universities in the South provide English-taught courses. In the following table 1, Campagna and Pulcini (2014: 185) illustrate the number of EMI programmes offered by the universities.

Table 1. Number of EMI programmes in Italian Univeristies (Campagna and Pulcini, 2014:185)

Milan	128	Lecce	18	Bergamo	6	Castellanza (Varese)	3
Turin	62	Bolzano	16	Ancona	5	Cagliari	2
Bologna	56	Camerino	16	Messina	5	Ferrara	2
Rome	54	Naples	14	Palermo	5	Macerata	2
Pisa	37	Pavia	13	Lucca	4	Vercelli	2
Venice	35	Genoa	12	Udine	4	Bari	1
Siena	34	L'Aquila	9	Cassino	3	Enna	1
Padua	31	Brescia	8	Catania	3	Perugia	1
Trieste	29	Florence	8	Parma	3	Teramo	1
Trento	24	Modena	7	Salerno	3	Verona	1
							671

Looking at the data collected in this table, in the top ten of Italian universities that provide EMI programmes, only 3 out of 10 are from the Centre of Italy and the rest are from the North. Southern universities do not appear in the top ten, but in the eleventh position it is placed the University of Lecce, which provides 18 programmes.

Finally, Costa and Coleman (2013: 14) analyse in their study the teacher profiles. They (2013: 14) discover that the 90% of them are Italian native speakers, who are not trained for this new way of teaching. The only reason given is that "universities simply do not feel the need for particular training, or that, in this period of crisis, they cannot afford such training".

1.5 EMI at the University of Padova

As mentioned above, some Italian universities have an ancient and prestigious history and one of them is the University of Padua, which was founded in 1222. As Dalziel (2017: 132) highlights, it has always pride itself on its academic freedom and it has always hosted international scholars. Consequently, one of the main goal of the University of Padua is the internationalisation as it is stated in Article 1 of its Statutes (2014):

> "L'Università promuove lo sviluppo dell'internazionalizzazione anche favorendo la mobilità dei docenti, del personale tecnico amministrativo e degli studenti e la composizione internazionale del proprio corpo docente e studentesco. Incentiva programmi integrati di studio e iniziative di cooperazione interuniversitaria per attività di studio e di ricerca".

A clear example of this aim to promote the mobility of students are the Erasmus + and Erasmus Mundus programmes that the University has always supported. According to the statistics of the academic year 2014-2015[2], Padova was second only to Bologna for the number of outgoing students and it was third to Bologna and Florence for the number of incoming students.

As all the other European universities, the University of Padova promotes internationalisation through English Medium Instruction (EMI) degree programmes. According to Helm and Guarda (2015: 358) the first attempt to introduce EMI was during the academic year 2009-2010. In order to encourage it, the university Senate approved a

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[2] http://www.unipd.it/nucleo/rapporti-annuali

financial incentive and in 2011-2012 there was the introduction of the first entire programmes taught in English (Helm and Guarda, 2015: 358). Recent figures show that the number of English taught programmes increased from the academic year 2014-2015 to 2015-2016, from 27 programmes to 35 (Dalziel, 2017: 134). Looking at Table 2[3], it is demonstrated how the EMI is developed across the eight Schools of the University, in particular the second-cycle degree courses and individual course units.

Table 2. Second-cycle degree courses and individual courses units in English 2016-2017

School	No. of second-cycle degree programmes in English	Titles of second-cycle degree programmes	Number of course units in English
Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine	3	Forest Science; Italian Food and Wine; Sustainable Agriculture	76
Economics and Political Sciences	3	Business Administration; Economics and Finance; Human Rights and Multi-level Governance	83
Engineering	2	Environmental Engineering; Mathematical Engineering	125
Human and Social Sciences and Cultural Heritage	5	Local Development	54
Law	-	-	17
Medicine	2	Medical Biotechnologies; Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies	51

[3] All the data are available in the University of Padova's website: http://en.didattica.unipd.it/catalogues

		Cognitive Neuroscience and Clinical Neuropsychology	42
Psychology	1		
Science	-	-	79
Total	16		527

As regards the first experience with English Medium Instruction at the University in 2011-2012, it is important to consider how the University Language Centre could offer "courses geared specifically to the needs of lecturers teaching their subject courses in English", as Dalziel affirms (2017: 138). Consequently, it was decided to provide a 30-hour course taught by the professor Suzanne Cloke (Dalziel, 2017: 138). This course had a great success and several lecturers asked to participate. The course received a lot of positive reviews, but the lecturers also demonstrated their concerns about EMI. For instance, Dalziel (2017: 139) describes one of the principal problems which was "the need to focus on teaching methodology as well as on language awareness".

1.5.1 The LEAP project

In Dalziel's words (2017: 139), the LEAP project, an acronym that stands for Learning English for Academic Purposes, is not a "bottom-up" approach like the first EMI support course, but a "top-down" one. She explains that in the first case the agents were the professors, who approached the Language Centre, but in this case the agents were the university administration.

The LEAP project was launched by the University Language Centre with the collaboration of the International Relations Office before the beginning of the academic year 2013-2014. Helm and Guarda (2015: 359) summarise the three main goals of this project:

- to discover the needs, concerns and expectations of professors involved in EMI;

- to offer support and professional development to those lecturers involved in EMI;
- to assess the quality of support courses in order to develop a long-term support course.

As for the development of a long-term support course, the University Language Centre (CLA) decided four different options: an intensive two-week summer course in Dublin; a nine-day residential summer school in July 2013 on the island of S. Servolo in Venice; a 100 hour blended course (60 hours face-to-face and 40 hours online) to be held in five months; individual support provided by the CLA teaching staff (Dalziel, 2017: 140).

Between July and August 2013, the Summer School course begun on the island of San Servolo in Venice. The aim of this course was to create an international environment, as it was opened to lecturers of University of Padua, but also to other universities. So, thanks to this course, the lecturers were completely immersed in an English environment, as English was the language of communication. The lecturers took part in sessions: the morning ones held by the Language Centre and the afternoon ones by guests. The main topics of those sessions were the teaching style, presentation skills, teacher and student perspective on EMI, pronunciation and so on. However, Dalziel (2017: 141) highlights that at the beginning of the course there were some tensions "arising from the emphasis on teaching methodology in the Summer School". In other words, some professors thought that it was not the Language Centre's place to teach them how to teach.

Thirdly, through the 100-hour blended course, they tried to combine the language with pedagogical topics. As Dalziel (2017: 142) emphasises, "lecturers do need to acquire new pedagogical skills (along with language skills) in order to provide effective instruction in English". Therefore, a content delivery approach would appear more suitable rather than a traditional lecture-style one (Wilkinson, 2013: 15).

Finally, the last strategy was to provide individual support for lecturers. This opportunity was offered to 16 lecturers, who were observed during their lectures and then they received an individual feedback.

After that these strategies were investigated, it was carried out a questionnaire, where the lecturers stated their opinions about the four options. It is important to stress some features, that the LEAP project of the future will take into account. For example, the Summer School will take place in Padova, because it would be hard to meet again in Venice

for the costs and the organisational duties. (Dalziel, 2017: 144). Finally, the Language Advising service changed its name in Lecturer Support Service, offering twice in a month three-hour workshops with topics like pronunciation, introducing the course, the interaction between the student and the teacher and the assessment in EMI (Dalziel, 2017: 145).

1.6 Critical views of EMI

As I have described in this chapter, EMI is an innovative way in teaching in Italian universities. This is due to the global widespread of the use of the English language because it is used as a worldwide means of communication between people who share different first languages. Although the introduction of English as medium of instruction in the universities is a positive and innovative approach, it has brought some concerns, doubts and problems. The first main problem is highlighted by Mauranen (2010: 8) who claims that:

> "One of the major concerns has been that the adoption of English as the language of instruction in higher education may cause even nationally well-established majority languages to suffer domain loss".

In particular, the fear of domain loss is related to scientific terminology (Campagna and Pulcini, 2014: 179). They state that this fear is widespread among many Nordic scholars, because they observe that scientific terminology "is at risk of becoming entirely *Englishised*" (2014: 179), a process that will lead to the impoverishment of Nordic national languages. Therefore, this English-only formula seems to be the only possible solution in these contexts and this is the reason why they prefer bilingual policies.

The fear of loss of the native language can be found not only in Scandinavia, but also in Italy. In 2012, the Politecnico of Milan's rector Giovanni Azzone declared that starting from the 2014-15 academic year all its 34 graduate-level courses would be taught in English only. He strongly believed in the internationalisation of Italian classes and the only way to achieve this goal was through the English language (BBC news, 2012). Nevertheless, lecturers opposed this initiative for the reason that it obliged students and rectors to adopt the English language limiting their freedom and marginalizing the national language (La Repubblica, 2013). They appealed to the court, which accepted their view and condemned the decision of the Politecnico of Milan.

Secondly, teaching methodology is another issue that concern the English as medium of instruction. According to Klaassen and de Graaff (2001: 282), teaching in English can affect:

> "The lecturer's didactical skills in the sense that they are less flexible in conveying the contents of the lecture material, resulting in long monologues, a lack of rapport with students, humour and interaction".

Focusing on the Italian setting, Helm and Guarda (2015: 363) demonstrate that for several lecturers the loss of spontaneity and the lack of a relationship with their students is a big problem. Hence, the English language can be a barrier for non-native speakers' lecturers, because they cannot improvise as they can do in their native language. In Shohamy's view (2013: 204) in the EMI context students have to interact with the professors in a language that "does not represent the natural type of discourse between students and teachers". Consequently, this feature can harm the natural flow of the discourse, "especially when fluency is not reached and ideas are not communicated fully", as Shohamy explains (2013: 204).

Nevertheless, the lack of lecturers' didactical skills is strictly connected to the inadequacy of the language skills. The scholar Shohamy (2013: 203) stresses how the lecturers can have high knowledge of the content of their lecture, but very low competence in the language. That is the reason why Coleman (2006: 6) emphasises the importance of the need for training the English non-native speakers' lecturers.

Another concern about EMI is the method of assessment. Teaching in English can allow the lecturers to test their students in English. Yet, according to Shohamy's point of view (2013: 205), "using tests in English with students for whom English is a second or a third language can result unjust and invalid scores on tests". Several studies have been conducted in order to prove this thesis, in particular Robinson (2010, in Shohamy 2013: 206) demonstrates that giving a math test to students in the second language, they will score a lower mark than in their first language.

Finally, as stated above, English can be the second language for students, but it can also be the third language. In a class, students may be different cultural backgrounds, and some of them can be minorities, for example the case of immigrants. Therefore, in an EMI context, English may be their third language and often they do not have complete proficiency in the national language of the country in which they live. Thus, the proficiency

in their third language may be lower than in the second one and a consequence is a lower score in the tests provided in English, as Shohamy (2013: 205) stresses.

Chapter two

Comprehension in university lectures

In my second chapter, I will highlight academic lectures, especially EMI lectures. Firstly, I will introduce the lecture, providing a brief description. Secondly, I will describe certain features of lectures, starting with the different styles used in a lecture and then briefly focusing on the use of the personal pronouns in EMI lectures. I will emphasise the variety of registers in academic lectures, as they are a hybrid genre. I will then investigate the structural features of lectures, which play an important role in the comprehension process and then how to deliver a lecture. In the second half of my chapter, I will investigate an important aspect of a lecture, which is the listening comprehension process. I will provide a general overview of it, focusing on the second language listening comprehension process. Then I will show the differences between the everyday listening comprehension and the lecture comprehension. Finally, I will highlight the main listening comprehension problems of students, who attend EMI lectures and their perceptions in EMI lectures comprehension.

2.1 The Lecture

The term "lecture" derives from the Latin word *lecture* which means to read aloud. In medieval times, "a monk at a *lectern* would read out a book and the scholars would copy it down word for word" (Exley and Dennick, 2004: 3). It is surprising that nowadays the scene in university lectures is not so much different.

In recent years, lecturers have started to use a wide range of teaching methods such as seminars, tutorials and practical sessions, but the lecture continues to be "a cornerstone of many tertiary level courses and, due to the increase in student numbers, it is likely to remain so", as Exley and Dennick affirm (2009, in Martín del Pozo 2016: 27). Benson (1994: 181) defines a lecture as "the central ritual of the culture of learning". Therefore, lecturing is the most accepted practise in institutes of higher education around the world. Hansen and Jensen (1994: 245) outline a lecture as "an extended piece of discourse that is delivered by one person to a group of people". The main aim is to provide information to an audience, principally through a logical sequential argument structure. It is rarely

memorized and delivered or written and read, because it is characterised to contain oral features, such as pauses or hesitations.

Waggoner (1984, in Fortanet Gómez and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 162) underlines that lectures are changing because new interactive methods start to coexist with the traditional lecture approaches. He (1984, in Fortanet Gómez and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 162) argues that students identify in professors the figure of a helper, a counsellor for their learning process. On the other hand, lecturers invite their students to contribute to the lecture and participate more than in previous times. This can be seen as an attempt to avoid formalisms and to narrow distances with their students.

As I mentioned above, there is a great variety of lectures and each kind of lecture has its own features. Dudley-Evans (1994: 148) argues that "one of the key to the comprehension of lectures is the appreciation of lecturers' individual style". Therefore, in the following section, I will describe the different lecturing styles and other features that characterize a lecture.

2.1.1 Styles of lectures

Several studies have been conducted in order to understand the different styles of delivering a lecture. Firstly, Morrison (1974, cited in Jordan 1989: 153) divided science lectures into two kinds: formal and informal. He highlighted that the formal style was "close to the spoken prose". On the other hand, the informal style provided "high informational content, but not necessarily in high formal register". Morrison's study can be seen too simplistic, but it was one of the first studies regarding lecturing styles. Therefore, other studies have been carried out in the following years, such as Dudley-Evans and Johns' study in 1981 and Dudley-Evans in 1994. In Dudley-Evans' opinion (1994: 148) "the key to the understanding of lectures is an appreciation of lecturer's individual styles". Consequently, the styles that a lecturer can adopt have been divided in three categories.

- *Reading style*, "in which lecturers either read the lecture or deliver it as if they were reading it" (Dudley-Evans, 1994: 148).

- *Conversational style*, "in which lecturers deliver the lecture from notes and in a relatively informal style with a certain amount of interaction with students" (Dudley-Evans, 1994: 148). In this kind of lecture, the topic has been previously planned, but not the speech. So, typical features of this style are "disfluencies such as false starts, hesitations and fillers" (Chafe 1985, in Crawford Camiciottoli 2004: 43). The conversational style is also named by Northcott (2001: 19-20) interactive style.

- *Rhetorical style*, "in which the lecturers give a performance with jokes and digressions" (Dudley-Evans, 1994: 148).

Although there is no written proof about the frequency of types of lecture style, there is the general agreement that the informal conversational style is the main mode of lecture presentation, based on notes or handouts, to both native and non-native-speaker audiences (McDonough 1978; DeCarrico and Nattinger 1992; Dudley-Evans 1994).

In 1994, Benson indicated that lectures started to have a more conversational or interactive style, a practise that is more developed in the United States rather than in Europe. Conventional or non-interactive style lectures are that kind of lectures widespread in Europe. Goffman (1981: 165) describes them as:

> "institutionalized extended holdings of the floor in which one speaker imparts his views on a subject, these thoughts comprising what can be called a 'text'. The style is typically serious and slightly impersonal, the controlling intent being to generate calmly considered understanding, not mere entertainment, emotional impact, or immediate action".

However, this trend of moving toward a more conversational or interactive style of lecturing, at least in the United States, may create problems to non-native speaker students, who have conventional lecturing backgrounds, "producing a default or precarious listening comprehension" (Fortanet Gómez and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 162).

2.1.1.1 The use of personal pronouns in a lecture

Based on the style of a lecture, lecturers' choice of the use of the personal pronoun can be different. The focus here is on the use of personal pronouns in the English language, because I will focus on EMI lectures. Firstly, to understand the importance of personal pronouns in the English language, Rounds (1987: 649) stated that:

> "linguists consider personal pronouns to be crucial to intersubjective communication: they are the means language provides for constituting the roles of speaker and addressee in face-to-face interaction".

Halliday (1994: 309-312) considered pronouns as one of the tools used to create cohesion in English; pronouns, together with demonstratives and comparatives, give reference points for the hearer to understand a speech event. Therefore, it is generally agreed that *I* denotes the lecture, *you* can refer to a student or a group of students and *we* designate the lecturer with the students or the lecturer with his or her academic peers.

Rounds (1985 in Fortanet 2004: 47) carried out a study on the use of pronouns in academic lectures, analysing mathematics lectures at the university of Michigan. The results of her study demonstrated that the personal pronoun *we* occurred up to three times more than the personal pronouns *I* and *you*.

However, based on Rounds' research, Fortanet (2004: 63) demonstrated *we* is only used half as many times as other pronouns such as *I* or *you* in today's academic English. She analysed lectures from the MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English) as well as Rounds did. A possible explanation of these different results is that Rounds focused only on mathematics lectures, whereas Fortanet chose different lectures among the MICASE corpus. Furthermore, in recent years, it has been observed a tendency to substitute the first person plural pronoun for *I* in the academic writing; a tendency that may be extending to academic speech too (Hyland 2001 in Fortanet Gómez and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 166).

Finally, Morell (2004) analysed the interactive discourse that occurred in lectures for EFL students taking a degree in English studies in Spain. Investigating the lecturers' choice of use of personal pronouns, she (2004: 330) demonstrated that lecturers tend to use the personal pronoun *I* in non-interactive style lectures, whereas in an interactive style lectures, professors tend to use the personal pronoun *we.* Biber (1999: 329) explained that

"*we* can be inclusive, including the addressee(s)". Therefore, as Kamio (2001: 1120) noticed, the first person plural pronoun indicates a closeness between the speaker and the hearer(s). Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1994: 127) stressed that the use of *we* is associated with positive politeness, whereas the use of *I* and *you* is related to negative politeness.

2.1.2 Variety of registers in academic lectures

As I mentioned above, academic lectures can have different kind of styles, which can be categorised in parameters such as formal or informal style, interactive or non-interactive style. Lecturers can engage their students with questions, creating a sort of dialogue and discussion, or they can avoid any kind of verbal interaction, delivering a speech event like a monologue. Even though it can be possible to create a dialogue with the students, a lecture is not properly a typical face-to-face conversation, because it contains informational and academic contents. Considering these aspects, it is possible to highlight how lectures have a variety of registers and share different features.

First of all, I shall give a definition of register. Biber (2002: 4) affirmed that "registers are varieties of language that are associated with different circumstances and purposes". He subdivided the English language in four major registers: conversation, fiction, newspaper language and academic prose. Biber (1999: 16) underlined that "these registers are different enough from one another to represent a wide range of variation". For example, conversation is different from the others, because it is spoken with at least two interlocutors and interactive. On the other hand, the other three registers are written, not directly interactive and they lack of a specific address.

In his study, Biber used the Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus (LSWE Corpus). He (1999: 33) categorized academic lectures as a supplementary register, "the non-conversational speech, which complements the conversation corpus in that it includes a range of more formal speech events found in specific situational context". Csomay (2002: 204) defined the register of lectures as a "hybrid" one, because it can be a continuum of the academic prose, having high informational content, and face-to-face conversation, showing spoken features, such as the addresser and addressee who share the same time and place.

Csomay (2002) conducted a study in order to investigate the patterns of variation within lectures focusing on level of interactivity. He analysed a corpus of 176 academic

lectures of four university in the United States. Csomay (2002: 221) outlined that low interactive classes reflected features of the academic prose, as the informational focus tends to be very high. On the other hand, highly interactive classes showed more conversation features.

2.1.3 Structural features of lectures

The organization and the structure of university lectures plays an important role in the listening comprehension process, especially in the EMI context. Firstly, Cook (1975, in Fortanet Góme and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 164) noticed two structural aspects of a lecture: the macro and the micro-structure. The former has different a number of "expositions", which are different classes of episode. He divided them into an optional episode of expectation, an obligatory focal episode, an obligatory developmental episode and some optional ones and finally an obligatory closing episode. On the other hand, episodes in the micro-structure are portrayed as "moves". For example, a concluding move is a summary or a justificatory statement. Nevertheless, Cook was able only to describe the boundaries of these units, but he failed to provide detailed information about the internal structure.

The inability to recognize the macro-structure is a problem of English non-native speakers in EMI lectures. A study conducted by Olsen and Huckin (1990 in Flowerdew 1994: 17) demonstrated that ESL engineering students "may understand all the words of a lecture and yet fail to understand the lecturer's main points or logical argument". This failure to understand lecturer's main point and logical argument can be interpreted as a lack of knowledge in the overall discourse structure.

Young's study (1994) was the most comprehensive research on structural features of university lectures. She analysed seven two-hour lectures from third and fourth year courses. Four lectures were from two North American universities in Geology, Sociology, Engineering and Economics. The other three lectures were from Western European university where non-native speakers of English delivered the lectures in Economics, Sociology and Soil Physics. In her work she tried to "describe the macro-structure of university lectures and to identify some of more prominent micro-features that contribute to this structure" (1994: 159). She decided to use the phasal analysis in order to reveal a more accurate configuration of the macro-structure of lectures. So, she portrayed the macro-structure of a lecture in terms of "phases".

> "Phases are strands of discourse that recur discontinuously throughout a particular language event and, taken together, structure that event. These strands recur and are interspersed with others resulting in an interweaving of threads as the discourse progresses" (Young, 1994: 165).

It is possible to define the strand that Young described in her study as signposting language. In other words, it is words and phrases that people use in order to guide the listeners through what is being said. In my next chapter, I will provide an overview of signposting language. I will analyse lecturers' use of signposting language, when they deliver a lecture. Here, I will explain Young's representation of signposting language with her phasal model.

According to Young (1994: 166-172), it is possible to identify six different phases in university lectures, which are divided into two groups. The first group is made up of three metadiscoursal-strands, which comment on the discourse itself.

- *Discourse structuring phase*: "is the one in which speakers announce the direction they will take, telling the audience what will come next in the discourse" (1994: 168). In other words, lecturers point out what they want to focus on in the lecture. In this phase, there is a high use of declarative statements, imperatives and rhetorical questions, which are posed and answered by the lecturers.

- *Conclusion phase*: "where lecturers summarize points they have made throughout the discourse" (1994: 166). In other words, lecturers classify what they have already explained in order to assure that their students have understood the contents of the lecture. Here the statements are all realised by the indicative declarative mood.

- *Evaluation phase*: "the lecturer reinforces each of the other strands by evaluating information which is about to be, or has already been transmitted" (1994: 167). This phase is not as much frequent as the other two, but is still important. In this phase, lecturers give their personal opinions of the contents, indicating to the students how to consider such information.

On the other hand, the second group is composed of non-metadiscoursal phases, which always mark university lectures.

- *Interaction phase:* in which "lecturers maintain contact with their audience in order both to reduce the distance between themselves and their listeners and to ensure that what has been taught is in fact understood" (1994: 167). Therefore, lecturers try to create a dialogue with their students by posing and answering questions.

- *Theory or Content phase:* is the one used to "reflect the lecturer's purpose, which is to transmit theoretical information" (1994: 167). In this phase, lecturers provide to their students' definitions, theories and models.

- *Examples phase:* is the one, where "the speakers illustrate theoretical concepts through concrete examples familiar to students in the audience" (1994: 168). In her study, she underlines how significant this phase is in monologic discourse, because she points out that strands of the example phase are numerous compared to the theoretical ones.

In her study, Young demonstrates that using phases it is possible to create a more accurate schema of university lectures rather than presenting it with a macro-structure of a lecture in terms of outlines, where the structure of a lecture is only divided in the beginning, middle and end part.

2.1.4 Delivery strategies in lectures

In the previous section, I explain the importance of organizing a lecture. This is the basis for an effective delivery of lectures. Professors organize their lectures trying to cover a certain amount of content in a limited time. Furthermore, they have to try to capture and maintain students' attention and concentration.

In Sandhu, Afifi, and Amara's point of view (2012: 1), it is important to begin the lecture with an opening statement. They (2012: 1) agree that "an opening summary remains an important prerequisite of an effective lecture". This strategy has been analysed in Palmer's study (2004), where he created a corpus of thirty lectures from the University of Valencia, analysing the strategies to deliver a university lecture. He (2004, in Fortanet Gómez and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 170) pointed out three possible ways that lecturers use to begin a lecture. The first one is that the professor states all the information observed in a prior lecture on the topic. In other words, he or she provides a brief summary of the previous lecture at the beginning of the current lecture, by using the past tense and the plural pronoun *we* to create a closer relationship with the audience (Palmer, 2004: 103). The second strategy is stating only some specific ideas of the previous lecture. In this case, at the beginning the lecturer recalls only some specific points with a general framework, using mainly the first and second person plural pronouns. In the last strategy, the professor starts his or her lecture without recalling any specific information on the previous meeting. Another strategy highlighted by Sandhu, Afifi, and Amara (2012: 1) is to pose a question at the beginning of the lecture, so students will focus on the lecture to find a solution.

The second step in delivering a lecture is the presentation of the main topic. Palmer (2004) affirmed that it can be introduce with some references to previously acquired knowledge, in order to recall information that students already possess. Palmer (2004: 109) explains that "lecturers point out some specific knowledge explained in the previous sessions, establishing a gap that will be hopefully completed in the lecture". Another possible way to introduce the main theme of the lecture is through the use of an example. It is possible that a professor states a case at the beginning of the meeting that it will be discussed later, establishing in this way the main argument. Finally, the last way to introduce the main topic of the lecture is through a humorous remark, though Palmer (2004) explains that it is an exception, for the reason that not many lecturers decide to follow this trend.

Finally, at the end of the lecture, professors should give students the opportunity to ask questions in order to make clear their possible doubts. This aspect is very important, especially in EMI lectures. These lectures are attended by non-native speakers, therefore same parts of the lectures, or some explanations can be not well understood. Morell (2004: 329) explained that the negotiation of meaning is the main interactive aspect, which is "an aspect of interaction that occurs when at least two interlocutors work together to arrive at mutual comprehension of their utterances". It presents modifications and restructuring of the interaction, because it may be that lecturer and students have difficulty understanding each other's messages. In order to negotiate meaning, the participants of the interactions try to repeat, to change the words or syntax, to reformulate the sentences to finally reach a mutual comprehension. Long (1981) and Pica (1994, in Morell 2004: 329) show three typical ways of negotiations:

- *Clarification requests*: are questions that one speaker asks for help in order to understand what the other participant says. An example can be the question "what did you say?".

- *Confirmation checks:* are partial or total repetition with an increasing tone of voice, searching for a confirmation of the other participant's previous utterance.

- *Comprehension checks:* are ways by which a speaker asks if the other one has understood his or her utterance. An instance can be the simple question "did you understand?".

The right comprehension of a lecture is fundamental for students. This is the reason why lecturers allow their students to ask questions in order to clarify their doubts and achieve a correct understanding. The listening comprehension is an important aspect in understanding a lecture. It could be an easy process when the lecture is delivered in learners' mother tongue. However, it is a challenge for students in the EMI context, because they are English non-native speakers. Therefore, I will provide in the following sections a brief overview of the listening comprehension process, focusing on the second language listening comprehension and students' problems in listening EMI lectures.

2.2 Second language listening comprehension process

In this section, I will first explain the listening comprehension process in general and then I will focus on the second language listening comprehension process.

Flowerdew (1994: 8) affirmed that listening comprehension can be described as a general construct. Some comprehension theorists demonstrated that the process involved in comprehension has a hierarchical relationship. This is the reason why, for a period of time, scholars illustrated comprehension as a "bottom-up" process. It started with a "lower level", when someone tried to decode the language system and to represent this decoding into the working memory. Then the decoding would be interpreted in relation to "higher level" knowledge of context and the world. Later, Flowerdew (1994: 9) highlighted how scholars started to work with "top-down" models. They put the "higher level" pragmatic processes as the starting point with the linguistic data at the "lower levels". Nevertheless, defining the comprehension process as "bottom-up" or "top-down" process can create some problems. He outlined that "most scholars now accept the view that comprehension involves a variety of processes, all of which interact, but in what way it is not possible to say".

Flowerdew (1994: 9) showed a conceptualization which has been adopted by several second language learning theorists. According to this point of view, comprehension is a two-stage process. The first step is a purely linguistic process and the second is its application to the learner's background knowledge and context. This distinction is fundamental for non-native speakers involved in L2 lecture listening. These students possess significant degree the skills involved in the first stage of this process, and any training in lecture comprehension tends to underline their "higher skills" of the second stage.

Richard (1985, in Sharif & Ferdous 2012: 92) defined listening as "the process of understanding speech in a second or foreign language". Howatt and Dakin (1974, in Sharif & Ferdous 2012: 92) provided another definition of listening:

> "it is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, understanding his grammar, recognizing his vocabulary and being able to grasp the meaning of what he says".

In Rost's opinion (2011, in Brunfaut and Révész 2015: 142) listening in a second language is "an interactive, cognitive process, which involves neurological, linguistic, semantic and pragmatic processing". Hence, one of its main features is the real-time processing, which is the ability to integrate in real time information from several knowledge sources. Unlike a reader, a listener does not have the time to revise the text over and over or to skip some parts. However, the process of integrating real-time information with various knowledge sources is a highly automatized process for the proficient speakers or native speakers of a language, which requires little or no conscious attention. On the other hand, non-native speakers of a language or people with a limited proficiency of the foreign language require a more controlled and conscious listening comprehension process. (Segalowitz 2003 in Brunfaut and Révész 2015: 142).

The second feature of the listening process is the ability of the listener to recognize the phonological unit boundaries, which would be visually marked in a written text. Furthermore, she or he has to identify false starts, hesitations and irregular pausing. Brown (1990, in Flowerdew 1994: 10) affirmed that listening is a challenge for non-native speakers, because they have mainly learned English in an idealised and written context, which is completely different from everyday colloquial speech.

Analysing the listening comprehension process from the perspective of what listeners do, we can agree that it is not only a process, but it is the result of a series of processes. Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983, in Hansen and Jensen 1994: 243) described the different listening processes in their development of a model of discourse comprehension and listening comprehension in specific. First of all, in the short-term memory the stream of sound is held in a very short period of time, but it is the place where phoneme recognition and morpheme chunking begin. Thanks to their knowledge of syntactic structure, listeners are able to organize chunks into clauses. Then these units are matched with long-term memory information in order to verify the interpretation of the input. Then listeners create a semantic representation of the discourse in their long-term memory, that Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983, in Hansen and Jensen 1994: 243) named "textbase". At the same time, listeners create a unique situational model of the input, which is a cognitive representation of the actions and events. They are able to do this because they collect their information from the scripts or schemas of their knowledge. Schank and Abelson (1977: 41) described these scripts or schemas as "knowledge organized around predetermined stereotypical sequence of action that define well-known situations". After the development of these semantic propositions, the element of the proposition that connects it with the previous one

is in the short-term memory, where the clauses are connected for the interpretation of the text.

Van Dijk and Kintsch's model of discourse comprehension described the process listeners go through listening to a speech delivered in their native language or in a foreign one. Therefore, it is the same process that students apply when they listen to a lecture. However, the listening comprehension process of a lecture is different from every-day listening. I will portray these differences in the next section.

2.3 Distinctive features of lecture comprehension

Lecture comprehension has its own features that are different from those of general listening. Richards (1983, in Flowerdew 1994: 11) was the first to highlight the differences between listening to academic discourse and more general listening events.

Firstly, the background knowledge required is different, because in a conversation it is general, while in a lecture it is specialised on the subject. However, in order to achieve a better comprehension of a lecture, some lecturers refer to a common background knowledge that they share with their students, which is not only specific of the discipline. Fortanet (2005 in Fortanet Gómez and Bellés Fortuño 2005: 169) identifies that references to a cultural background knowledge facilitate lecture comprehension. For example, lecturers can make:

- Local references, which means they refer to place where the lecture takes place;
- National references, to the information known by the inhabitants of the country;
- Western civilization references, which is assumed to be shared by the whole world;
- Aged group references to knowledge shared by a generation.

Secondly, the spoken discourse in a lecture is divided in spurts of language, named by Chafe (1979, in Hansen and Jensen 1994: 245) "idea units". An idea unit can be defined as a single intonation outline followed by a pause. He pointed out that in a lecture an idea unit is composed of 11 words, whereas in a normal conversation only 7 words. He believed that in academic speech, idea units are delivered through nominalizations, relative clauses showing a greater degree of syntax complexity rather than an everyday conversation. This

can explain the difference between everyday discourse and lectures, because the latter has a planned nature, whereas the former does not.

A third remarkable difference between academic and conversational listening is the "application of turn-taking conventions" (Flowerdew 1994: 11). In a general conversation, turn-taking is essential, while in a lecture turn-taking is possible only if the questions are allowed from the audience or the lecturer asks the audience some questions.

Flowerdew (1994: 11) focused his attention in two skills of students, which highlighted a difference between academic and conversational listing. During a lecture, students have the ability to concentrate on and to understand a long and articulated discourse, without being able to interrupt the speaker in order to ask to some clarifications or repetitions, because most of the time this happens at the end of a lecture. This is different compared to an every-day conversation, when the listener can interrupt the speaker at any time.

The second skill is the ability to take note during a lecture. Chaudron, Loschky and Cook (1994, in Flowerdew 1994: 82) carried out a study to examine the effectiveness of note-taking among 98 Asian adult students of English as a second language who were studying listening comprehension in a university program in the United States. In their study, they noticed that "certain information in the lectures was better retrieved with the aids of notes" (1994: 88), but those students did not have any overall advantage over the condition of not taking notes. However, Flowerdew and Miller (1992: 74) conducted a study, in which they analysed the lecture comprehension problems of 30 first year Chinese students who attended EMI lectures. Their results showed that students were aware of the potential value of note-taking, but they relied on marking their textbook or handouts rather than taking notes. Therefore, last peculiarity of a lecture comprehension process, that it is not possible to find in the conversational listening, is the ability to integrate information with other media. For instance, handouts provided at the beginning of the lecture, textbooks or visual displayed materials, such as PowerPoint presentations. The use of other materials can help the students to have a better comprehension of the lecture. However, through the use visual materials, students tend to copy what is visually available and not what the lecturer says. This is particularly true for L2 students, who experience more difficulty in the listening comprehension aspect of the lecture (King, 1994: 230). According to Ackerley's (2017: 275) results on her study conducted at the University of Padua, only 29 out of 111 EMI students appreciated the use of visual aids during lectures.

Nevertheless, the second language listening comprehension is still a problem for L2 students, even though lecturers help them with the use of handouts or visual aids. In my next section, I will describe the common listening comprehension problems among English non-native speaker's students in EMI lectures.

2.4 Listening comprehension problems in EMI lectures

In recent years, several studies have been conducted in order to understand the problems learners face when they listen in a foreign language. Firstly, I will describe Goh's study (2000) who identifyed the five common listening comprehension problems of a group of 40 Chinese tertiary-level students, who were learning English in preparation for their undergraduate studies. The data she collected were from the weekly diary that the students kept as part of their listening course and from small group interviews. Figure 1 shows the common problems that she discovered in her study.

Figure 1: Five common listening comprehension problems (Goh, 2000:60)
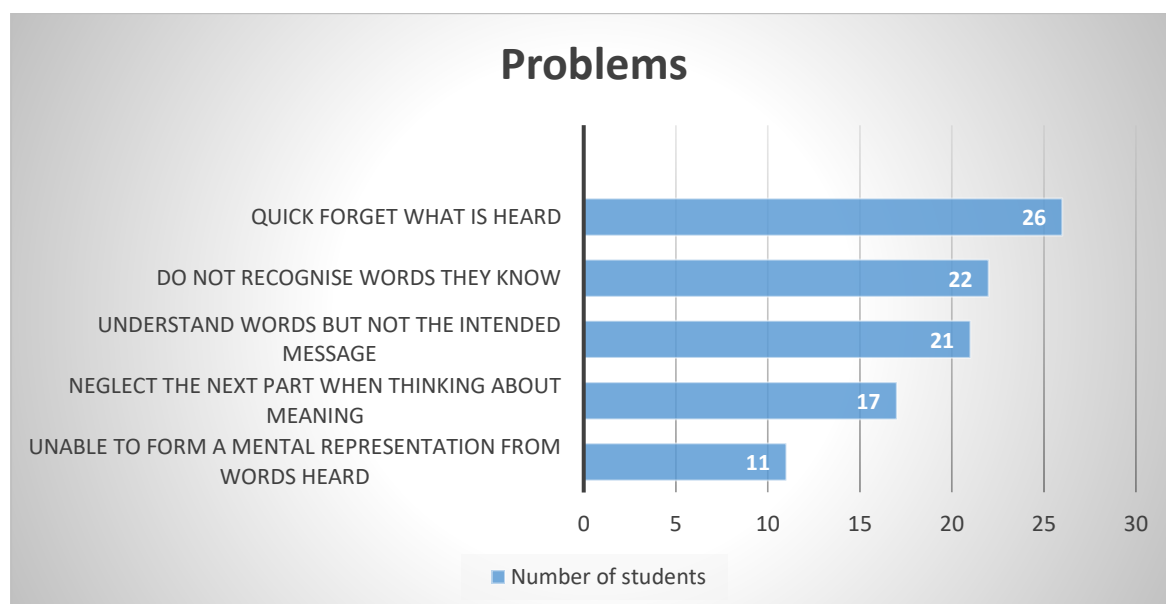
In Goh's opinion (2000: 56), listening difficulties are not related to external or internal characteristics that might interrupt text understanding. Rather they are real-time processing problems, directly related to cognitive procedures that take place at various stages of listening comprehension.

The first main problem reported is the inability of students to remember certain words or phrases they had just heard. Although they understood what was said, they would forget it as soon as they started to listen to another part of the message. Goh (2000: 60) explains this problem as a limited capacity of the students' short-term memory. Short-term memory is constantly cleared for new input, so information which are just acquired, will be forgotten immediately, unless some forms of fixation or association in long-term memory occur.

The second most common problem happens during the perceptual processing phase, which is "the encoding of the acoustic or written message" (Goh, 2000: 57). 22 out of 40 students claim that some words sounded familiar, but they were not able to recall their meanings. A possible cause is that students have an underdeveloped listening vocabulary. They are certainly able to recognize the words by sight, but they do not remember the sounds of the lexical items in their long-term memory.

Thirdly, more than half of the students explained that they could understand the literal meaning of words, but they could not comprehend the full meaning of the message. A plausible reason can be the lack of background knowledge of the topic. This problem happens during the utilisation phase, when the listener "may draw different types of inferences to complete the interpretation and make it more personally meaningful" (Goh, 2000: 57). During the parsing phase, words are transformed into a mental representation, so listeners might be able to create the literal sense of the words, but they do not understand yet the sense.

The fourth most common problem is the neglect of the next part of the speech, because they stopped to think about unfamiliar words they caught in the first part. According to Goh (2000: 63) this common listening problem shows the recursiveness and overlapping of the three phases of comprehension (perceptual, parsing and utilisation), suggested by Anderson in his model (1995). In other words, students could not understand some words, so they stopped trying to search for the meanings. They should do this process under the limited time of their short-memory, which was further limited by the demand of processing a foreign language that they were not completely proficient. At the same time, they continued to receive new input of the following parts of the speech, losing them.

The last problem occurs in the parsing phase, because students complained that they were unable to portrait the mental representation of the words they heard. The only reason that Goh (2000: 64) reaches for this problem is that the majority of words that students understand were not content or key words, but only words that they could recognise immediately.

Hasan (2000, in Hamouda 2013: 118) carried out a similar study, analysing listening comprehension problems of 81 Arabic students, who were learning English as a foreign language for academic purpose. He found that the most important factors for listening difficulties are "unfamiliar words", "the length of the spoken text" and "difficult grammatical structures" (2000: 118).

A more recent study conducted by Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian and Nimehchisalem in 2015 highlighted the problem of the rapid speech rate. They investigated the listening comprehension problems of 100 Iranian tertiary level first-year students from three universities in Iran. They highlighted (2015: 267) that the major problem of Iranian students was fast speech rate, the same problem that Flowerdew and Miller (1992) demonstrated in their study, in which they analysed the perceptions, problems and strategies in EMI lectures of a group of first year Chinese students. It has been assumed that a faster speech creates more listening difficulty, because the period of time to process the incoming input is shorter compared to a normal speech (Brunfaut and Révész, 2015: 145). Brown (2001: 254) argued that the L2 learners fear most English native speakers' high speed of speech, especially for those learners whose language is syllable-timed, as English is a stress-timed language and "English speech can be a terror for some learners as mouthfuls of syllables come spilling out between stress points".

As for difficult grammatical structures, Brown (2001: 253) claimed that contracted forms create difficulties for foreign language learners. Rubin (1994, in Brunfaut and Révész 2015: 143) supported Brown's opinion, because "the recognition of lexical items and syntactic constructions might pose a greater challenge due to decreased phonological information".

The last problem that emerged in some studies on students' lectures comprehension in EMI context is lecturers' pronunciation. Hellekjær (2010: 24) carried out a study on 391 students, comparing EMI and L1 instruction at three Norwegian universities. He demonstrated that lecture comprehension problems in EMI courses is the result of a weak pronunciation skills of lecturers in English. The same difficulty has been identified in Evans and Morrison's study (2011: 203) who conducted their research among first year

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undergraduate students at Hong Kong Polytechnic University. They pointed out that students faced issue in understanding some lecturers' accents, preferring local professors as the Hong Kong English accent was easier to comprehend. In both studies of Hellekjær (2010: 24) and Evans and Morrison (2011: 203) students underlined their problem in understanding the disciplinary terminology. The use of specific vocabularies related to the subject in a foreign language, created several difficulties in the global understanding of a lecture. The same problem was underlined by Flowerdew and Miller (1992: 70), as they showed that students failed to comprehend new terminology and concepts, leading to a total breakdown in comprehension. Therefore, Evans and Morrisons (2011: 203) affirmed that some students tried to record the new words in a notebook to develop their knowledge. Selamat and Sidhu (2011: 192) illustrated that students tried to use familiar words in order to guess the meaning of unknown words.

After having depicted the main problems students face in EMI lectures, I will describe their perceptions in EMI lecture comprehension process.

2.5 Students' perceptions of EMI lecture comprehension

"First-term graduate students using English as a medium of instruction and/or studying in an English-speaking environment for the first time enter in a critical period of their academic life" (Mason 1994:199).

These are the words that the scholar Mason uses in order to express the difficulty of English non-native speaker students in their EMI studies. In the previous section, I have already explained their problems in understanding EMI lectures, but now I want to point out students' perceptions of EMI lecture comprehension.

First of all, it has been agreed that the background knowledge play an important role for the success of an EMI program. Mason (1994: 200) conducted her study to find out the perceived degree of lecture comprehension of 26 first-term foreign graduate students studying in English at Georgetown University. The clear majority (20 out of 26 students) were Asian, so their native languages were Chinese and Japanese. She (1994: 206) noticed that students with weak background knowledge cannot comprehend very well the subject matter, even though they can understand lecturer's English. According to Kym and Kym (2014: 49) Korean students had a better EMI lecture comprehension whether they had

background knowledge of the subject. Flowerdew and Miller's study (1992: 67) showed the same result, because some students were able to bring background knowledge to the lecture, relating more effectively to the lecture content, whilst others, who had any previous knowledge, had difficulty in comprehending the lecture.

Secondly, in several studies students indicated that English proficiency affected their EMI lecture comprehension. As is shown in the study of Byun *et al.* (2011: 440), Korean students have trouble following courses conducted entirely in English due to their low English proficiency. They highlighted that students needed to improve their English skills in order to take EMI courses. Similarly, Kym and Kym (2014: 55) showed that Korean students' ability to comprehend the lecture was influenced by their English proficiency. Students with a high English proficiency benefited more from EMI classes, but low proficient students had problems in the comprehension of the content.

Students' satisfaction in EMI lecture comprehension may also depend on lecturers' English proficiency. Maiworm and Wächter (2002, in Byun *et al.* 2011: 440) emphasized that a possible reason for students' low English level proficiency might be the lecturers' low level of English and their difficulty to express themselves in English. This is because they were non-native-speaking lecturers who taught in English to non-native speaking students. In Byun *et al.*'s study (2011: 442) several Korean students complained about the limited English skills of their professors, affirming that in EMI lectures lecturers tended to explain the content in a brief and easy way. As Kym and Kym (2014: 56) showed in their study, Korean students' ability to comprehend the lecture was higher when the professor was an English native speaker. On the other hand, Jenkins (2014) found out that students preferred non-native speakers of English as lecturers.

Finally, students agree in some strategies to overcome their problems in comprehending EMI lectures. First of all, Flowerdew and Miller (1992: 73) showed that some students tended to read some materials before the lecture in order to ensure their comprehension. Selamat and Sidhu (2011: 190) supported Flowerdew and Miller's result. In their study, they found that students who read the textbook before the lecture "can guess what the lecturer is going to talk about and it's easier to understand the lecture" (2011: 90). In Kym and Kym's study (2014: 54) students suggested that having lecture notes in advance could help them in their comprehension. Students perceived also a better comprehension when the professors recapped the lecture. They can repeat a concept, or make a summary at the end or in the middle of the lecture in order to ensure students content comprehension. (Flowerdew and Miller 1992; Kym and Kym 2014).

Another strategy is to ask help from their peers. Flowerdew and Miller (1992: 73) highlighted how Chinese students preferred to ask their classmates what was in the lecture rather than to ask the lecturer. They (1992: 73) explained this reluctance to ask questions during the lecture to the lecturer related to the Chinese sensibility. Similarly, Mason (1994: 206) showed that Asian students asked help to individuals speaking the same native language outside the lecture.

2.6 Conclusion

As I mentioned above, several studies show the main problems non-native English speaker students face attending EMI lectures. The most problematic aspects are: missing part of the text, not recognizing words, not comprehending the full meaning of the speech, the rapid speech rate, the difficult grammatical structures, the unclear lecturers' pronunciation and failure to comprehend new terminology and concepts. It has been demonstrated that L2 students can understand better an EMI lecture when lecturers have a high level of English proficiency. Finally, another way to better comprehend EMI classes is a good background knowledge of the topic.

Chapter three

Signposting language

In my third chapter, I will introduce the main topic of my thesis which is signposting language. Firstly, I will provide a definition of signposting language. Secondly, I shall outline early studies on the role of signposting on comprehension of L2 students in EMI lectures, showing their limitations. Then, I will discuss further studies, emphasising the positive effects of signposting on the comprehension of non-native English speaker students who attend EMI lectures. Finally, I will provide a classification of signposting language.

3.1 What is signposting language?

In my previous chapter, I discussed the comprehension difficulties of non-native English speaker students in EMI lectures. Vandergrift (2007: 202) affirmed: "the use of metadiscursive comments [signposting] such as 'First, let's look at' or 'what I will do now is' – [to] facilitate lecture comprehension, particularly of L2 listeners". Therefore, signposting language is composed by words, phrases or sentences that help students to follow lecturers' line of thought. Furthermore, signposting language helps lecturers to deliver well-organized and structured lectures. This so-called "signposting" includes words or short sentences known as discourse markers. According to Martín del Pozo (2016) discourse markers are one of the major features of the language of academic lectures. She (2016: 28) defines them as "lexical phrases which help to signal the most important content, and to indicate moves in argumentation or the boundaries of non-essential information". By discourse markers, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 435) mean "words that speakers use to mark relationships between chunks of discourse".

It is important to highlight that discourse markers do not only signal relations between adjacent sentences, but they signal the overall direction of a given discourse. Markers that provide the overall direction of the discourse are generally named "macro-markers" (Chaudron and Richards, 1986) or "macro-organizers" (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992). Chaudron and Richards (1986: 117) describe macro-markers as "signals or meta-

statements about the major propositions within the lecture, or the important transition points". Jung (2003: 749) explain macro-markers as "markers of higher order information that signal the relationship between the major propositions or mark the important transition points in the discourse". In other words, macro-markers are used to signal topics, shift in other topics, summarize points and create relationships between topics. For example, markers such as "what I am going to talk about today" or "Let me summarize" or "The next is" are all macro-markers. They are mostly long, syntactically complex phrases, the shortest is made of three-word phrase, for instance "we'll see that", "what I'd like to do is to discuss", "now we will move on to", etc.

On the other hand, the other group of discourse makers, which has been defined as "micro-markers" (Chaudron and Richards, 1986) or "micro-organizers" (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992), which are all short and non-complex phrases, generally ranging from one to four words (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 107). Chaudron and Richards (1986: 117) identify micro-markers as "markers of intersentential relations, framing of segments, and pause fillers". In other words, they are markers of low-level information, signalling the relations between clauses or between adjacent sentences. Nattinger and DeCarrico emphasise that micro-organizers are "phrase fluency devices used by the speakers to allow more time to plan for the next routine" (1992: 104). For example, markers such as *well, I see, yeah, sure, and, but, however, and so* are all micro-markers.

To sum up, markers are devices that serve as a guideline to signal how listeners should interpret the information they are listening to. They help the listener to create a "mental map" of the speech. In the following sections, I will focus my attention on the importance of these markers on comprehension of L2 students in EMI lectures, showing several studies where scholars demonstrated the effects of markers in the comprehension process. Firstly, I will describe the earlier studies, emphasising their limitations and then I will describe other more recent studies.

3.2 Early studies and their limitations

The structuring and the organisation of a lecture is an essential aspect for its comprehensibility. However, students who are not native speakers of English may have difficulties understanding and following the structure of EMI lectures, especially to recognize the macro-markers in the organisation of the discourse. Yuan (1982) carried out a research with Chinese students at the University of California in Los Angeles. Analysing lecture comprehension problems of these students, he observed that the lack of discourse awareness was averse to their comprehension. He affirmed (1982: 48):

> "In general, the subjects were rather weak at paying attention to the sequence of the lecture because of their · neglect of the logical connectors of sequence and their lack of recognition of transition from one main idea to another. Besides, they paid more attention to decoding the speech sentence by sentence than to extracting the science information from the lecture through understanding the rhetorical nature and functions of both textual and lecture discourse".

The awareness of this problem has become one of the main topics in the field of EMI lecture comprehension. Several scholars have tried to understand whether the use of markers help non-native speakers of English to comprehend the lecture. The first study was conducted by Chaudron and Richards in 1986. The aim of their study was to investigate how different categories of discourse markers affect L2 students' comprehension of lectures delivered in English. They measured the lecture comprehension of two different instructional level groups with subjects of Asian and Pacific linguistic background. A pre-university group was composed of 71 ESL students enrolled in an English course in a private college at Hawaii. On the other hand, the university group was made up of 81 ESL students who attended the University of Hawaii. Those students listened to four versions of the same video tape and transcript American History lecture:

- A baseline version, which did not contain any markers of organisation of the lecture or sentence linking.
- A macro version, in which macro-markers were added to signal the relationships between the major propositions of the lecture. For example, markers such as "what I'm going to talk about today", "let's go back to the beginning", "this brought about new problems" were added.

- A micro-version, in which the micro-markers were added. Examples of these markers are *then, and, now, because, so, but, you see, of course, well, OK, all right?*.
- A micro-macro version, in which there was a combination of the macro and micro-markers.

These four versions were separately recorded by a male speaker in a professional studio at a slow rate of speech. Then, they were assigned at random to different classes in the respective groups. Chaudron and Richards met the students during their class time and they explained the procedure of their study.

In their results, Chaudron and Richards (1986) highlighted the positive effects of the macro lecture on the L2 students' comprehension, but they discovered no significant effects on the micro version. They (1986) agreed that the micro version and the micro-macro version of the lecture did not facilitate lecture comprehension, but they suggested that those two kinds of versions could distract from understanding propositions.

Nevertheless, several limitations and problems emerged from Chaudron and Richards' study (1986). First of all, they used a reading style lecture as material for their research. Nowadays, a reading style lecture is quite unusual and it is seldom used in an academic context. It is generally agreed that the most common style of academic lectures is the conversational-style. Therefore, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 441) suggested that a more appropriate research methodology should analyse the role of discourse markers in lectures, such us using conversational style lectures. Furthermore, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 442) noticed that the task given by Chaudron and Richards (1986) to their students was more difficult than listening to a lecture in real life.

It is important to underline that Chaudron and Richards (1986) did not deliver a normal lecture to their subjects. Not only because of the reading style, but also because they divided the lecture into units no longer than 60 or 90 seconds. The reason why they decided to conduct their study in this way was to allow their subjects to complete the cloze procedures to measure the comprehension of the lecture.

Another problem of this study is that Chaudron and Richards (1986) tried to minimize the effect of the micro-markers when they added in the baseline version. Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 442) affirmed that the baseline version was already comprehensible and coherent without the insertion of the micro-markers. Chaudron and Richards (1986: 117) stated that: "every attempt was made to keep any of these markers

from adding semantic information to the lecture. The relationships encoded by the markers were, typically, already evident in the content of the text". Consequently, Chaudron and Richards inserted the micro-markers without making the text more comprehensible or coherent. That is the reason why they declared that micro-markers did not aid the lecture comprehension of non-native English students.

In 1994, another study on the effects of discourse markers on students' comprehension during EMI lectures was conducted by Dunkel and Davis. Differently from Chaudron and Richards' study (1986), Dunkel and Davis (1994) analysed the effects of discourse markers, or as they named them "signaling cues", on the lecture comprehension of both native and non-native speakers of English. The subjects of the research were 26 ESL students and 29 English native speaker students who attended the Pennsylvania State University. They chose to divide the students in two groups. The first group consisted of 14 ESL students of different linguistic backgrounds such as Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and Urdu, and 14 English native speaker students. Dunkel and Davis (1994) assigned to this group the non-evident form of lecture, which was the one without signalling cues. The second group was composed of 12 ESL students, who were speakers of Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Greek and Urdu, and 15 English native speakers. They (1994) assigned to this group listened the evident form of lecture, the one containing rhetorical signalling clues. Each group of students listened an audiotaped lecture. Both lectures followed two commonly-used rhetorical structures: narration and comparison-and-contrast. To gather their data, Dunkel and Davis (1994) asked to write recall protocols, allowing the students to use the notes they took during the lecture. Analysing these protocols, Dunkel and Davis (1994: 65) discovered that: "the ESL listeners' comprehension was not improved by the addition of rhetorical signals and cues".

Nevertheless, Dunkel and Davis' research (1994) showed some limitations, advocating further investigations of the role of markers on the ESL lectures comprehension. As their lectures had a narration and a comparison-and-contrast structures, they affirmed (1994: 68): "the narrative and comparison-and-contrast structures may have been sufficiently salient to listeners, so that signaling devices were not necessary for their recognition".

Secondly, in the introduction of their study, Dunkel and Davis (1994) seemed to support Chaudron and Richards' study (1986), in which the role of micro-markers did not aid to the lecture comprehension of ESL students. However, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 441) demonstrated how Dunkel and Davis (1994) focused their study on the overall

effects of markers, both micro and macro-markers as one single group. They did not measure the effect of micro-markers separately from the one of macro-markers. Consequently, they reached the conclusion that micro-markers did not help ESL students to comprehend the lecture, because "this low frequency of insertion of micro-markers, of course, would be likely to diminish any potential effect they might have on comprehension" (Flowerdew and Tauroza, 1995: 441). Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the markers added by Dunkel and Davis did not correspond to the most common markers that typically occurred in conversational lectures. For example, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 441) demonstrated that Dunkel and Davis inserted micro-markers typical of the written language and no instances of micro-markers such as: *well, so, now, OK* or *right*, which are more typical of spoken language.

In this section, I have described the earlier studies on the effect of markers in the EMI lecture comprehension of English non-native speaker students. Over the years, other scholars investigated this field, showing how markers are important in the process of lecture comprehension, especially for ESL students. Therefore, in my following section, I will provide a general overview of the works that follow the early and limited ones of Chaudron and Richards (1986) and Dunkel and Davis (1994).

3.3 Later studies on the effect of markers on students' comprehension

In my previous section, I have described two studies, highlighting their limitations. These constraints were portrayed in Flowerdew and Tauroza's study in 1995. The aim of their study was to analyse the role of discourse markers in second language lecture comprehension. In particular, they wanted to determine whether the presence of discourse markers, especially micro-markers, helped English non-native speaker students to understand lectures. The subjects were 63 Cantonese electronic engineering students of the first year at the City University of Hong Kong. They divided the students into two groups: a control group, who viewed a video of a recording an extract of a naturally occurring lecture; and an experimental group, who viewed the same lecture, but without the naturally occurring micro-markers. They used three methods in order to verify whether the omission of micro-markers affected students' lecture comprehension: a self-assessment task, a

written summary test and a short answer test with true or false questions. After having analysed their data, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995: 449) stated:

"Subjects comprehend a lecture better when discourse markers are included than when they are deleted. With all three measures, the subjects who viewed the original version of the lecture scored higher than those who viewed the deleted version".

In other words, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) proved that micro-markers facilitated the foreign students' understanding of EMI lectures. However, further research should have been carried out to demonstrate whether the combination of micro and macro-markers aid the lecture comprehension of L2 students.

In 2003, Jung carried out a study in order to analyse the relationship between micro and macro-markers and the L2 listening comprehension of EMI lecture. Her research involved 16 Korean students enrolled in a major U.S. university. The subjects listened an audiotaped academic lecture named "Attitudes and Behavior". She divided the students in two groups. Half of them listened to the lecture with markers (the marker group) and the other half listened to the lecture without markers (the non-marker group). The marker lecture contained macro-markers and it also included micro-markers such as *ok, and, then, and so*. Jung (2003: 756) found out that the marker group performed better than the non-marker group. She supported the idea that listening a text with markers helped non-native speakers to understand the lecture in a more accurate way. The non-marker group "tended to misinterpret the main ideas and become confused about the relationship between key points in the lecture" (Jung, 2003: 756).

Therefore, it is possible to understand how the use of markers is important and useful for non-native English speakers. Another study that supports this thesis is the one of Medawattegedera in 2003. She (2003) conducted a research in order to understand whether ESL students understand better an academic lecture with the presence of micro-markers or with the presence of both micro and macro-markers. Medawattegedera (2003) carried out her work on 70 undergraduate students enrolled at the Open University of Sri Lanka, who were all Sinhalese native speakers. 40 of those subjects had a low-intermediate level of English proficiency, whereas 30 of them had a high level of English proficiency. Medawattegedera (2013: 80) decided that students with different level of English proficiency took part on the research, because she wanted to verify whether the effect that English proficiency had on the comprehension of ESL students in a lecture with micro-

markers and in a lecture with both micro and macro-markers. Therefore, she divided randomly those two groups of students into two subgroups. Two subgroups listened to the "micro version" of the lecture, where the micro-markers were added in appropriate places. The other two listened the "micro-macro version" of the lecture. Medawattegedera (2013: 95) demonstrated that the use of micro and macro-markers facilitate a better ESL students' comprehension than the use of only micro-markers. Furthermore, the use of micro and macro-markers in a lecture had a great impact on those students with a low level of English proficiency.

A fourth noteworthy study is the one carried out by Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh in 2007. Their research focused on the role of discourse markers on listening comprehension of Iranian students. The participants of their study were 72 Persian native-speaker students attended the Najafabad Azad University in Iran. The students were divided into two groups and each group listened two versions of three academic lectures. The baseline version included the presence of discourse markers, whereas the other one was without discourse markers. The results of this study supported the idea that discourse markers have a positive influence on the EMI lecture comprehension of Iranian students. Analysing their data, Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007: 33) emphasised that students who listened the baseline version scored higher results in their comprehension tests than those who listened the version without discourse markers.

Another study involved Iranian EFL students as participants. It is the study of Kuhi, Asadollahfam and Anbarian in 2014 that focused on the effects of metadiscourse on the lecture comprehension by 22 Iranian EFL students enrolled in Marefat Language School in Maragheh. As for metadiscourse, they (2014: 1027) referred to Vande Kopple's (1985: 83) definition: "discourse that people use not to expand referential material, but to help the readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and develop attitudes towards that material". It is that level of discourse that help the listener to understand the ongoing discourse, in other words it has the function of macro-markers. The subjects were split into two groups: one group listened lectures with metadiscourse markers, whereas the other one listened the lectures without the use of metadiscourse markers. In their results, Kuhi, Asadollahfam and Anbarian (2014: 1033) affirmed: "metadiscourse markers have a positive influence on comprehension and the lack of those markers is the cause of incomprehensibility".

The final study that I would like to describe is that carried out by Jung in 2006. She analysed the role of contextualization markers in Korean students' understanding of both main and supporting ideas in an academic monologue. These contextualization markers are

the same category of macro-markers (Chaudron and Richards, 1986). 80 Korean students of a Korean university took part in the research and they were divided into two groups: the first one listened the original version, which included the markers, whereas the second group listened the experimental version, in which markers were excluded. According to her results, contextualization markers played a beneficial role in the L2 listening comprehension. Furthermore, Jung (2006: 1940) claimed that "when these contextualization markers are missing, listeners experience difficulty understanding the message, and communication problems ensue".

In this section, I have highlighted all the beneficial effects that markers played on the EMI lecture comprehension of English non-native speaker students. After having described all these positive results, I wanted to portray a classification of the macro-markers that characterise a lecture. I will highlight the functions of the markers, providing also some examples. This categorisation is useful for my analysis of the lecturers' use of macro-markers at the University of Padua, that I will illustrate in my fourth chapter.

3.4 Classification of macro-markers

In 1992, Nattinger and DeCarrico provided one of the first classifications of macro-markers. Firstly, they (1992: 144) preferred to use the term *macro-organizer* rather than *macro-marker* because they wanted to: "stress the angle of the listener's perception of lecture organization, and to stress the importance of these cues in helping students mentally organize the lecture as it goes along". Furthermore, Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992: 132) emphasized that macro-organizers are important directional signals since they signal the organization of the information in the lecture and how to evaluate that information.

Therefore, they (1992: 95) decided to distinguished the macro-organizers into two groups: the *global* markers and the *local* markers. The global markers or co-ordination markers are those that highlight the introduction of a topic, the shift to a new argument and the summary of the topic. Here, I will provide some examples of these global markers that occur during academic lecture.

- Topic markers: markers that introduce the topic, for example *what I wanted to talk about/tell you about was; the first thing is; let me start with; let us*

begin with; today we are going to hear, etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrigo, 1992: 145).

- Topic shifters: markers that show a shift to a new topic, for instance *Ok, now* (falling the intonation); *that bring us; let me go to; the next point is; so let's turn to,* etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrigo, 1992: 145).

- Summarizers: markers that introduce a summary of the topic, for example *OK so; what I am trying to say is; in short; to sum up; in summary/conclusion,* etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrigo, 1992: 145).

The second type of macro-markers are the local markers or subordinate markers. The local markers mark sequencing or importance of high-level information, "but they do so at specific points within the overall framework set by the global macro-organizers" (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 95). The local macro-organizers include markers of exemplification, relations between topics or sub-topics, evaluative comments, qualification of previous materials and aside. Here, I will illustrate some examples of local markers that can be found in academic lectures.

- Exemplifiers: markers which help to provide example of the topic, such as *for example/instance; to give you an example; something like that; here's one,* etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 146).

- Relators: markers that signal sequencing, restatement of important points and comparison or contrast of ideas, for example *not only X, but also Y; however; same way here; but look at X; the other X is Y,* etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 95).

- Evaluators: markers which signal the relative importance of topics, examples and other points, for instance *I think/I don't think that; as far as I know; there's no doubt that; I'm positive/certain/sure,* etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 96).

- Qualifiers: markers that qualify the previous material, such as *it/that/you sort of; the catch is; that's true but X; at least in X,* etc. (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 96).

- Asides: markers that signal which information are not important, for example *where I was?; I guess I got off the track here; I guess that's beside the point; well don't worry about X right now, e*tc. (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 96).

A more recent classification of macro-markers was provided by Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha in 2010. Based on Young's research (1994) on the phasal model of the lecture structure, that I have already explained in my second chapter, Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010: 220) introduced a more refined level of analysis.

First of all, Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010: 218) presented a revision of the original phasal categories proposed by Young (1994). Young (1994: 166) identified for metadiscoursal phases the Discourse Structuring phase, the Conclusion phase and the Evaluation phase; whereas the non-metadiscoursal phases were the Interaction phase, the Theory or Content phase and the Example phase. Nevertheless, Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010: 218) decided to invert the Interaction phase with the Evaluation phase. Furthermore, they (2010: 218) chose to adopt the term Discoursal place rather than Young's Non-metadiscoursal phase. The main reason of those changes was Young's definition (1994: 166) of metadiscoursal phase, which were "strands which comment on the discourse itself". Consequently, it did not seem to consider the interpersonal markers, which were established to be part of the metadiscourse. In Hyland's point of view (2005: 37), metadiscourse represented:

> "the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assist the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers [or listeners] as members of a particular community".

Therefore, Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010) decided that the Interaction phase fitted better in the metadiscoursal phase, because it fulfilled an interpersonal function.

The other difference with Young's model (1994) is the position of the Evaluation phase. Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010: 219) noticed that the evaluative devices

tend to comment on the importance of the propositional materials that they accompany. So, they (2010) decided to insert this phase in the discoursal level. In Table 1, I will illustrate Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha's classification of metadiscourse devices for each metadiscourse phase.

Table 1. Phase analysis and its relation to metadiscourse categories and functions (Dafouz Milne & Núñez Perucha,2010: 220)

Phases	Metadiscourse Category	Function of metadiscursive devices	Examples
Discourse Structuring Phase	Openers	Signal the formal beginning of a class	Today, we are going to talk…
	Sequencers	Mark particular positions within a series	First, then, next…
	Topicalisers	Indicate introduction of new topics/topic shifts	Another concept; what are F1 cars made of?
	Prospective markers	Refer forwards to future topics/sections in the lecture/other lectures	We will see later…
	Retrospective markers	Refer backwards to previous topics/sections in the lecture/other lectures	As I mentioned before…
Interaction Phase	Questions	Requesting student participation/checking comprehension	Who can answer this?
	Commentaries (help to establish speaker/listener rapport)	Direct address to the audience/Inclusive expressions	Remember; you know well…We all know; it is our decision …
	Apologetic comments	Apologise for some lack/deficiency	I have to apologise for; sorry…

		Contextual comments	Comment on situational features or aspects outside the actual content of the lesson	We are going to be recorded today; Is it too hot [in the classroom]?
Conclusion phase		Closing markers	Indicate the formal closing of the lecture	I will finish here
		Recapitulation markers	Summarise the main ideas in the lecture	Today we saw…
		Prospective markers	Refer forwards to future topics to be dealt with in other lectures (placed towards the end of the lecture)	Tomorrow we will cover…
		Retrospective markers	Refer backwards to the previous topics/sections of the lecture (placed towards the end of the lecture)	What we learned today was…

Chapter four

Analysis of signposting language at the University of Padua

In this chapter, I will portray the analysis and the results of my study. First of all, I will provide a brief overview of the tools of the analysis, describing a corpus linguistics and the concordance program *AntConc*. Secondly, I will describe in details the features of the EMI lectures attended at the University of Padua, showing the transcription and mark-up convention I used in order to transcribe the lectures. Thirdly, I will illustrate all the signposts I have found in the lectures, subdividing them according to their function. Finally, I will discuss the results of the study.

4.1 Tools of analysis

In this section, I will describe the tools of the analysis. First of all, I will explain what corpus linguistics is, showing the different kinds of corpora. Secondly, I will provide a brief description of the concordance program *AntConc*, the program that I used for the analysis.

4.1.1 The corpus

McEnery and Wilson (1996: 1) define corpus linguistics as the study of a language based on examples of real life language use. Firstly, a corpus is the collection of texts, which are stored in an electronic database so the data can be accessed easily with a computer. In other words, a corpus linguistics is a systematic and computerised collection of authentic language used for linguistic analysis. As the texts are electronically stored, researchers can investigate linguistic patterns and analyse the frequency of the phenomena they investigate. Based on this definition, corpus linguistics is a method to gain and analyse data in a quantitative and qualitative way rather than a theory of a language.

Corpus based analysis has started to develop since the nineteenth century, therefore several corpora have been created over the years. According to Baker (2006: 26) there are three main kinds of corpora:

- *Specialised corpora:* aim to represent the features of varieties or genres of the language, for instance the MICASE corpus (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English), which is the collection of transcripts of academic speech events recorded at the University of Michigan.

- *Reference corpora:* are large collections of texts that show the status of a language at a given time (Baker, 2006: 30). They can contain different types of texts, by speakers of different ages and different social classes. A clear example of this kind of corpora is the British National Corpus, which is the collection of sample of written and spoken British English from a wide range of sources. The written part, for example, consists in extract of newspapers, journals, academic books and so on. The spoken part includes transcriptions of informal conversations and other examples of spoken language collected in different contexts.

- *Diachronic corpora:* can be the representative of a language or language variety over a period of time, allowing researchers to track the linguistic changes (Baker, 2006: 30). An example of diachronic corpus is ARCHER: A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers, a multi-genre corpus of American and British English covering the period from 1600-1999.

In my analysis, I created a specialised corpus, because it is the collection of ten transcriptions of academic lectures delivered at the University of Padua. Indeed, the focus of my study is to highlight signposting language used by lecturers at the University of Padua, subdividing it in several categories, showing which category of signposting language is the mainly used.

The creation of a corpus is an essential part of my study and in order to analyse it, I use a concordance program *AntConc.* In the following section, I will provide a brief description of this tool.

4.1.2 AntConc

An important tool of my analysis is the concordance program AntConc[4]. It was developed by Dr. Laurence Anthony, professor in the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Waseda University in Japan. *AntConc* is a freeware corpus analysis toolkit for concordancing and text analysis. It shows the words or word strings in order to analyse them in their textual context. In other words, this program is able to generate concordance lines. Baker (2006: 71) describes a concordance as: "a list of all the occurrences of a particular search term in a corpus, presented within the context that they occur in".

The aim of creating concordance is to identify patterns of language use. In my analysis, I tagged all the signposts I found in my lectures. Thanks to this program, it was easier to analyse all the different kind of signposts throughout all my lectures. After uploading my corpus on this program, I wrote in the search box the tag that I used to identify a category of signposts and then the program provided me all the concordance lines of that specific tag.

After having explained the tools of my analysis, I will illustrate my study in detail, describing the features of my lectures and the transcription conventions used.

4.2 The data of the analysis

4.2.1 The lectures

In this section, I will portray the characteristics of the lectures I attended. First of all, I contacted via e-mail 13 lecturers explaining the aim of my study and asking for permission to observe and record their lecture. After positive answers from seven professors, I attended five of their lectures in two different schools at the University of Padua.

The first School is the School of Human and Social Sciences and Cultural Heritage, where I attended two lectures: the History of Illuminated Manuscript, a module in the second cycle degree course in History of Art; the second class was Moral Philosophy, a module in the second cycle degree course in Philosophical Science. The other three classes were in the School of Economics and Political Science. The first was Economics of Human

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[4] http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/

Capital and the second was Religions and Human Rights, both modules in the second cycle degree programme Human-Rights and Multi-Level Governance. The last lecture was "Republic" and "Empire" in the American Political Thinking, which is a module in the second cycle degree course in International Politics and Diplomacy. All the lecturers were Italian native speakers.

In order to have a larger corpus, I used five other lectures delivered at the University of Padua, recorded and transcribed by Michela Meneghetti for her master thesis. Meneghetti (2016: 62) attended five lectures at different Schools of the University. Under the School of Economics and Political Science, she attended two Family Business classes, a second cycle degree course in Business Administration. Secondly, under the School of Engineering she attended a Water Supply Treatment lecture, a second cycle degree course in Environmental Engineering. Finally, under the School of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine she attended two lectures: a Forest Ecosystem and Global Changes class and a Forest Pathology and Wood Alterations lecture, both modules on the second cycle degree programme in Forest Science. In her work, not all the lecturers were Italian native speakers. In particular, the professor of Forest Pathology and Wood Alteration was a Spanish native speaker (lecturer 9 as shown in table 1) and the lecturer of Water Supply Treatment was an English native speaker (lecturer 10 as shown in table 1).

In table 1, I provide a general overview of the corpus of the analysis, highlighting for each lecture the recording time and the number of words. I will also include Meneghetti's lectures (2016: 65).

Table 1. The Corpus

Lecturer	Topic	Recording Time	Number of Words
Lecturer 1	History of Illuminated Manuscript	1:02:36 h.	8049
Lecturer 2	Moral Philosophy	1:27:06 h.	8312
Lecturer 3	Economics of Human Capital	1:13:43 h.	7700
Lecturer 4	Religions and Human Rights	1:21:47 h.	7495
Lecturer 5	"Republic" and "Empire" in the American Political Thinking	1:10:14 h.	5547

Lecturer 6	Family Business 1	1:29:24 h.	10158
Lecturer 7	Family Business 2	1:42:16 h.	5052
Lecturer 8	Forest Ecosystem and Global Changes	1:54:58 h.	13399
Lecturer 9	Forest Pathology and Wood Alteration	1:58:57 h.	5352
Lecturer 10	Water Supply Treatment	1:33:16 h.	8062
Total		**14:54:17 h.**	**79126**

The corpus consists of 14:54:17 hours of lectures recorded at the University of Padua with a total number of 79126 words (Table 1).

As mentioned above, all the lectures were recorded and transcribed manually. I used Meneghetti's (2016: 63-65) transcription and mark-up conventions as a starting point and adopted them for the present analysis. For instance, I highlighted all the signposts, as can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Transcription and mark-up conventions

Lecturer(s).	\<S1\> \<S2\>
Students.	\<SU\> all the students \<SU-f\> female student \<SU-m\> male student
Ellipses indicate a pause of 2-3 seconds.	…
Pause lasts 4 seconds or more.	\<P: 04\> \<P: 10\>
Used when the lecturer changed the intonation.	,
Used when the lecturer concluded a sentence.	.
Used when a part was read by the lecturer or a student.	\<READING\> xxx \</READING\>

Used when a word is in Italian or in other languages than English.	*Italics*
Used when the lecturer and a student's speech overlapped, or when students' speech overlapped.	</OVERLAP>
Used when one or more words were not comprehensible.	(xx)
Used to mark the laughter.	<LAUGH> xxx </LAUGH> </LAUGH> </STUDENTS LAUGH>
Several contextual events have been marked when they affected the comprehension.	</NOISES> </OUTSIDE NOISES> </NOISES OF STUDENTS> <STUDENTS TALK AMONG THEMSELVES> </TALKING TO A STUDENT> </WRITING ON THE BOARD> </STUDENT ENTERS> </COUGH> </STUDENT COUGHT> </DRINKING> </SNEEZED>
Types of signposts.	<SP-OPENER> xxx </SP-OPENER> <SP-INTRODUCING TOPIC> xxx </SP-INTRODUCING TOPIC> <SP-RETROSPECTIVE MARKER> xxx </SP-RETROSPECTIVE MARKER> <SP-CLARIFYING> xxx </SP-CLARIFYING> <SP-SEQUENCER> xxx </SP-SEQUENCER> <SP-GIVING EXAMPLE> xxx </SP-GIVING EXAMPLE> <SP-SHOWING IMPORTANCE> xxx </SP-SHOWING MPORTANCE> <SP-ANALYSING A POINT> xxx </SP-ANALYSING A POINT> <SP-TOPICALISER> xxx </SP-TOPICALISER> <SP-CONCLUDING A TOPIC> xxx </SP-CONCLUDING A TOPIC> <SP-PROSPECTIVE MARKER> xxx </SP-PROSPECTIVE MARKER> <SP-CLOSING MARKER> xxx </SP-CLOSING MARKER>

4.3 Results of the study

In this section, I will illustrate the results of the study, classifying them according to the different functions of each signpost. The results are presented in tables.

4.3.1 Openers

In this section, I have highlighted the openers, which have the function of indicating the formal beginning of the lecture. Table 3 shows all the openers found in the corpus.

Table 3. Openers

Lecturer	Number of openers	Examples
Lecturer 1	1	• Ok, so ehm… yesterday we talked about...
Lecturer 2	1	• I would like to begin today.
Lecturer 3	1	• Hello everybody! How you doing? So today we have our lab session
Lecturer 4	1	• Good afternoon! Welcome!
Lecturer 5	1	• Ok, eh eh, let's start.
Lecturer 6	2	• Welcome to our business family course! • The day before vacation before Easter so thank you to be here and to having come to class.
Lecturer 7	1	• How are you after the holidays?
Lecturer 8	2	• Have you try to download the papers? • So let's start.
Lecturer 9	1	• Good morning to everybody good morning so today we have four hours of theory.

Lecturer 10	1	• Hey good morning! I want to talk a little about the design
Total	12	

Looking at table 3, it is interesting to observe how lecturers started their classes in a different way. Lecturer 3, lecturer 4, lecturer 9 and lecturer 10 started their lecture by greeting their students. On the other hand, lecturer 1, lecturer 2, lecturer 5 and lecturer 8 started the class going straight to the topic of the lecture or what they wanted to talk about.

As explained above, the function of the opener is to show the formal beginning of the lecture. This kind of signpost is basically used by most of the lecturers in order to have the attention of the students and begin their class. Therefore, the clear majority of the professors tried to make direct contact with their students. Indeed, 4 out of 10 professors started their speech with a greeting, such as "good morning" as lecturer 9 and lecturer 10 did; "hello everybody" as lecturer 3 did and "good afternoon" as lecturer 4 did. In particular, lecturer 4 and lecturer 6 said "welcome" to their students, which is another interesting way to create a contact with them and to start the class. Furthermore, lecturer 6 tried to make a joke, saying thank you to her students who came to the lecture the day before the Easter holiday. It is another interesting way to capture students' attention, creating a relaxed atmosphere in order to signal the formal begin of the class. Finally, lecturer 1 started her class with "ok so", in order to gather her ideas and then she introduced a retrospective marker, another kind of signpost that I will explain later on this chapter. However, table 3 presents no instances of openers in lecturer 5 and lecturer 8's rows. In the first case, the professor started directly the class with "Ok, let's start". In the second case, lecturer 8 asked the students a question about whether they had tried to download the papers.

To sum up, there are 12 openers in the lectures analysed, used in a variety of ways. It is important to highlight that the vast majority of professors tried to establish a contact with their students through this kind of signpost.

4.3.2 Introductive Markers

In this section, I will analyse the introductive marker, which is the marker used by the lecturer to introduce the topic of the lecture. Through this marker, the lecturer gives some ideas about the structure of the lecture. Therefore, it is mainly used at the beginning of the lecture, after the opener. Table 4 shows the introductive markers found in the corpus.

Table 4. Introductive Markers

Lecturer	Number of introductive markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	5	- Today, we will face eh well the colour. - Today and tomorrow we will address these different points. - So we will shortly speak about changing in reading practices. - So ok now let's start from changing in reading practises. - I want to ehm to start from...
Lecturer 2	2	- So this chapter speaks up an issue. - Well basically we are ... discussing…
Lecturer 3	3	- We are going to talk about the relationship between education and happiness. - I'm going to introduce the dataset right now. - So in this way the idea is to start thinking about…
Lecturer 4	2	- What we are trying to do is talking about the premises of this relationship. - So I would tell you today something about these three points.
Lecturer 5	1	Today we have to go deep into eh this political figure.
Lecturer 6	2	- Today we are going a little bit in details... - So the basic idea for today is…
Lecturer 7	1	This class is divided into two sessions…

Lecturer 8	2	• Today we will have a special focus on… (x2)
Lecturer 9	1	• We will start at fifteen past nine talking about how a disease…
Lecturer 10	4	• The first thing I want to talk a little bit is • So we are gonna talk about… • I will also talk a little bit about… (x2)
Total	23	

As shown in table 4, this corpus presents 23 examples of introductive markers[5]. It is important to underline how lecturers help students explaining what they will discuss during the class, because they state clearly the topic of the lecture. In this corpus, the vast majority of lecturers used the verb "to talk", which appeared 7 times mainly in the future tense. However, some professors used synonyms of the verb "to talk", such as "to speak", "to discuss", "to introduce" or "to start". A particular example is the one of lecturer 7 for the reason that the professor explained how the lecture was divided, highlighting the two parts with two sequencers, another kind of signpost that I will analyse in another paragraph of this chapter. As mentioned above, the future tense is the most used tense in this corpus, because there are 11 out of 23 examples of future tense, with 8 out of 11 marked by the modal verb "to will"; and 2 out of 11 introductive markers were marked by the semi-modal "be going to", which were both used by lecturer 3. It is interesting to notice lecturer 10's example, because he used the American form of "be going to" that is to say "so we are gonna talk about". Finally, lecturer 1 used once the imperative form "let's start from" in order to introduce the topic.

As for the use of personal pronouns: 12 out of 23 introductive markers are highlighted by the first person plural pronoun "we" and only 5 out of 23 are marked by the first person singular pronoun "I". In general, those professors who used the personal pronoun "we" tended to use it in all their introductive markers, even though lecturer 1, lecturer 4 and lecturer 10 used both personal pronouns. Finally, there are four examples of introductive markers, in which lecturers did not use a personal pronoun, but a noun. For instance, lecturer 2 said "this chapter speaks up…", lecturer 3 and lecturer 6 used the

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[5] All the repeated signposts of this corpus are marked with the exact number into brackets.

abstract noun "idea" saying "they idea is to…" and "so the basic idea for today is…" and lecturer 7 said "this class is divided…". Therefore, it would appear that in general introductive markers are composed of a personal pronoun and a future tense verb. Indeed, 10 out of 23 introductive markers started directly with the personal pronoun. The last peculiarity of the introductive markers is that they were introduced 7 times by "so" and 6 times by "today".

In conclusion, it is possible to find examples of introductive markers in all the lectures analysed. It is possible to affirm that professors tended to use the first person plural pronoun with the modal verb "will", never in the contracted form.

4.3.3 Retrospective markers

In this section, I will highlight the function of the retrospective marker and its examples. The retrospective marker allows the lecturer to make some references to previous topics that he or she has mentioned earlier in the lecture or during previous lectures. Table 5 illustrates all the retrospective markers used in this corpus.

Table 5. Retrospective markers

Lecturer	Number of retrospective markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	10	- As I was telling you before… - Ok and talking about what I have said yesterday… …as I was saying… …as I told you… (x4) - As I told you yesterday… - So as I was saying and I've already said… - As I have already said…
Lecturer 2	4	- We have started, barely started I would say discussing chapter four… - We have seen in the notion of reminder in previous chapters… …a lot of what we have already seen... - If you remember when we talked about paternalism…

Lecturer 3	1	• As promised to you…
Lecturer 4	10	• I have told you already that… • We've already told about, discussed about the issue… • I've already told you that… • We have already mentioned that… • I've told you that… • …we discussed about this… • … I told you that… • …do you remember that? (x3)
Lecturer 5	4	• So yesterday, we discussed… • I told you that… • As you may know… • …as you know…
Lecturer 6	8	• So professor Gubitta already had a class about this… • So you have already talked about that… • …last time professor Gubitta talked about… • …we talked about shareholders meeting, right? • …as I said… • …as we said… • Do you remember…? (x2)
Lecturer 7	6	• Do you remember…? (x5) • As I told you…
Lecturer 8	9	• I have probably already shown… • So… we were discussing about… • … as I told you… • …if you remember we have mentioned… • …if you remember… • Before we were speaking about something… • This is a very first thing I have told you • …as I told you before… • …as I have told you before…
Lecturer 9	3	• …we have talked about… (x2) • …that we have used yesterday...
Lecturer 10	5	• …I think I have told you before… • So we have talked about… • …we have talked about…
Total	60	

Sixty retrospective markers have been found in the corpus (table 5). As can be seen from this table, all the lecturers refer to some topics that they discussed in previous lectures or previously during the same lecture. Some lecturers (1, 5 and 9) make clear references to the lecture of the day before saying "yesterday". In fact, there are 4 retrospective markers with the adverb "yesterday". Another way to refer to a previous class is provided by lecturer 6, who said the words "last time". To sum up, 5 out of 60 retrospective markers make clear reference to a previous class. On the other hand, some professors (lecturer 1, lecturer 8 and lecturer 10) referred to something said previously during the class through the adverb "before", even though there are just 5 out of 60 examples. In conclusion, only 10 out of 60 instances of retrospective markers make a clear reference to a specific time in which that information has been given. Consequently, most of the professors does not specify the time they gave that information to the students. They mainly used the past forms, both past simple and present perfect, in order to demonstrate that they have already discussed those topics.

As for the aspect of verbs, professors used the present perfect more often than the past simple, as the present perfect was used 22 times and the past simple 19. Furthermore, in 9 out of 22 examples of retrospective markers with the present perfect, professors added the adverb "already" to highlight that they have already explained that topic. However, lecturers also used the present simple to remind their students of information previously dealt with. As can be seen from table 5, lecturer 4 explained a topic that he had already discussed and then he asked three times whether the students remember it saying "…do you remember that?". Lecturer 6 asked her students "Do you remember…?" twice, whereas lecturer 7 asked the same question 5 times. Consequently, another way to use retrospective markers appears to be through questions, checking whether the students remember or not the topic. It is interesting to notice that lecturer 2 and lecturer 8 used the present simple not to ask a question, but to say "if you remember…", a pattern that occurs three times in this corpus.

Focusing on verbs, the verb "to tell" is the most used verb, as it occurred 18 times. The second most used verb is "to talk" (11 times). Then, professors used some synonyms of these two verbs such as the verb "to say", which occurred 7 times, but it is mainly used by lecturer 1 and the verb "to discuss", which was used 5 times. Finally, the verb "to remember" has been used 13 times in the corpus as retrospective markers in order to verify whether the students remember or not what they were explaining.

Analysing the personal pronouns, the first person singular pronoun "I" is the most used, as it occurred 23 times, whereas the first person plural pronoun "we" appeared 20 times. Nevertheless, there is a great use of the personal pronoun "you" in the corpus (16 examples).

Finally, 16 out of 60 retrospective markers are introduced by the conjunction "as" in order to make some references to previous topics, for example "as I told you" or "as I said".

4.3.4 Prospective markers

In this section, I will analyse prospective markers, which are the opposite of retrospective markers, that is they refer to some future topics of the lecture or of the next classes. Table 6 presents the prospective markers found in this corpus.

Table 6. Prospective markers

Lecturer	Number of prospective markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	9	- We will face [..] tomorrow and maybe in the following week which is… - Divine Comedy that we will see in this lecture and also tomorrow… … we will particularly see… - Tomorrow I will bring you… … tomorrow I will show you… (x2) …and we will consider… …tomorrow I will begin with… …and we will also see why this happens…
Lecturer 2	3	…we will get back to the passages from… - We are going to go on discussing this chapter next week - Next week we are going to keep discussing this chapter…

Lecturer 3	3	• As you will see in a while… • We are going to look for income later… • We are going to look later at all this kind of variables…
Lecturer 4	2	• But then finally today we will reach this last point. • I will say something about the other dimensions next time.
Lecturer 5	4	• …we will see that in a moment. • And we will get into it in a minute… • But this is a matter for the next week. • Well done let's have it next week…
Lecturer 6	3	• …top management teams but this would be the topic for next classes. • …we will do it in the next classes… • …we will talk about top management team in the next class.
Lecturer 7	1	• …later we will explain better these roles…
Lecturer 8	8	• …we will see later on… (x2) • …we will enter in detail and we will see… • I will say you something later on… • …you will see the way in which we will arrive at… • I will show you something, an example the next lecture… • …you will see that… • …we will discuss later on…
Lecturer 9	3	• We will talk about (xx) during this forty-five minutes… • …tomorrow Wednesday we have half of you that will present… • I will show you tomorrow…
Lecturer 10	7	• …so we will talk in detail about that later… • …we will come back again in this course… • …we will come back to see… • …I will come along tomorrow… • …I will come back to the slide… • I will talk about it during the next class. • … I will get on this…
Total	43	

Table 6 presents 43 prospective makers. Analysing these data, the clear majority of the professors used the prospective markers in order to emphasise that they will discuss a certain topic in the next class, in the following day or in the following week. In fact, there are 32 examples of prospective markers where professors highlighted when they intend to provide that information. Focusing on a future lecture, lecturers have used the adverb "tomorrow" 8 times in the corpus and the cluster "next + noun" 10 times. Professors used several nouns, such as "class" used by lecturer 6 three times and by lecturer 10 once; or lecturer 8 said "lecture" once and lecturer 4 said "time" once. However, 14 examples of prospective markers through which professors emphasise something that they will discuss during the current lecture. As shown in table 6, the most common adverb is "later" (8 out of 14 occurrences). Then, professors used other similar words to indicate their intention to explain the topic in that lecture, for example lecturer 1 said "in this lecture"; lecturer 3 said "in a while"; lecturer 4 said "today"; lecturer 5 used two similar clusters saying "in a moment" and "in a minute" and lecturer 9 expressed the lecture's duration saying "during this forty-five minutes". In conclusion, there are 32 out of 43 example of prospective markers in which lecturers stressed the time when they are going to discuss that information.

Looking the verbs used by lecturers, it is difficult to say which is the main used with the prospective markers, for the reason that each lecturer used one according to his or her way of speaking. For example, the verb "to see" was repeated by lecturer 1 in 3 out of her 9 prospective markers and the verb "to show" two times, whereas lecturer 2 preferred to use the verb "to discuss" (2 out of her 3 prospective markers). Similarly, lecturer 3 used the verb "to look" twice in his three prospective markers and the other time he used the synonym "to see". Another example can be lecturer 8, who decided to use the verb "to see" 5 times out of his 8 prospective markers. It is interesting to notice lecturer 10's prospective markers, because he is the only one who used the verb "come back".

Even though it is difficult to show which the most frequently verb is in the prospective markers, it is possible to define the aspect of verbs. All the prospective markers are made up with the future verb form. In other words, there is always the personal pronoun and the will-form, which appears 37 out of 43 times. It is remarkable to observe that the contracted form of the modal verb "will", which is more common in the spoken English, never occurs. Then, only lecturer 2 and lecturer 3 used the other future construction with "be going to" (4 out of 43 examples). Two examples that do not have this construction, but there is the use of the "to be" following by a noun. The two instances are "but this is a

matter for next week" said by lecturer 6 and "but this would be the topic for next classes" said by lecturer 5.

Finally, table 6 shows that the most common personal pronoun is the first person plural pronoun "we" which occurred 27 out of 43 times in the corpus. Then, professors tended to use less frequently the first person singular pronoun "I" (11 times). Only lecturer 3 and lecturer 8 used the second person plural pronoun "you" respectively once and twice.

4.3.5 Topicalisers

In this section, I will analyse the function of the topicalisers, which shows the shift of subject during a lecture. In table 7 are present all the topicalisers found in the corpus.

Table 7. Topicalisers

Lecturer	Number of topicalisers	Examples
Lecturer 1	6	• So now let's move if everything is clear with the first point let's move to the second point. • …now we will face this great topic of… • Ok let's start with… • So let's see what these characteristics are. • So…Let's now exanimate all… • Ok, so let's consider…
Lecturer 2	4	• The points I would like to discuss a bit with you… • So I wouldn't like you to approach the second part… • Let's start from art. • Well let's try to look a bit the structure…
Lecturer 3	9	• Let's start to see… • So we are going to talk about… • So let's start to talk about… • So we can start to try to see… • Let's start with… • So let's start to… • I would start to investigate this kind of variables… • …now we're talking about… • Now let's try to…

Lecturer 4	3	• But now let's go to the first important point. • Okay, let's go with Catholicism and the State. • Let's try to read a kind of definition of religion.
Lecturer 5	0	-
Lecturer 6	3	• So now I challenge with another question. • Now the big challenge of this is… • So now let's see what...
Lecturer 7	0	-
Lecturer 8	7	• …now we have a special focus on… • …so let's start to enter a little bit to see… • …So let's start here… • …now we will see a picture of… • …So let's start with… • Let's consider… • …now we are speaking…
Lecturer 9	6	• Let's go to more complicated things. • …now we are talking about… • …this is a unit that focus on… • …so we will start the units… • …so I will explain you a project. • We go to the last point.
Lecturer 10	10	• Okay in this case I will move on… • Now in the next slide I will show you… • …Then we move to… • Now we will talk about… • …I want to talk a little bit… • …then we go to this slide… • So let's talk about… • …I will talk a little bit about… • Okay we will talk now a little bit about • …So I have another graph for you…
Total	48	

According to the data in table 7 there are 48 topicalisers in the corpus. Looking at table 7, lecturers used the topicalisers in the imperative form (23 out of 48 occurrences). They frequently used a special type of imperative form with the verb "let" used with the first person plural pronoun. Analysing this type of topicalisers with the imperative form, "let's start" is the most common, as there are 9 occurrences. The second most used are "let's try" (said by lecturer 2, lecturer 3 and lecturer 4) and "let's go" (said by lecturer 4 and lecturer

6) which both appear 3 times. Then, lecturer 1 used the imperative "let's move" twice and this verb was also used by lecturer 10, but with the future construction of the modal "will" and with the present simple. Furthermore, the verb "to go" also appeared twice in the present simple, as lecturer 9 and lecturer 10 used it. It is interesting to notice that this type of imperative is preceded by "so" which occurred 11 times before the imperatives and 18 times before each topicalisers. In these cases, it is used by lecturers to gather their ideas in order to change the topic. Furthermore, the adverb "now" is frequently used by lecturers as it occurred 16 times in all the topicalisers of this corpus and it is used by professors to indicate that they are going to change the topic in that exact moment. So, they are advising the students of this shift of subjects. In conclusion, the imperative form with the verb "let" is the most common form with topicalisers. Nevertheless, lecturers also used topicalisers with the "will" construction. Lecturer 10 used the modal verb "will" 5 out of 10 times and the other 4 occurrences of this construction were used by lecturer 9 "so we will start" and "...so I will explain you a project"; by lecturer 8 "now we will see a picture"; by lecturer 1 "now we will face this great topic".

Focusing on verbs, the most common used with topicalisers is "to start" which occurred 12 times. In the second place, there is the verb "to talk" which appeared 9 times. The verb "to talk" is followed by the preposition "about" 6 out of 9 times. The other three times is followed by "a little bit", but all the three examples are said by lecturer 10, so it can be a feature in the way of speaking of this professor. Moreover, lecturer 3 and lecturer 9 as well as lecturer 8 said "now we're talking about" or "now we're speaking about" in order to show the shift of the topic. At first, these two kinds of signposts could be interpreted as clarifying markers, a type of signposting language that I will explain later in this chapter. However, I have decided to classify them as topicalisers, because in those cases the professors changed the topic. In this way, they let the students know that they move to another subject, explaining what they were talking about. Moreover, to support my idea, I have seen that lecturer 10, who is an English native speaker, used the signposts "I want to talk a little bit" or "now we will talk about" in order to change the topic of the lecture. This is why I decided to classify them as topicalisers.

Looking at the use of personal pronouns, the most common is the first person plural pronoun "we" which occurred 14 times. However, it is remarkable to underline that all the topicalisers with the imperative form used the first person plural pronoun "us" contracted to "'s". This means that 37 out of 48 topicalisers have the first person plural pronoun. Then, 10 out of 48 topicalisers are with the first person singular pronoun "I", which is used by

lecturer 2 twice; by lecturer 3 once; by lecturer 6 once; by lecturer 9 once and by lecturer 10 five times.

Finally, lecturer 5 and lecturer 7 did not use any topicalisers during their classes. They shifted the topic of their lecture without advising their students that they were changing the subject.

4.3.6 Clarifying Markers

In the previous section, I have mentioned the clarifying marker, which has the function to clarify and explain a point that the lecturer expresses. Using the clarifying marker, the professor can explain in a better way what he or she has just illustrated. Table 8 presents the clarifying markers found.

Table 8. Clarifying markers

Lecturer	Number of clarifying markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	1	• This to say here the text is speaking about…
Lecturer 2	7	• …and this is why… (x4) • Well basically she states that… • So this is why… • Actually what she means is…
Lecturer 3	3	• So obviously, we are going to… • Because in this way is going to… • So the reason why…
Lecturer 4	4	• That's why from… • Anyway, generally speaking… • I'm trying to say that… • By social phenomenon we mean that…
Lecturer 5	2	• The German peoples included so clearly we are talking about conquering Germany. • And for this reason…

Lecturer 6	5	• Well a board means that… • …so generally… • …so that is why… (x2) • …but let me just tell you what I want to come up with…
Lecturer 7	1	• …for this reason…
Lecturer 8	4	• …let's say just to give you an idea… • …let's say generally speaking… • …this is why… • …just to let you know that…
Lecturer 9	1	• …this is clear for…
Lecturer 10	4	• …I just want to say that… • …this is the reason why… • …so the reason they do it… • …so just to clarify…
Total	32	

In this corpus 32 clarifying markers were found (table 8). Looking at this table, it is possible to claim that there is a great variety of clarifying markers, because they are very different among them and it is quite difficult to find similar patterns. However, the clarifying marker "this is why" occurred 6 times in this corpus, even though it was used by lecturer 2 4 out of 6 times. There is only one other similar example to "this is why" which is "this is the reason why" said by lecturer 10. Therefore, it is possible to claim that the cluster "this is" is followed by the adverb "why" 6 times, but it is also followed by the adjective "clear" as is shown in the example of lecturer 9; by the noun "the reason" as the clarifying marker of lecturer 10. Another clarifying marker, which is similar to "this is why" is "that is why", which was used by lecturer 6 twice and by lecturer 4 once, but in the contracted form "that's why".

In these clarifying markers, a key word is the noun "reason" (5 times) which is common when a lecturer tries to explain a topic. Furthermore, the adjective "clear", which is used to order to clarify a subject, which was used by lecturer 9, but it was also used as an adverb by lecturer 5 "…so clearly we are talking about…" and as a verb "so just to clarify" by lecturer 10 which has the same meaning of "to make clear".

As for verbs, lecturer 2, lecturer 4 and lecturer 6 used the verb "to mean" once each. This is a way to clarify a concept, explaining what they were talking about. Similarly,

lecturer 4 used the verb "to say" affirming "I'm trying to say that" as well as lecturer 10 who said "I just want to say that" or lecturer 8 who said "let's say just to give you an idea".

Finally, lecturer 4 and lecturer 8 used the clarifying marker "generally speaking" and similarly lecturer 6 claimed "so generally". Therefore, through this kind of signpost, lecturers can clarify and explain in other words a concept that they are talking about.

4.3.7 Sequencers

In this section, I will portray the function of the sequencer. It is a kind of signpost which helps the lecturer to mark a position within a series. In other words, sequencers are used to specify the order in which they will explain the points of their lecture. Table 9 delineates the sequencers used.

Table 9. Sequencers

Lecturer	Number of sequencers	Examples
Lecturer 1	4	- Then we will… (x2) - First of all… - And third point…
Lecturer 2	4	- First of all… - Then we can see… - One is about… …the other one is about…

Lecturer 3	30	• First we have… • First of all… (x5) • The first one is… (x2) • So first of all… • Then we have… (x12) • Then you may have… • Then after we have to… • Well, the second one is… • …and the second one is… • And the last one is… • Then you have… • Then, the other one was… • The other one was… • This is the first relation…
Lecturer 4	11	• First of all… • So a third actor… • The first level is… (x2) • Second level is… • Then the last element… • But, second aspect… • So the third level is… • So, first step is… • First […] then…
Lecturer 5	8	• …first… • …second… • One was… • And the second reason was… • First of all… (x3) • Then…
Lecturer 6	2	• …then we have… (x2)
Lecturer 7	2	• The first is focused on… • The second is focused on…
Lecturer 8	4	• …first of all… • …the second point is… • …So first of all… • …this is one point…
Lecturer 9	2	• …this is the first approach… • …this is the first tool…
Lecturer 10	6	• …first of all… (x2) • …So the first one.. • …then we have.. • …first… • …and then…
Total	73	

Table 9 shows 73 sequencers, one of the most frequently used signposts. One of the main sequencers is "first of all", which was repeated 16 times. Secondly, professors used "the first" 7 times, followed by several nouns. For example, lecturer 3 said "the first one" twice and "the first relation" once; lecturer 4 used "the first" followed by the noun "level"; lecturer 9 used it followed by "approach" and "tool" and lecturer 7 used "the first" followed by the passive form of the verb "to focus". Furthermore, this corpus presented 6 concordances with the adverb "first", which was not preceded by the determinative article "the", but it is preceded by "so" in 2 out of 6 cases. However, 30 out of 73 sequencers contain the word "first".

Secondly, the adverb "second" occurred 8 times in the corpus and it was used by lecturer 3, lecturer 4, lecturer 5, lecturer 7 and lecturer 8. There are 5 out of 8 instances in which it is preceded by the determinative article "the". Looking at the concordance lines with the adverb "second", it is followed by nouns, such as "level" and "aspect" said by lecturer 4; "reason" said by lecturer 5 and "point" said by lecturer 8. Then, there are two examples said by lecturer 3 in which "the second" is followed by the pronoun "one". As for the pronoun "one", it occurred 12 times. It was preceded by "first" three times, as shown in lecturer 3 and lecturer 10's rows. However, the pronoun "one" was mainly used by lecturer 3 who used it preceded by "the other" twice; by "the second" twice and by "last one" once. Lecturer 2 used the pronoun one twice as it is shown in the table; lecturer 5 said once "one was" and the last one is lecturer 8 who said "this is one point".

Thirdly, there is a high use of the sequencer "then" (26 times). It is followed by the first person plural pronoun "we" 19 out of 26 times and by the second person plural pronoun "you" just twice both said by lecturer 3. However, the most frequent pattern is "then we have" which occurred 16 times.

Fourthly, there is a low use of the adverb "third" as sequencer, because it occurred 3 times: lecturer 4 said it twice "so the third level is" and "so a third actor is" and lecturer 1 claimed "and third point" once.

Finally, it is important to underline that most of the sequencers are followed by the verb "to be" in the present form (14 occurrences) or in the past form (4 examples). Another verb frequently used with sequencers is the verb "to have", because the cluster "then we have" was repeated 17 times.

4.3.8 Exemplifiers

In this section, I will describe the exemplifiers, which are another kind of signposts. The exemplifiers have the role to provide examples in order to explain a theoretical topic. Table 10 shows all the exemplifiers found in the corpus.

Table 10. Exemplifiers

Lecturer	Number of exemplifiers	Examples
Lecturer 1	4	• So let's consider some examples. • So let's consider for example the... • Ok let's move on to another example. • Let's consider another example.
Lecturer 2	5	• Eh to provide you with an example. • Let's try to think examples. • …we might make a different example… • …this is the kind of example… • But there might be another case…
Lecturer 3	2	• Let's say that... • It may be the case that…
Lecturer 4	4	• Let me give you an example. • Let's make an example. • I'll give you an example. • If let's say…
Lecturer 5	0	-
Lecturer 6	6	• So a good example of… • …here there is a case that… • Let's say that… (x2) • So now we provide you an example. • …this is an example of what I mean.
Lecturer 7	0	-

Lecturer 8	9	• …this is an example… (x2) • …so this for example is… • …we will see an example a little bit of… • …in some cases for example let's say… • …this is one of the examples very specific. • …so this is one of the special case… • …this could be a typical example of… • …let's say…
Lecturer 9	6	• …so we will continue with these examples… • I put you an example of… (x2) • …the example I want to give you… • …here you have the example of… • …this is an example of…
Lecturer 10	1	• Chloroform is an example of…
Total	37	

As for the exemplifiers, 37 instances of this signpost were found in the corpus. However, I would like to highlight that exemplifiers such as "for example" and "for instance" are not included here, even though the former occurred 29 times and the latter 25 times in the corpus. The reason why I have decided not to include those two signposts is because they are micro-markers, as defined by Chaudron and Richards (1986). In the present study, the focus is on the macro-markers (Chaudron and Richards, 1986) and this is the reason why there are no examples in lecturer 5 and lecturer 7's rows. Analysing their lectures, lecturer 5 used the micro-marker "for example" 6 times whereas lecturer 7 said "for instance" 15 times and "for example" just once.

Looking at table 10, 28 out of 37 exemplifiers contain the noun "example". There are only 5 out of 37 exemplifiers which do not contain the noun "example", but the synonym "case". Therefore, it is possible to claim that the vast majority of exemplifiers contain the noun "example".

Focusing on the aspect of verbs, 12 exemplifiers are expressed by the imperative form with the verb "let" used with a first person plural pronoun "us". For example, lecturer 1 used this imperative three times with the verb "to consider" "let's consider some examples" and with the verb "to move" "ok let's move on to another example"; lecturer 2 affirmed "let's try to think examples"; lecturer 4 said "let me give you an example" and "let's make an example". Finally, it is worth to underline that a kind of exemplifiers can be

the imperative "let's say that" which occurred 5 times as exemplifiers. On the other hand, 7 exemplifiers are introduced by the words "this is" and twice by "there is".

As for personal pronouns, the first person plural pronoun "we" occurred 4 times, in lecturer 2, lecturer 6, lecturer 8 and lecturer 9. However, adding the imperative, there are 16 exemplifiers which make use of the first person plural pronoun. On the other hand, the first person singular pronoun "I" occurred 3 times, as it was said by lecturer 4 and lecturer 9.

Finally, professors tended to use exemplifiers before providing the examples in order to draw students' attention to the example they are giving.

4.3.9 Emphasising markers

In this section, I will portray the emphasising markers found in this corpus. The emphasising marker allows the lecturer to draw students' attention to the important points. Table 11 illustartes the emphasising markers found.

Table 11. Emphasising markers

Lecturer	Number of emphasising markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	12	• …pay attention to this because it is very important… • And it's very interesting because… • And this is a very important premise… • These are very important questions you should keep in the back of your minds. • This is important because… • …the most important thing… • So this is very important because… • So why is this very important? • It's interesting that… • …it is important because… • The most interesting thing is… • Let's consider probably the most interesting thing…

Lecturer 2	13	• Why is this important? • So keep in mind that… • So this is a premise that you should keep in mind… • This already tells us something important… • Keep in mind this… • Well, if we keep this project in mind… • This is why it is important to keep that link in mind… • So these aspects are to be kept in mind. • And this is important, keep in mind. • It is important to remember that… • So I would like to point out… • And this is an important point… • I think it is useful to keep in mind in order to understand…
Lecturer 3	4	• Pay attention… (x2) • Let me say that is important… • And this is important because…
Lecturer 4	7	• …it is interesting because… • …attention! Not just this world… • I just would like to underline… • Because it is important to keep in mind that… • …you have to keep in mind… • …but you should keep in mind… • This is a very critical aspect because…
Lecturer 5	9	• The key point was… (x2) • This was politically important because… • But the key point is that… • And what is interesting for us is that… • … a key reason why… • But what is interesting for us was the fact that… • It is interesting to… (x2)
Lecturer 6	8	• …and this is extremely important… • …so that is also another important characteristic… • …here there is one important comment… • …that is very important because… • …so remember that… • …but the most important thing is that… • …the decision is really important because… • …competences of people are extremely important…
Lecturer 7	2	• …okay remember in term of… • …this is one of the most important difference…

Lecturer 8	11	• I stressed like a lot this part… • …this is really important… • …this is important because… (x2) • …the most important thing to do… • …I stress again this… • …but what is important is that… • …we just have in mind what I stressed at the beginning… • …just have in mind because… • …so that is important… • …this is really really important I spent a little bit more time on this…
Lecturer 9	4	• …that is important for you in the future… • …it is the most important thing… • …the interesting thing I wanted to… • …the important things are that…
Lecturer 10	9	• …for sure it is really important that you understand… • …so the importance of this… • …so it is very important that… • …remember this is the… • I want to remind you that… • …so that is important… • …so this is really important… • …it is really important… • …here this highlights…
Total	79	

Table 11 shows 79 examples of emphasising markers in the corpus, one of the most frequently used signposts. They present the repetition of the adjective "important" which occurred 41 times out of 79 and it occurred once as the uncountable noun "importance" as shown in lecturer 10's row. Professors used a synonym of the adjective "important" which is "interesting", even though it occurred less frequently because there are only 10 examples. The emphasising marker "this is important" is the most frequent, because it is repeated 17 times. 9 out of 41 times the adjective "important" is followed by "because" and by the noun "thing" 4 times. Finally, another frequent pattern is "the most important" which was repeated 5 times and there is the variation "the most interesting" said by lecturer 1 once.

An interesting emphasising marker is "to keep in mind" which occurred 12 times in this corpus and it occurred with the form "to have in mind" twice as shown in lecturer 8's

row. It is another way to emphasise the key points of a lecture highlighting what students should remember. However, this pattern "to keep in mind" was mainly used by lecturer 2 who said it 8 times. The other occurrences are in lecturer 1's row, who said "these are very important questions you should keep in the back of your minds" and in lecturer 4's row who said "you have to keep in mind" and "but you should keep in mind". Another pattern that was repeated 4 times, but it is an interesting emphasising marker is "pay attention", which was said by lecturer 3 twice, by lecturer 1 once and just the word "attention" by lecturer 4 once. Through these words, professors can immediately capture students' attention, explaining later the important points.

Finally, two emphasising markers are two questions "so why is this very important?" asked by lecturer 1 and "why is this important?" asked by lecturer 2. These two occurrences are particularly interesting, because when a lecturer asks a question, he or she immediately capture students' attention, as students should answer. Therefore, using a question as emphasising markers is an interesting way to highlight an important point.

4.3.10 Analysing markers

In this section, I will delineate the role of the analysing markers which are used to present an analysis of a specific point of the lecture. Table 12 presents the analysing markers found in this corpus.

Table 12. Analysing markers

Lecturer	Number of analysing markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	11	• So what does that mean? • What can we see? • And here we can see… • And here you see… • Here we have… (x3) • Here we find… (x2) • Here we are… • Here we do not find […], but we find…

Lecturer 2	4	- I would like to stop a bit about this… - Here she refers to some aspects… - I'm taking into account the contingent aspect… - So the way we can consider…
Lecturer 3	11	- So the point is that… - And so what do you observe is that… - The idea is that… - From an individual point of view… - Let me also say that… - But from a statistical point of view… - At the same time I expect… - Let's see, we can see… - Okay here in terms of education we have… - So from one point of view… - What may we say? - What can we say?
Lecturer 4	6	- Now, we will go in details of these different aspects… …from our perspective… - What we're trying to understand is… (x2) - I'm going to tell you something more in detail… - So, you have…
Lecturer 5	9	- So at this point… …but if you analyse it closely… …the point was that… (x2) - At this point… …we are not talking about defending the borders here. We are talking about… - This was the point… - The point is that… (x2)
Lecturer 6	6	…so you see… …so we have… - So the idea here is that… …but the idea here… …so on one side we need… …so here we are talking about…
Lecturer 7	4	…here we have… …here we design… …the main idea is that… (x2)

Lecturer 8	16	• …this is the starting point… • …here we have… (x2) • …here we are speaking… • …so I consider this is… • …let's see here… • …here we are… • …here you can see… • …let's consider the very easy way… • …so it is something to consider… • …you see here… (x3) • The macroscopically point of view and the chromatically point of view we are starting to see… • …we must enter in more detail… • …this is a case where…
Lecturer 9	8	• …here there is… • …here we have… (x2) • Here we can also have… • …here we see that… • …we have to take into account what here… • here we can guess that… • I am telling you in a theoretically point of view…
Lecturer 10	6	• So when you look at this equation you see that… • …you can see here… • …so you can see that… • …so we are looking at… • …so here what we are looking at… • …and you see that…
Total	81	

Looking at table 12, the total number of analysing markers is 81. This is the highest number of signposts found in this corpus. Focusing on these analysing markers, there is a frequent use of the adverb "here" which occurred 35 times. The adverb "here" is followed by the first person plural pronoun "we" 23 out of 35 times and by the second person plural pronoun "you" only 6 times, which do not always follow the adverb "here", because the personal pronoun preceded the adverb 3 out of 6 times, as it is used by lecturer 8 "you see here". Then, the adverb "here" is followed by the verb "to have" 10 times and by the verb "to see" 9 times.

Secondly, there is a frequent use of the noun "point" which was repeated 15 times in these analysing markers in order to analyse the topic. Then, professors used the noun

"idea" in the analysing markers, which was repeated 5 times, in a similar way as the word "point".

As for the aspect of verbs, 42 out of 81 analysing markers are expressed through the present simple. Then, 11 out of 81 examples are expressed with the present continuous. For example, lecturer 2 said "I'm taking into account"; lecturer 4 claimed "what we're trying to understand is" twice; lecturer 5 said "we are not talking about […] we are talking about" as well as lecturer 6 who said "so here we are talking about"; lecturer 8 said "here we are speaking"; lecturer 9 affirmed "I am telling you" and lecturer 10 used "what we are looking at" twice. Finally, the last mood is the imperative form, which was used by lecturer 3 twice and by lecturer 1 once.

Finally, it is remarkable to see that 4 analysing markers are expressed through questions. Two of them were used by lecturer 1 asking to her students "so what does that mean?" and "what can we see?". The other two instances were said by lecturer 3 asking "what can we see?" and "what may we see?". Asking these questions, professors involved the students to analyse what they were explaining and together they investigated the point.

4.3.11 Concluding markers

In this section, I will describe the function of the concluding markers. After having introduced and described a topic, professors try to conclude it, sometimes also summarizing it, and this can be marked with a concluding marker. Table 13 shows the concluding markers found in the analysis.

Table 13. Concluding markers

Lecturer	Number of concluding markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	8	• So this is to sum up what I have just said. • So from this short glance what can we conclude? • And from this conclusion… • So this is just to sum up what I was saying up to now. • Ok, so now that we have seen and recognized… • Ok, this is just to sum up. • To sum up…

Lecturer 2	1	• I showed you what is similar between…
Lecturer 3	0	-
Lecturer 4	0	-
Lecturer 5	2	• We must also arrive to the conclusion that… • So in the end…
Lecturer 6	0	-
Lecturer 7	0	-
Lecturer 8	0	-
Lecturer 9	0	-
Lecturer 10	1	• So these are the things that we have seen in this lecture.
Total	12	

Table 13 shows 12 concluding markers; a low result which indicates that lecturers do not provide a conclusion or summarize the most important part at the end of each topic. In this corpus, it is possible to notice that professors just concluded their subjects without using any kind of signposts and then they move on to another topic with the use of topicalisers.

As shown in table 13, lecturer 1 is the only one who made a great use of concluding markers, because she used 8 out of 12 concluding markers; she used them in order to provide a brief summary of what she said so far (4 out of 8 times). Secondly, I decided to classify "I showed you what is similar between" said by lecturer 2 as a concluding marker, because saying those words, lecturer 2 concluded a topic and then she moved on to the next one. Focusing on the concluding markers of lecturer 5, it is possible to note that he tried to reach the conclusion of a topic in order to move on to the next one. Finally, I chose to classify lecturer 10's signpost as a concluding marker, because the professor used this marker after having explained the slides he prepared for that class and not at the end of the lecture. If he had used it at the end of the class, I would have classified it as a closing marker, a kind of signpost that I will explain in the following section.

4.3.12 Closing markers

In this last section, I will focus on the closing marker, which indicate the formal closing of the lecture. Table 14 shows how the lecturers ended their classes.

Table 14. Closing markers

Lecturer	Number of closing markers	Examples
Lecturer 1	1	• Today is enough.
Lecturer 2	1	• Are there questions? Okay, excellent so see you tomorrow…
Lecturer 3	1	• Okay, now we are going to have a break.
Lecturer 4	1	• I would say that this is more than enough.
Lecturer 5	2	• If you can resist the noise and want to stay for a few minutes more you can have questions. • But we have time to discuss it. No more questions? Okay have a good weekend.
Lecturer 6	1	• So I give you ten minutes of this class I will be here around and if you have questions please ask me.
Lecturer 7	1	• Okay I will upload the these slides in the afternoon.
Lecturer 8	1	• I will prefer to stop here okay.
Lecturer 9	1	• Okay that's all.
Lecturer 10	1	• So I will stop here.
Total	11	

In this corpus 11 closing markers were found (table 14). There is a great variety of signposts that indicate the formal end of the lectures. Some professors just stated that they wanted to stop, as lecturer 8 and lecturer 10 did, saying the former "I will prefer to stop here okay" and the latter "so I will stop here". Other similar examples are those of lecturer 1 and lecturer 4 because they stated that it was enough what they said. In fact, lecturer 1 said "today is enough" and lecturer 4 said "I would say that this is more than enough". It is interesting to notice that only 3 out of 10 lecturers asked if there are any questions. These three professors were lecturer 2 who asked "Are there questions?"; lecturer 5 who said that in the last minutes of his class he would have answered students' questions and after one student's question he asked "no more questions?" and finally lecturer 6 who said that in the last ten minutes of her class she would answer to students' questions.

4.4 Conclusion

The aim of this analysis is to investigate signposting language used by the professors at the University of Padua who are involved in the EMI project. First of all, I would like to underline that these ten lectures contained 511 signposts as shown in table 15 below. It is a positive result, for the reason that lecturers are aware of the important role of signposting language. Therefore, they try to use it in order to help their students to have a better comprehension of their lecture.

Table 15. Signposting language results

Signposts	Number
Analysing markers	81
Emphasising markers	79
Sequencers	73
Retrospective markers	60
Topicalisers	48

Prospective markers	43
Exemplifiers	37
Clarifying markers	32
Introductive markers	23
Openers	12
Concluding markers	12
Closing markers	11
Total	511

First of all, the most common signposts of this corpus are analysing markers, as they occurred 81 out of 511 times. As previously mentioned in this chapter, analysing markers present a repetitive use of the adverb "here" (35 times in the corpus). Moreover, there are 23 examples of the adverb "here" followed by the first person plural pronoun "we". Through analysing markers, professors present an analysis of all the several aspects and features of a subject.

However, after having analysed a topic, lecturers try to highlight the key points of this topic. Therefore, the second most used signposts are emphasising markers, because they occurred 79 out of 511 times. In this corpus, there is a repetition of the adjective "important", which appeared 41 times as well as the pattern "this is important", which occurred 17 times. The fact that professors stress the most important points is fundamental in order to guarantee students' comprehension. Showing which are the key concepts of their speech, lecturers try to assure that students comprehend the most important parts. Consequently, looking at this result, it is possible to affirm that professors at the University of Padua pay attention at this aspect.

In the third place, there are sequencers, which occurred 73 out of 511 times and they are so widely used because they are very useful in order to create a logical and structured speech. It can be seen a great use of the sequencer "then" which occurred 26 times and 19 out of 26 examples of it was followed by the first person plural pronoun "we". However, professors tend to use this sequencer instead of "secondly", "thirdly" or "fourthly". A

possible explanation of this could be that "then" is easier to remember rather than the right ordinal number.

Fourthly, there are retrospective markers, as there are 60 retrospective markers out of 511 signposts. They are mainly expressed with the present perfect rather than the past simple, but it is a slight difference, as the examples with the present perfect are 22 and the instances with the past simple are 19. However, it is possible to emphasise a wider use of the first person singular pronoun "I", which occurred 23 times. Retrospective markers are very useful, because professors make several references to what they have already said in that class or in a previous lecture in order to avoid to repeat a certain concept as students should have learned it.

In the fifth place, there is the category of topicalisers, which are very useful in long lecture with different topics. Signalling to the students the shift of topics, lecturers will help them to follow long speech. Topicalisers are mainly expressed through the imperative form with the verb "let" used with a first person plural pronoun "us" or the contracted form "'s" to express a suggestion involving both the lecturer and the students. Furthermore, professors at the University of Padua make a great use of the first person plural pronoun "we" instead of the first person singular pronoun "I". Using the personal pronoun "we" is a way of involving the students in the lecture instead of keeping distance as it could be interpreted with the use of the personal pronoun "I".

After topicalisers, there are prospective markers, which appeared 43 out of 511 times. They are mainly expressed with the first person plural pronoun "we", as there are 27 examples of this pronoun, followed by the will form construction, as there are 37 instances.

Nevertheless, there is a low number of concluding markers (19 examples). The professors do not tend to signal the conclusion of a topic or summarize it, but they move on to the next topic, underlining it with topicalisers. This may be why there is a higher number of topicalisers rather than concluding markers.

Another point that I would like to underline in this analysis is to see who is the lecturer who mainly used signposts in his or her lecture. As shown in table 16, lecturer 1 and lecturer 8 are those with the highest use of signposts, as both used 73 signposts in their lectures. On the other hand, lecturer 7 made the lower use of signposts, reaching only 19 signposts in his lecture. However, it is possible to affirm that these professors made a great use of the signposts in their lectures.

Table 16. Number of signposts used by each lecturer

Lecturer	Number of signposts used
Lecturer 1	73
Lecturer 2	49
Lecturer 3	68
Lecturer 4	52
Lecturer 5	42
Lecturer 6	46
Lecturer 7	19
Lecturer 8	73
Lecturer 9	36
Lecturer 10	54

Finally, I would like to emphasise two aspects of this study. First of all, it is a small-scale investigation which includes a variety of lectures. I believe that this research could be more extensive, because only ten lectures are analysed. A larger corpus would lead to more results, but also possibly other kinds of signposts. Furthermore, it could be interesting to focus on a specific kind of lectures. It would be interesting to create a corpus for each school of the university and compare them. So, there are several ways to build on this study. Secondly, it would be useful to have a corpus of EMI lectures delivered by English native speaker professors in order to compare it with my corpus. In this corpus, just one lecture was delivered by an English native speaker, but it is not enough to make comparisons. Therefore, having a corpus of lectures delivered by English native speakers could be interesting, because it would be possible to notice the differences and similarities between English native speakers and non-native speakers of English. Furthermore, it could be useful to show Italian professors new signposts in order to avoid repeating always the same ones and to illustrate how to use them in the correct way.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have discussed the spread of English as medium of instruction in the academic context in those countries where English is not the first language. I have highlighted the main reasons for adopting EMI in the institutes of higher education, because it provides several advantages both to the universities and to the students, as Wilkinson (2006) stressed. Then, I have focused my attention on EMI in the European context, outlining how EMI is more widespread in the North of Europe than in the South. It is possible to find the same situation in Italy, which I have decided to analyse showing the characteristics of English as medium of instruction in the Italian context, illustrated in the first chapter. Finally, I have explained EMI in the University of Padua, describing the LEAP project and I have depicted the possible problems and concerns about the introduction of English as medium of instruction around the world.

The focus of the second chapter of this dissertation is mainly on EMI lectures. I have portrayed several features of academic lectures in EMI context, explaining styles, register, structural features and delivery strategies. Later, I have discussed the second language listening comprehension process, focusing on the distinctive features of lecture comprehension. However, the second language listening comprehension process is still a problem for EMI students, consequently I have provided a description of all the major problems and perceptions of students who attend EMI degree programmes.

The main topic of this dissertation is signposting language in EMI lectures. In the third chapter, I have provided a definition of signposting language, subdividing it in "macro-markers" and "micro-markers", as Chaudron and Richards (1986) defined them. Then, I have illustrated the early studies on signposting language, in particular Chaudron and Richards' study (1986) and Dunkel and Davis' work (1994), in which they affirmed that signposting language did not help L2 students to have a better comprehension of EMI lectures. However, I have demonstrated their limitations, showing later studies in which other scholars highlighted the positive effects of signposting language on non-native speaker students in the EMI context (Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995; Jung 2003; Medawattegedera 2003; Jung 2006; Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh 2007; Kuhi, Asadollahfam and Anbarian 2014).

Finally, I have provided two classification of the macro-markers used in the analysis. The first is Nattinger and DeCarrico's one (1992), which was a simple classification as they subdivided the macro-markers in two main categories: the global and the local markers. Therefore, I decided to use Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha's classification (2006) in which they subdivided the macro-markers according to the lecture's phase they belonged to. I have used this classification as the starting point of my analysis.

In the last part of this work, I have described the study that I have carried out at the University of Padua. Firstly, I have shown all the tools and the method used in order to conduct this analysis, illustrating all the details of the EMI lectures attended and the transcriptions of them. Then, I have outlined the results of the analysis, subdividing each signpost according to its role, providing the figures and the examples found in the corpus. After this research, I can affirm that lecturers at the University of Padua make extensive use of signposts during their lectures, which gives their discourse a clear and organised structure, possibly enabling their students to comprehend their class. As shown in the fourth chapter, a wide use of analysing markers is noted. They occurred in 81 out of 511 signposts. One of the main features of analysing markers in this corpus is the repetition of the adverb "here", which was repeated 35 times. I have reached the conclusion that professors tend to use this macro-marker widely, so students can understand the most important part of their lecture. In second place are emphasising markers, with 79 occurrences. It is interesting to note that the adjective "important" was repeated in 41 instances of emphasising markers,in particular in the phrase "this is important" (17 times). As we can see, the total number is very high and indicates that the lecturers aimed to draw their students' attention to what is important in the lecture. The third most used category of signposts is sequencers with 73 out of 511 examples. There is a wide use of the sequencer "then", which occurred 26 times, a higher number compared to the sequencer "first of all" which was repeated 16 times. This great use of sequencers means that lecturers tend to organize in a clear and structured way their speech. Then, it is possible to underline that lectures make a great use of retrospective markers, with 60 out of 511 examples, mainly used in the past simple and with the first person plural pronoun "we". They allow the lecturer to make some references to previous topics that he or she has mentioned earlier in the lecture or during previous lectures. On the other hand, I would like to underline that in these ten classes, I have found only a small number of concluding markers, just 12 out of 511 examples. The professors do not conclude

a topic with a concluding marker, but they shift to a new topic, emphasising it with the use of topicalisers, which are present in a higher number, namely 43 out of 511 signposts.

This is the first study of signposting language in EMI lectures carried out at the University of Padua. At the beginning of this work, I was not expecting to find a wide use of signposting language, because the corpus was small and most professors told me they did not know what signposting language was. Nevertheless, after this work, I can strongly affirm that my first expectations were wrong. This study presents a great analysis of signposting language, highlighting twelve different categories of signposts. Therefore, this work has confirmed that professors at the University of Padua make use of signposting language.

I think that this dissertation can contribute to other possible future studies. For example, it could be the starting point for studies about the speech's structure, as signposting language has a fundamental role in its organisation and structure. Another possible future study could investigate in which lecture's phase (Young, 1994) signposting language is mainly used. This analysis can also show to professors at the University of Padua involved in EMI project which signposts are mainly used in their lectures, which signposts they should start to use more, which patterns are the most frequent for each category of signposts. Thanks to this work, lecturers can start to make a greater use of signposting language, using these categories in their speeches.

However, I would like to suggest that it could be interesting to enlarge the corpus of this analysis, because this is a small-scale investigation and in a larger corpus it could be possible to find other signposts. I think that further research on signposting language in EMI lectures at the University of Padua should be carried out which could also possibly investigate the positive effects on L2 students. Moreover, further research should be conducted, for instance it could be interesting to test the students after the EMI lectures in order to investigate the comprehension of the class. To investigate the positive roles of signposting language, students could attend an EMI lecture with the use of signposts and one without them. After the classes, they should be tested to verify if they understand better with or without the use of signposts.

Finally, signposting language is a key element in EMI programmes and lecturers should use it in the organisation of their speeches in order to help students to have a better comprehension of the lectures.

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Italian summary

Lo scopo di questa tesi è di analizzare l'uso del *signposting language* nelle lezioni universitarie che hanno adottato la lingua inglese come metodo d'istruzione (*English Medium of Instruction, EMI*) presso l'Università degli Studi di Padova. Il *signposting language* sono tutte quelle parole e frasi che i docenti utilizzano affinché gli studenti possano seguire e comprendere al meglio una lezione universitaria. In questa tesi ho dimostrato quale sia la categoria di *signposts* più utilizzata dai professori coinvolti nell'EMI dell'Università degli Studi di Padova, illustrandone le principali caratteristiche.

Il tema principale del primo capitolo è l'EMI, l'acronimo inglese per *English Medium of Instruction*, ovvero l'insegnamento di corsi universitari in inglese, in paesi in cui l'inglese non è la lingua ufficiale. Negl'ultimi anni, la lingua inglese è diventata la lingua principale in moltissimi campi e uno dei motivi principali di questa diffusione è stata la globalizzazione. Quest'ultima si è manifesta con l'aumento dell'uso della lingua inglese come seconda lingua in tutto il mondo e di conseguenza la lingua inglese è diventata una presenza costante in tutti quei paesi dove non è la lingua ufficiale. Secondo lo studioso Coleman (2006: 3), le università fanno parte del mercato globalizzato, perciò hanno deciso di affrontare questa nuova realtà linguistica adottando l'inglese come metodo d'istruzione dall'inizio degl'anni '90 del secolo scorso.

La prima università europea che adottò l'EMI fu l'Università di Maastricht a metà degl'anni 80. All'inizio vennero fatti dei test per verificare il livello d'inglese degli studenti per capire se fossero in grado di seguire i corsi di *International Management* in inglese, sconsigliando a chi avesse ottenuto un punteggio basso di intraprendere quel corso di laurea. Dopo il primo anno, il numero degli studenti iscritti al corso di *International Management* in inglese aumentò notevolmente tanto che il dipartimento di economia decise di non proporre più questo corso in olandese.

Dopo questo primo successo, molte altre università europee hanno iniziato ad introdurre l'inglese come metodo d'istruzione, ottenendo grandi vantaggi sia per gli studenti che per gli istituti stessi. Innanzitutto, le università aumentano il loro prestigio e profilo internazionale reclutando un gran numero di studenti internazionali e nazionali, diventando così competitive nel mercato mondiale dell'istruzione. Inoltre, attraendo studenti internazionali, non solamente attraverso i programmi di mobilità come il progetto

ERASMUS +, ma come veri e propri studenti presso un'università straniera, gli istituti universitari possono bilanciare la scarsità del numero di studenti nazionali iscritti. Infine, le università potranno avere maggiori entrate finanziare con l'iscrizione di studenti internazionali. Dopo la laurea, questi studenti si affacceranno al mondo del lavoro e avranno molte più possibilità di lavorare nel mercato globale rispetto agli studenti che hanno la stessa laurea, ma non in inglese. Infine, l'EMI promuove il multilinguismo portando gli studenti a vivere un'esistenza bilingue: nella vita accademica e lavorativa useranno l'inglese come dei madrelingua, mentre nella loro vita sociale e quotidiana useranno la loro lingua madre.

Al livello europeo, l'EMI si è sviluppato soprattutto nel nord Europa, in paesi come l'Olanda e i Paesi scandinavi rispetto al sud Europa, in paesi come Italia e Spagna. Campagna e Pulcini (2014: 177) sostengono che questa differenza si rifletta nella disuguaglianza delle competenze dell'inglese tra i diversi stati. Per esempio, in Finlandia le persone sono a contatto con l'inglese non solo durante gli studi, ma anche nella vita quotidiana attraverso i media, una gran differenza rispetto agli stati del sud Europa, come l'Italia.

Al livello italiano, Campagna e Pulcini (2014: 180) hanno dimostrato come gli italiani hanno basse conoscenze della lingua inglese rispetto agl'altri europei. Solo negl'ultimi vent'anni sono state introdotte delle riforme nel sistema scolastico per migliorare le competenze della lingua inglese, come l'introduzione del progetto CLIL (*Content and Language Integrated Learning*) ovvero l'insegnamento di una materia scolastica in inglese nelle scuole. A livello universitario, l'EMI ha portato numerosi vantaggi, ma si è potuto notare come si sia sviluppato principalmente nel nord e centro Italia rispetto al sud, principalmente nei corsi di laurea in economia ed ingegneria.

L'Università degli Studi di Padova promuove lo sviluppo dell'internazionalizzazione incentivando l'EMI. Venne introdotto nell'anno accademico 2009-2010 ed oggi vengono offerti 527 corsi in lingua inglese presso i vari dipartimenti. Prima dell'inizio dell'anno accademico 2013-2014, il Centro Linguistico d'Ateneo (CLA) in collaborazione con il Servizio Relazioni Internazionali hanno avviato il *LEAP project*. Gli obbiettivi principali sono: capire i bisogni e problemi dei professori coinvolti nell'EMI; offrire un supporto a livello professionale per questi professori e verificare la qualità di questi corsi di sostegno professionale per avviarne un corso a lungo termine. Per sviluppare questo corso di supporto a lungo termine, il CLA ha deciso di offrire due volte al mese, tre

ore di corso in cui verranno affrontati argomenti come la pronuncia inglese, l'interazione tra docente e studente, il metodo di valutazione nei corsi EMI, ecc.

Tuttavia, l'introduzione dell'EMI nelle università ha portato con sé dei dubbi e delle perplessità. Mauranen (2010: 8) ha rimarcato che uno dei problemi principali è la paura che gli studenti possano perdere la padronanza della loro lingua madre, soprattutto per quanto riguarda il campo scientifico, il quale sta diventando sempre più "inglesizzato". Nel 2012, questa paura è stata vissuta anche in Italia quando il rettore del Politecnico di Milano voleva che in tutti i corsi di laurea fosse usato l'inglese come lingua veicolare, ma la vicenda si risolse con la condanna di questa proposta da parte dei giudici del Tar. Un altro problema è il metodo d'insegnamento, perché parlando in una lingua straniera molti professori perdono la loro spontaneità e questo porta a lunghi monologhi senza interazione con gli studenti. Infine, difficile risulterebbe anche valutare quegli studenti che per loro l'inglese sarebbe la terza lingua, perciò i risultati dei loro esami potrebbero essere ancora più bassi.

Nel secondo capitolo ho descritto le caratteristiche principali di una lezione universitaria, in particolare di quelle lezioni in cui viene adottato l'inglese come metodo d'insegnamento. In una lezione universitaria, il professore ha il compito di fornire delle informazioni agli studenti attraverso un discorso basato su una struttura logica ed argomentativa. Dudley-Evans (1994: 148) ha affermato che il segreto per comprendere una lezione sia apprezzare lo stile d'insegnamento individuale di ogni docente. Tuttavia, il principale modo per presentare una lezione accademica è attraverso uno stile informale, basato sull'interazione con gli studenti sia madrelingua inglese e non. Basandoci su questo stile informale, i professori coinvolti nell'EMI utilizzano nelle loro lezioni il pronome personale *we* molto più frequentemente rispetto al pronome personale *I*, perché in questo modo il professore coinvolge gli studenti nel suo discorso e non li allontana come farebbe con il pronome personale *I*.

Tuttavia, una lezione universitaria ha un genere "ibrido" così definito dallo studioso Csomay (2002: 204), perché presenta aspetti tipici della prosa academica con alti contenuti formali accademici ed informativi, ma presenta anche aspetti tipici della conversazione faccia a faccia con tutte le caratteristiche del parlato.

Fondamentale per il processo di comprensione in lingua straniera è l'organizzazione e la struttura del discorso del professore. Young (1994) ha condotto uno studio sulle caratteristiche strutturali delle lezioni universitarie. Nel suo lavoro, Young ha cercato di descrivere la macro-struttura delle lezioni, suddividendole in sei fasi. Una fase è una parte

del discorso che ricorre singolarmente e in modo discontinuo durante un discorso, ma insieme ne danno la forma. In altre parole, è possibile identificare le fasi di Young come il *signposting language*, cioè parole e frasi che vengono usate affinché si possa comprendere al meglio un determinato discorso. La *discourse structuring phase* viene utilizzata dal professore per spiegare cosa vorrà dire nel discorso. La *conclusion phase* è la fase in cui il docente riassume i punti principali del suo discorso. Nell'*evaluation phase* il professore esprime le proprie opinioni riguardo gli argomenti trattati. Un'altra fase è l'*interaction phase*, nella quale il docente cerca di creare un dialogo con gli studenti ponendo delle domande, per verificare l'effettiva comprensione degli studenti. La *theory or content phase* è la fase in cui il professore fornisce agli studenti le definizioni o teorie degli argomenti trattati. L'ultima fase descritta da Young è l'*examples phase* in cui il professore spiega i concetti teorici attraverso esempi concreti. In questo lavoro, Young ha dimostrato come attraverso il modello a fasi si possa ottenere una struttura molto più accurata di una lezione universitaria, rispetto a suddividerla nella parte iniziale, centrale e finale.

L'organizzazione accurata della struttura di un discorso di una lezione è la base per un'efficace capacità oratoria del docente. Secondo Sandhu, Afifi e Amara (2012: 1), è fondamentale iniziare una lezione con una frase d'apertura, per esempio ripetendo le informazioni principali osservate nella lezione precedente, o ponendo una domanda agli studenti i quali dovranno rispondere entro la fine della lezione. Dopo l'inizio, i docenti devono introdurre l'argomento principale della lezione attraverso un esempio come afferma Palmer (2004) nel suo studio. Alla fine di una lezione, i professori dovrebbero dare l'opportunità agli studenti di fare domande, un aspetto molto importante nelle lezioni EMI, perché gli studenti non-madrelingua potrebbero non aver compreso dei punti e perciò vorrebbero un'ulteriore spiegazione.

In conclusione è possibile affermare che la comprensione della lezione è fondamentale per gli studenti e un ruolo importante viene giocato dalle capacità di comprensione orale degli studenti. Infatti, le lezioni EMI sono una grande sfida per gli studenti, perché non essendo madrelingua inglesi, devono avere elevate capacità di comprensione orale in una lingua che non è la loro lingua madre. Lo studioso Flowerdew (1994) afferma che la comprensione orale è un processo che coinvolge diversi processi i quali collaborano insieme, ma il modo in cui lo fanno è impossibile da spiegare. Essa si divide in due parti: la prima parte è formata da un processo puramente linguistico, mentre la seconda consiste nell'applicare questo processo alle conoscenze personali della persona. Secondo Rost (2011), l'ascolto in una lingua straniera è un processo cognitivo ed interattivo

che coinvolge un processo neurologico, linguistico, semantico e pragmatico. Una delle caratteristiche principali è la comprensione in tempo reale, ovvero l'abilità di integrare in tempo reale le informazioni che si stanno ascoltando con le conoscenze generali che una persona possiede. Tuttavia, questo processo è automatico nelle persone madrelingua, non lo è per i non madrelingua. Il secondo elemento distintivo è la capacità di distinguere le strutture fonologiche, le quali sono segnate in testo scritto, ma oralmente è più complesso capirle.

È importante sottolineare la differenza tra l'ascoltare una conversazione in una lingua straniera e seguire una lezione EMI. Innanzitutto, le conoscenze generali sono diverse, perché in una lezione devono essere specifiche di un determinato argomento. Poi in una conversazione, i soggetti possono interrompersi a vicenda ed esprimere il loro punto di vista, mentre in una lezione universitaria c'è un determinato spazio per l'interazione. Il discorso in una lezione è studiato ed organizzato, mentre in una conversazione è spontaneo. Inoltre, in una lezione gli studenti prendono appunti, integrano informazioni che ricevono da presentazioni PowerPoint, opuscoli, ecc.… diversamente da quanto accade in una conversazione quotidiana, nella quale tutto questo non è richiesto.

Tuttavia, come ho già spiegato prima, una delle più grandi sfide per gli studenti che frequentano corsi di laurea EMI è la comprensione orale. Negl'ultimi anni, sono stati fatti diversi studi per capire i problemi che gli studenti hanno nel seguire una lezione universitaria in una lingua straniera. In uno studio condotto da Goh (2000) sono stati trovati cinque problemi principali: la facilità nel dimenticare cosa è stato detto; l'incomprensione di vocaboli che tuttavia conoscevano; la comprensione delle parole, ma l'incomprensione del messaggio globale; il trascurare la parte successiva perché cercano di comprendere la parte precedente e l'incapacità di creare una rappresentazione mentale del discorso sentito. Nel 2000, Hasan ha fatto uno studio simile a quello di Goh, mostrando che i fattori principali che incidevano nei problemi di comprensione orale di 81 studenti arabi iscritti a corsi di laurea EMI erano: le parole sconosciute, la lunghezza del discorso e le difficili strutture grammaticali. Un altro problema è la rapidità nel parlare del docente oltre al suo accento che possono creare difficoltà nel comprendere il discorso.

Infine, ho illustrato le impressioni che gli studenti, che frequentano corsi di laurea EMI, hanno per quanto riguarda la comprensione di queste lezioni. Le conoscenze personali su un determinato argomento giocano un ruolo fondamentale nella comprensione della lezione, come dimostrato negli studi di Kym & Kym (2014) e Flowerdew & Miller (1992). Un altro aspetto importante è la conoscenza della lingua inglese che influenza la capacità

di comprensione. Inoltre, una buona conoscenza della lingua inglese dovrebbe essere posseduta anche dal docente, per poter spiegare al meglio una lezione. Infine, gli studenti hanno cercato di adottare delle strategie per superare i problemi di comprensione orale, come leggere dei materiali prima della lezione o confrontarsi con i compagni di corso per le eventuali incomprensioni.

Nel terzo capitolo, ho descritto il *signposting language,* ovvero l'argomento principale di questa tesi. Come ho già spiegato prima, gli studenti non madrelingua inglese hanno difficoltà nel comprendere le lezioni EMI, perché vengono tenute in inglese. Tuttavia, lo studioso Vandergrift (2007) sostiene che l'uso del *signposting language* facilita la comprensione delle lezioni EMI agli studenti non madrelingua. Il *signposting language* include parole e frasi brevi chiamate con il termine inglese *marker*. Gli studiosi Chaudron and Richards (1986) suddivisero i *markers* in due categorie: i *macro-markers* e i *micro-markers*. I primi sono frasi composte generalmente da più di tre parole che indicano la relazione tra diverse parti o sottolineano importanti punti del discorso, come ad esempio il cambiamento di argomento, o il riassunto di alcuni punti principali. Degli esempi di *macro-markers* sono "what I am going to talk about today", "firstly, I would like to say". I *micro-markers* sono invece frasi composte da una o due parole che indicano le relazioni tra le frasi e sono spesso usati come degli strumenti per lasciare il tempo di pensare a cosa dire, per esempio "well", "yeah", "sure", "and", "but", "however".

I primi studi sul *signposting language* dimostrarono che non era molto utile nel facilitare la comprensione di studenti non madrelingua inglese. Chaudron e Richards (1986) condussero uno tra i primi studi sul *signposting language* dimostrando l'effetto positivo che i *macro-markers* avessero nella comprensione delle lezioni EMI, ma non scoprirono nessun vantaggio nell'uso dei *micro-markers*. Inoltre, arrivarono alla conclusione che l'uso di *micro-markers* e *macro-markers* in una lezione non facilitasse la comprensione degli studenti. Tuttavia, questo studio aveva delle limitazioni, perché Chaudron e Richards (1986) si basarono su delle lezioni tenute con un stile nel quale il docente leggeva il discorso, non nello stile informale abituale e questo creerebbe maggiori difficoltà di comprensione negli studenti.

Nel 1994, gli studiosi Dunkel e Davis condussero un altro studio sugli effetti del *signposting language* su studenti sia madrelingua inglese che non. Un gruppo misto di studenti ascoltò una lezione con l'uso dei *signposts,* l'altro gruppo invece senza. Dopo aver analizzato dei protocolli scritti dagli studenti alla fine dell'esperimento, notarono che la

comprensione degli studenti non madrelingua non migliorasse con l'utilizzo dei *markers*. Tuttavia anche questo studio aveva dei limiti, perché le lezioni che scelsero avevano una struttura di analogie e confronto, perciò era possibile comprenderle anche senza l'uso del *signposting language*. Inoltre, non analizzarono i *macro-markers* in maniera distinta dai *micro-markers*, mostrando come questa bassa frequenza nell'uso dei *micro-markers* diminuiva qualsiasi effetto che avrebbero potuto avere nella comprensione.

Tutti i limiti di questi due studi descritti sopra vengono spiegati da Flowerdew e Tauroza nel 1995. Lo scopo della loro ricerca era quello di analizzare il ruolo dei *markers* nella comprensione di lezioni tenute in una lingua straniera. In particolare, volevano scoprire se la presenza dei *markers* aiutava gli studenti non madrelingua inglese a comprendere le lezioni EMI. Studiando la comprensione di 63 studenti cantonesi, conclusero che questi studenti comprendevano meglio una lezione quando c'era la presenza dei *markers*. Molti altri studi dimostrano che gli studenti non madrelingua inglese comprendono al meglio una lezione tenuta in inglese se il docente utilizza il *signposting language,* come fece Jung nel 2003, Medawattegedera nel 2003, Eslami e Eslami-Rasekh nel 2007 e Kuhi, Asadollahfam e Anbarian nel 2014.

Nella parte finale di questo capitolo, ho riportato due classifiche di *macro-markers,* che ho utilizzato in seguito nella mia analisi. Una prima classificazione dei *macro-markers* è quella fornita dagli studiosi Nattinger e DeCarrico nel 1992. Suddivisero i *macro-markers* in due categorie: i *markers* globali e quelli locali. I primi sono quei *markers* che sottolineano l'introduzione di un argomento, il cambio verso un nuovo argomento e il riassunto di un argomento. I *markers* locali evidenziano sequenze o informazioni importanti, ma lo fanno in punti specifici all'interno della struttura generale mantenuta dai *markers* globali. Tra questi *markers* locali troviamo esempi, commenti valutativi, digressioni. Tuttavia, utile alla mia analisi, è stata la classifica dei *macro-markers* fatta da Dafouz Milne e Núñez Perucha nel 2010. Quest'ultime hanno utilizzato il modello a fasi di Young (1994), portandone alcune modifiche. Hanno suddiviso una lezione universitaria in sole tre fasi e all'interno di ognuna hanno stilato una classifica di *signposts,* come è possibile vedere nella tabella alla fine del terzo capitolo.

Nell'ultimo capitolo di questa tesi, ho descritto il lavoro che ho svolto per effettuare l'analisi dell'uso del *signposting language* da parte dei professori dell'Università degli Studi di Padova e infine ho mostrato i risultati ottenuti.

All'inizio ho descritto gli strumenti che ho usato per svolgere quest'analisi, ovvero il programma *AntConc* e la creazione di un corpus. Un corpus è formato da una collezione sistematica e computerizzata di testi, che vengono analizzati da un punto di vista linguistico. Nella mia ricerca, ho creato un corpus specializzato, perché è formato da una collezione di dieci trascrizioni di lezioni tenute in inglese coinvolte nell'EMI all'Università di Padova. La creazione di questo corpus era essenziale in modo da rendere più facile la mia analisi con il programma *AntConc.* Questo programma analizza i testi di un corpus generando delle liste in modo da analizzare le caratteristiche del linguaggio usato. Per esempio, nella trascrizione delle lezioni avevo evidenziato le varie categorie di *signposts.* così una volta inserito il corpus nel programma *AntConc,* digitando la parola chiave che evidenziava questi *signposts,* venivano generate delle liste con tutti gli usi di quella determinata categoria in tutti i testi.

All'inizio di questo studio, ho contattato via e-mail i docenti coinvolti nell'EMI spiegando lo scopo della mia tesi e chiedendo loro il permesso di registrare le loro lezioni. Una volta ricevuta una risposta positiva, ho partecipato a cinque lezioni all'Università di Padova. Le lezioni *History of Illuminated Manuscript* e *Moral Philosophy* facevano parte di due corsi di laurea magistrale sotto il Dipartimento di Beni Culturali. Le altre tre lezioni erano rispettivamente: *Economics of Human Capital*, *Religions and Human Rights* e *"Republic" and "Empire" in the American Political Thinking* sotto il Dipartimento di Economia e Scienze Politiche. Tutti i professori era di madrelingua italiana. Per ampliare quest'analisi, ho utilizzato le trascrizioni di cinque lezioni dell'università di Padova di un'altra studentessa Michela Meneghetti (2016) nella sua tesi di laurea magistrale. Lei trascrisse due lezioni di *Family Business* sotto il Dipartimento Economia e Scienze Politiche. Sotto il Dipartimento di Ingegneria ha partecipato alla lezione *Water Supply Treatment*, tenuta da un professore madrelingua inglese. Infine le ultime due lezioni erano sotto il Dipartimento di Scienze Agricole e Medicina Veterinaria, ovvero *Forest Ecosystem and Global Changes* e *Forest Pathology and Wood Alteration* tenuta da un docente spagnolo. In tutto sono state trascritte 14 ore, 54 minuti e 17 secondi di lezioni con un totale di 79126 parole. Per trascrivere queste lezioni, ho utilizzato le convenzioni di Michela Meneghetti, la quale ha usato quelle del MICASE, che ho riportato nella tabella presente nel quarto capitolo. Infine ho analizzato ogni categoria di *signposts* mostrandone le funzioni e le principali caratteristiche e particolarità.

La prima categoria sono gli *openers* che indicano l'inizio formale della lezione. In quest'analisi sono presenti 12 *openers* e si può notare come i docenti li utilizzino in modo

diverso, ma comunque cercando di instaurare un rapporto con gli studenti. La maggior parte dei professori ha iniziato la lezione con un saluto agli studenti, mentre tre professori hanno iniziato direttamente spiegando.

La seconda categoria di *signposts* sono gli *introductive markers*, i quali servono ad introdurre l'argomento della lezione, affinché il professore riesca a dare un'idea della struttura che prenderà la lezione. In questo corpus sono presenti 23 *introductive markers,* ed è possibile vedere come i docenti utilizzino principalmente il verbo *to talk* al futuro e il pronome personale *we*.

I *retrospective markers* permettono ai docenti di far riferimento a punti precedentemente discussi in quella lezione o in un'altra lezione e in questo corpus sono presenti 60 esempi in totale. Questo tipo di *signpost* viene utilizzato principalmente al *present perfect* e il verbo maggiormente usato è il verbo *to tell.* Analizzando i pronomi personali, si nota come il pronome *I* sia maggiormente usato rispetto al pronome *we*.

La quarta categoria sono i *prospective markers*, i quali permettono ai professori di fare dei riferimenti a degli argomenti che spiegheranno in seguito o in un'altra lezione. In questo corpus sono presenti 43 *prospective markers*. Contrariamente ai *retrospective markers* nei quali i professori non dicevano quando avevano dato quelle informazioni, con i *prospective markers* i docenti sottolineano quando daranno quelle informazioni. È stato difficile capire quale fosse il verbo più utilizzato, perché quello dipendeva molto dal modo di parlare del docente, ma questi s*ignposts* sono generalmente espressi con il futuro *will* e con il pronome personale *we*.

I *topicalisers* mostrano un cambio di argomento durante una lezione e in questo corpus sono presenti 48 esempi. Essi vengono espressi principalmente attraverso la forma imperativa plurale *let's* infatti il più usato è *let's start,* ma ci sono stati dei casi in cui i professori hanno utilizzato anche la forma del futuro *will.* Osservando i pronomi personali, il più usato è *we.* Tuttavia, due professori non hanno utilizzato nessun *topicaliser* cambiando direttamente argomento senza avvisare gli studenti di questo cambio.

I *clarifying markers* presenti in questo corpus sono 32*,* i quali hanno il compito di chiarire e spiegare un determinato punto. Essi sono molto diversi tra loro, perciò è stato difficile trovare le caratteristiche principali. Tuttavia, il *clarifying marker "this is why"* è stato utilizzato più volte dai docenti.

I *sequencers* sono usati per specificare l'ordine in cui il professore spiegherà i punti del suo discorso. Ho potuto osservare la presenza di un numero notevole di *sequencers,* 73

per l'esattezza. Uno tra i più usati è *first of all* con le sue varianti, ma quello più utilizzato è *then,* seguito dal pronome personale *we*.

Un'altra categoria sono gli *exemplifiers* i quali hanno il compito di fornire degli esempi dopo una spiegazione di un concetto teorico, trovandone 37 esempi. Tuttavia, non ho conteggiato *for example* o *for instance,* perché fanno parte dei *micro-markers* (Chaudron and Richards, 1986). Questo è il motivo per cui due professori non hanno utilizzato nessun tipo di *exemplifier*. Ricorrente in questa categoria, era la parola *example* o il sinonimo *case*. Questi *exemplifiers* vengono espressi principalmente con il modo imperativo plurale, perciò il pronome personale più frequente è *we*.

Gli *emphasising markers* servono al docente per attirare l'attenzione degli studenti in alcuni punti importanti del discorso. In questo corpus ci sono 79 esempi di *emphasising markers* e la maggior parte di questi contengono l'aggettivo *important*. Ricorrente era *to keep in mind* come *emphasising marker*.

La categoria più usata di *signposts* sono gli *analysing markers* i quali vengono usati per presentare un'analisi di un punto specifico della lezione. In questo corpus sono presenti 81 analysing markers, espressi soprattutto con l'avverbio *here* seguito dal pronome personale *we*. Questa categoria di *signposts* viene espressa principalmente con il tempo verbale al presente.

I *concluding markers* vengono usati dai professori per concludere un argomento, a volte anche ricapitolandone i punti principali. In questo corpus ci sono 12 esempi di *concluding markers*, ma sono stati utilizzati soprattutto dalla professoressa di *History of Illuminated Manuscript*, dato che 8 esempi erano suoi.

L'ultima categoria che ho analizzato sono i *closing markers*, i quali indicano la fine di una lezione e ricorrono 11 volte in questo corpus. Solamente tre professori hanno chiesto in questa fase, se gli studenti avessero delle domande, mentre i rimanenti hanno solamente concluso la lezione.

In conclusione, lo scopo di questa tesi è quello di analizzare l'uso del *signposting language* tra i professori dell'Università di Padova coinvolti nell'EMI. È possibile affermare che in questo corpus di dieci lezioni, ho ottenuto un numero totale di 511 *signposts,* un risultato positivo poiché si può capire che i professori dell'Università di Padova cercano di esporre un discorso chiaro e ben organizzato utilizzando i *signposts* affinché gli studenti possano comprenderlo al meglio.

Tuttavia, vorrei sottolineare che questa è una piccola ricerca, ma può essere vista come un punto di partenza per delle ricerche più ampie sempre su questo campo. Infatti,

ampliando questo corpus, potrebbe essere possibile trovare altri tipi di *signposts* che in queste lezioni non erano presenti. Un altro modo in cui potrebbe essere usata questa analisi è per creare un confronto con un corpus di lezioni tenute da docenti madrelingua inglese per evidenziare le differenze e analogie tra i due corpus.

Infine, questo è il primo studio sul *signposting language* presso l'Università degli studi di Padova ed è possibile affermare che ha dimostrato come i professori di questa università utilizzano il *signposting language* nelle loro lezioni EMI.