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(Article begins on next page)

## **“Nothing beats the real thing”: the use of examples in EMI lectures**

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### **Abstract**

This chapter presents an analysis of the examples introduced by EMI lecturers in the lessons included in the TAEC corpus. The transcripts are analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively through the Sketch Engine suite of tools, along with the relevant videos and field notes. After measuring the frequency of verbal operators that are likely to mark the formulation of examples, the focus is placed on all the occurrences of the lemma ‘example’ (n=541) to explore their frequency and distribution, their linguistic and pragmatic features, along with their linguistic and cultural management. The results shed light on the considerable variation in the formulation design of examples across disciplines and individual lecturers, with both standard and non-standard language use. Although there is a prevalence, to some extent, of paratactic structures, direct questions, pre-positioning, and references to practical, external examples, other features that appear less frequently in the TAEC corpus (e.g. storytelling) can nonetheless inform best practices to the benefit of EMI lecturers and learners alike.

**Keywords:** EMI, TAEC corpus, frequency, example, instance, linguistic and pragmatic features

### **1 Introduction**

The study presented in this chapter takes advantage of one of the main outputs of the Erasmus+ project “Transnational Alignment of English Competences for University Lectures” (TAEC), namely the TAEC Corpus. The corpus includes the transcripts of 30 video-recorded EMI lectures in total, i.e. six lectures from each

partner country<sup>1</sup>, and covers a variety of subjects (see chapter 1 for a detailed description). The corpus is a unique resource for empirical research, as it gives access to real life data in EMI settings and can be a valuable tool to inform teaching practices as well as design EMI lecturer training programmes.

During the data collection stage of the TAEC corpus and fieldwork, EMI lecturers were observed to formulate a wide range of examples in their lessons across all disciplines and lecturing styles. “Nothing beats the real thing” said one lecturer when asked to what extent examples are designed, and possibly adjusted, to meet the learning needs of an international audience. Indeed, in lectures (and, more generally, in all teaching) examples fulfil different functions in support of content delivery and are a fundamental feature of lecture design patterns (Köppe & Schalken-Pinkster, 2015). For instance, examples “can provide orientation, help with making abstract concepts concrete, or help with showing dependencies between different concepts” (p. 5).

The TAEC corpus affords the opportunity to complement EMI perception studies focusing on teacher talk with the empirical analysis of authentic samples from the classroom. Therefore, the aim of this exploratory study is to describe to what extent and how the EMI lecturers included in the TAEC corpus use examples. Since the definition of what an example is in teacher talk may be problematic and not very clear-cut, and in order to take advantage of corpus linguistics methods with the level of annotations included in the TAEC corpus, only the examples occurring upon the explicit mention of the lemma ‘example’ are investigated in detail. Although these cannot be considered representative of all the occurrences of examples, which are also marked by other operators (or no operators at all), they provide robust and systematic evidence of one of the major ways content is made accessible to learners.

The focus of the analysis is placed on three main areas: frequency and distribution ; linguistic and pragmatic features ; linguistic and cultural management. The presentation and discussion of results is preceded by a section providing a general framework of effective use of examples in lecturing and a methodological

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<sup>1</sup> Denmark with the University of Copenhagen (UCPH), Spain with the University of Lleida (UdL), The Netherlands with the University of Maastricht (UM), Italy with the University of Turin (UNITO) and Croatia with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka (FHSS).

section illustrating how the analysis was carried out. The final considerations summarise possible ways to best deal with potential challenges and opportunities concerning the use of examples in EMI lectures and, hopefully, inform best practices for EMI lecturers and learners alike.

## **2 Examples for effective lecturing in EMI**

Good lecturing is often associated with effective use of examples (see the resources mentioned in the methodological section of this chapter; also see Breeze & Sancho Guinda, 2022: p. 85; Costa, 2016: 108). In general, examples are introduced by lecturers with the aim to help learners better understand new notions, keep focused, and remember what is being taught by making associations with tangible items and visualizing (abstract) content. Lecturers may also use examples as an inclusive strategy and to increase their interaction with learners.

In EMI settings, giving examples may raise additional challenges both on a linguistic and on an intercultural level. Linguistically, EMI lecturers may need to express themselves outside the language for specific purposes (LSP) realm of their discipline, translate culture-bound concepts that do not have entirely equivalent target references in English, and improvise more (Costa, 2016: 80, 100). In fact, language command seems to cause concern among EMI lecturers, especially with respect to spoken language skills and informal register (Hartle, 2020: p. 179), though lecturers “do not seem to realize the ‘embarrassment’ deficient language use may cause” (van Splunder, 2010: p. 280) among learners. At the same time, adjustments may be necessary to make examples fully accessible to all learners, both domestic and international ones, providing further explanations and more explicit information than would be the case in a non-EMI scenario. As an inclusive strategy, examples may also require some forms of adjustment to fully reach the target audience in a respectful manner.

A large part of the considerations presented above have been confirmed in scholarly research into EMI and English used as a lingua franca in academic settings (ELFA). Flowerdew et al. (2000) analysed the perception of 15 EMI lecturers who share the same native language (i.e., Chinese) of learners at City University

in Hong Kong. Based on semi-structured interviews, which cover a larger population and address a variety of EMI-related topics, they report on specific strategies that are deemed important when lecturing in EMI. These strategies include linguistic adjustments (or accommodation), such as speaking at a slower rate, streamlining sentence structures, narrowing the range of vocabulary (avoiding jargon), and code-switching (to Cantonese). Another strategy to support learners' understanding is the provision of handouts. Finally, two more strategies that can be linked to one's lecturing style are mentioned: repeating more and the abundant use of examples. The two main functions of examples, according to the respondents, are "to illustrate important concepts and their applications" (Flowerdew et al., 2000: p. 128) and "to allow lecturers to go beyond the textbook and relate the concepts to real life" (p. 129). Interestingly, local examples are considered particularly effective and these would seem to be more available to Chinese-speaking EMI lecturers than native English or expatriate lecturers. Also, examples are perceived as necessary to supplement the content of textbooks, as these are produced by foreign publishers.

The above orientation is well in line with the guidelines included in another output of the TAEC project, i.e. the EMI handbook (TAEC 2019). In particular, they point to a number of recommendations, i.e., including both domestic and international examples, possibly complemented with examples offered by learners themselves from their context of origin; supplementing local references with further explanations to make them accessible also to non-local students; stating the purpose of an example; considering whether adjustments are necessary for examples to be well received by learners with different cultural backgrounds.

The mixed composition of EMI classrooms in terms of linguacultures has also been highlighted in studies of ELFA, where English is seen to play a mediating role with respect to speakers' native languages coming into contact with it, thus giving rise to "similects" (Mauranen, 2012). In the TAEC corpus, all the lecturers but three (from the University of Maastricht) are native speakers of the local language. Considering the number of international students *vis-à-vis* the local students attending the lectures included in the corpus, lecturers may take advantage of such a "shared language benefit" (Albi-Mikasa, 2013: p. 105) to different degrees.

The use of languages other than English has also been documented as a prominent feature of ELF(A) communication (García & Wei, 2004), which is further conceptualized as translanguaging practices in pedagogical activities (Cicillini, this volume; Drljača Margić, 2018) and beyond (Mazzaferro, 2018a). From this perspective of flexible multilingualism, languages are thus seen as “part of complex interactional processes” (Mazzaferro, 2018b: p. 2) where mediation has also been framed “as a co-operative strategy that increases communicative explicitness and allows the interaction to proceed” (Hynninen, 2011: p. 976; Molino this volume).

As is the case with the TAEC corpus, EMI lectures may display differing patterns and degrees of interaction, ranging from frontal, mostly monologic delivery to more interactive, problem-based learning. Regardless of the interactional approach adopted by each lecturer/university, examples in lectures may also fulfil the function of engaging more with learners, all the more so when examples are explicitly directed to the target audience, e.g., through the use of pronouns such as ‘you’ and ‘we’. Interaction triggers such as these have been investigated in academic presentation delivery as an instance of membership and altercasting strategies, which contribute to “enhancing the dialogic dimension of a genre that is often erroneously perceived as purely monologic” (Anderson & Cirillo, 2022: p. 159).

The linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural dimensions of examples in EMI lectures (and more generally in teaching) testify to the inherent complexity of designing examples that can best serve their purpose. Educational resources for academic English, such as the Academic Phrasebank (Morley 2021), include explanations on how to give examples to provide additional information and support one’s claims with further evidence or clarify difficult concepts. The Academic Phrasebank was designed as a resource for academic writers, yet curiously enough it also makes reference to spoken language in the section about giving examples (Morley 2021: 119) along with the section about giving presentations. Although written language tends to display greater lexical variety compared to spoken language, these resources for academic English can be a useful source of inspiration to inform our research and define a list of terms and expressions that can be used to query the TAEC corpus and retrieve relevant occurrences. In fact, the TAEC corpus affords the unique

opportunity to systematically observe and analyse example use in real data from a variety of settings and disciplines, and to shed light on linguistic, pragmatic, and intercultural features of teacher talk that have thus far been considered either separately from each other or to a lesser extent in lecturers and students' perception.

### **3 Methods**

Given the important functions of examples in lectures and the critical design features reviewed in the previous section, this study used corpus linguistics methods to look at the occurrences of examples in the TAEC corpus to study their frequency and distribution, their linguistic and pragmatic features, along with their linguistic and cultural management. To this end, and to take advantage of computer-assisted retrieval of relevant occurrences, it was necessary to define a list of key terms and verbal operators typically used to introduce examples. The relevant items were identified and selected on the basis of a range of sources: field observations made during the data collection stage of the TAEC corpus; a brainstorming session with some TAEC project members; guidelines and instruction materials concerning effective lecturing such as the EMI Handbook developed within the TAEC project (TAEC 2019), British Council's *Academic Teaching Excellence* course (offered at the University of Turin as part of the initiatives to foster EMI), Coursera's *English for Teaching Purposes* programme offered by the University of Barcelona (Coursera 2023), and the Academic Phrasebank (Morley 2021).

After cross checking all the sources mentioned above with respect to recommended or common operators to be used in formulating examples, it was possible to determine a list of relevant items which include the following: example, instance, case, namely, especially, such as, like, illustrate, depict, represent, show. Obviously, the selected items may not account for all the examples introduced in every lecture, as these may be introduced in other ways, even without the explicit mention of such operators. However, it is safe to assume that they are functional to observe example use to a good extent and, most importantly, they can be retrieved automatically through corpus linguistics methods.

The resulting occurrences of the selected operators were obtained via Sketch Engine and scrutinised in terms of frequency and distribution throughout the TAEC lectures. In particular, all the occurrences relating to the lemma 'example' were considered for further analysis with respect to linguistic and interactional features, such as collocations, use of questions, syntactical structure, reference to support material (e.g. slides, whiteboard, handouts); linguistic and intercultural management, e.g. translanguaging, the use of explicitation, pragmatic comments or lack thereof. The results were broken down by subject area and lecturer to distinguish example-related features that were shared across disciplines from those that were indicative of individual lecturing styles. Concordance lines were downloaded in Excel form (with 200 characters to the left and to the right) and sifted through to be annotated in terms of the features mentioned above. These annotations were added to additional columns next to the lemma, thus making it possible to filter the results automatically, obtain quantitative information and explore each instance from a qualitative perspective, while also taking advantage of the complete dataset, including the full transcripts, along with the relevant video recordings and field notes.

## **4 Results and discussion**

The discussion of results is divided into three sub-sections focusing on the frequency and distribution of all the occurrences, their linguistic and pragmatic features, and how they were managed in terms of language and culture.

### **4.1 Frequency and distribution**

All the items identified as potential operators relating to the introduction of examples (see above) were extracted automatically from the TAEC corpus to calculate their total number and verify to what extent they are present in our corpus. The raw frequency of the selected key terms in the whole corpus is reported in Table 4.1. The left column lists the key terms (in their lemma form) and the right column displays the total number of occurrences from the highest to the lowest.



Table 4.1

*Raw frequency of key operators potentially marking the use of examples in the TAEC corpus.*

Key term (lemma)	Total number of occurrences
like	1245
<b>example</b>	<b>541</b>
case	294
show	169
instance	119
especially	85
represent	33
such as	31
namely	26
illustrate	21
depict	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2585</b>

Although not all the occurrences reported in Table 4.1 may be indicative of actual examples introduced by EMI lecturers in their lesson, the lemma ‘example’ can safely be considered an explicit reference to examples and it is the second most frequent item. This does not mean that it is evenly distributed among the 30 lectures contained in the TAEC corpus, as variations in its distribution owing to different disciplines and lecturing styles can be expected.

Table 4.2 shows the number of occurrences of the lemma ‘example’ found in each lecture of the TAEC corpus. In total there are 541 occurrences (of which a minimal part, only 26, are found in students’ speech production). The data are displayed by relative frequency, from the highest to the lowest. The first column includes the reference to the university where the lecture was recorded, i.e. UCPH for the University of Copenhagen (Denmark), UdL for the University of Lleida (Spain), UM for the University of Maastricht (The Netherlands), UNITO for the University of Turin (Italy) and FHSS for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka (Croatia). The second column shows the reference to each lecture included in the TAEC database. The third column displays the total number of words transcribed from each lecture, followed by the reference to the disciplinary area (SH for Social Sciences and Humanities, LS for Life Sciences, PE for Physical

Sciences and Engineering). The last two columns show the total number of occurrences and the relative frequency of the lemma 'example' in each lecture. Table 4.2 is followed by a vertical bar chart (Figure 4.1) showing the relative frequency in visual form to better appreciate the general distribution of the lemma 'example' in the entire corpus.

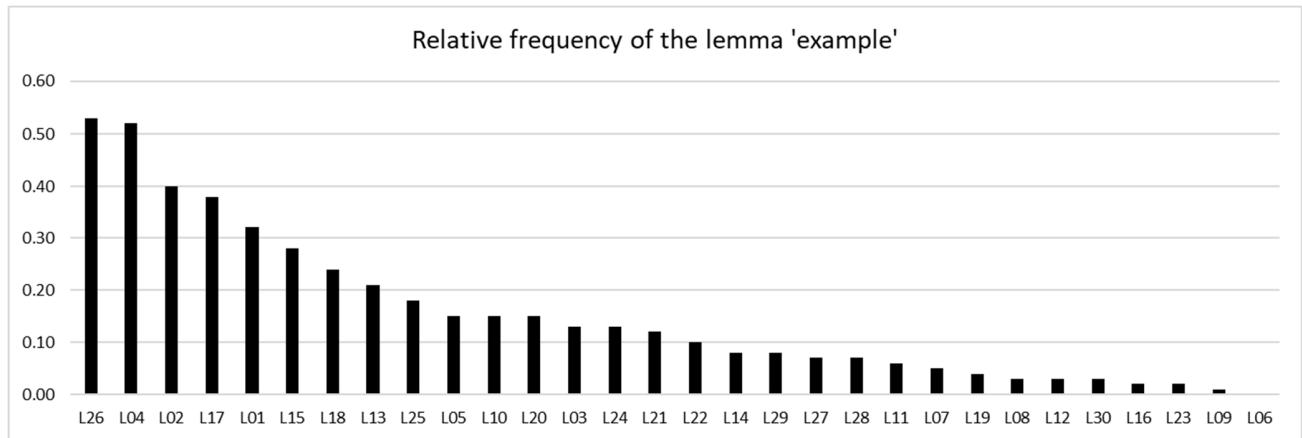
Table 4.2

*Frequency of the lemma 'example'.*

University	Lecture ref.	Total no. words	Discipline	Total no. of occurrences	Relative frequency
UNITO	L26	19415	SH	103	0.53
FHSS	L4	11902	SH	62	0.52
FHSS	L2	10374	SH	42	0.40
UdL	L17	11989	SH	45	0.38
FHSS	L1	9273	SH	30	0.32
UdL	L15	8176	SH	23	0.28
UdL	L18	9950	SH	24	0.24
UdL	L13	10692	SH	22	0.21
UNITO	L25	17947	LS	32	0.18
UM	L20	16554	PE	25	0.15
UCPH	L10	6705	SH	10	0.15
FHSS	L5	6884	LS	10	0.15
UM	L24	13128	SH	17	0.13
FHSS	L3	10366	SH	13	0.13
UM	L21	11191	SH	13	0.12
UM	L22	9627	LS	10	0.10
UNITO	L29	8628	PE	7	0.08
UdL	L14	5053	SH	4	0.08
UNITO	L27	9335	SH	7	0.07
UNITO	L28	11417	SH	8	0.07
UCPH	L11	10811	SH	6	0.06
UCPH	L7	13926	LS	7	0.05
UM	L19	10521	LS	4	0.04
UCPH	L8	12050	SH	4	0.03
UNITO	L30	10675	LS	3	0.03
UCPH	L12	15591	LS	4	0.03
UdL	L16	10641	LS	2	0.02
UM	L23	18573	SH	3	0.02
UCPH	L9	6713	LS	1	0.01
FHSS	L6	10305	LS	0	0.00

Figure 4.1

*Relative frequency of the lemma 'example'.*



Considering the data in Table 4.2 and looking at Figure 4.1, the relative frequency of the lemma 'example' can be divided into three main groups, i.e. high, medium, and low frequency. The first group includes lectures with a relative frequency of the lemma 'example' between the highest value (0.53) and 0.20; then the second group includes lectures with a relative frequency ranging between 0.19 and 0.10; finally, the third group contains all the lectures displaying a lower relative frequency in the use of the word 'example' (between 7 and 0 occurrences). All the lectures in the top part of the list belong to disciplines in the Social Sciences and Humanities. Half of them are from Spain (L17, L15, L18, L13), three are from Croatia and one, which displays the highest number of occurrences (103), is from Italy (L26). The middle range consists of eight lectures in total, four from the Netherlands, two from Croatia, one from Italy and one from Denmark. Finally, the last group ranks the lowest frequency values for the remaining 14 lectures: 5 from Denmark, 4 from Italy, 2 from Spain and 2 from the Netherlands. The only lecture with zero occurrences is L6 from Croatia. The lowest frequency values (i.e., equal to or below 0.5) display little disciplinary variation, as all the lectures but two in this range pertain to Life Sciences.

The considerable variations in frequency distribution that can be appreciated among the lectures from the same TAEC partners may point to individual differences in lecturing style. For instance, 4 out of the 6

lectures recorded in Italy rank in the low frequency bracket, while the others rank at the top of the list (L26) and at the top of the mid frequency range (L25). The only lecture with no occurrences of the lemma ‘example’ (L6), on the other hand, features other items with far greater frequency than can be found in the rest of the corpus: ‘instance’ with 43 occurrences (followed by L16 with 22 occurrences) and ‘namely’ with 22 occurrences (only three more lectures have one or two occurrences of this adverb). Table 4.3 lists the occurrences of the lemma ‘instance’ by relative frequency:

Table 4.3

*Relative frequency of the lemma ‘instance’.*

University	Lecture ref.	Total no. words	Discipline	Total no. of occurrences	Relative frequency
FHSS	L6	10305	LS	43	0.417
UdL	L16	10641	LS	22	0.207
UM	L22	9627	LS	12	0.125
UM	L19	10521	LS	8	0.076
UCPH	L12	15591	LS	8	0.051
UM	L24	13128	SH	6	0.046
UM	L23	18573	SH	7	0.038
UdL	L13	10692	SH	4	0.037
UdL	L17	11989	SH	2	0.017
UNITO	L26	19415	SH	3	0.015
UNITO	L27	9335	SH	1	0.011
UM	L21	11191	SH	1	0.009
UCPH	L11	10811	SH	1	0.009
UNITO	L30	10675	LS	1	0.009

Most lectures have zero or just a handful of occurrences of the lemma ‘instance’. The few lectures with a higher relative frequency of this lemma belong to Life Sciences. These are all introduced with the preposition ‘for’ with the exception of three occurrences (from the same lecture, L26) in which the lemma ‘instance’ appears in an object clause, one of them in combination with the phrase ‘for example’:

Russian Russian system appears as, an **instance** of, extractive institution?

it is it is no longer so, but anyway it was one **instance** of a protest against Wall Street okay?

you're quite right but you you can make other **instances** for example what is also deterring eh foreign companies to invest in our country?

Queries for the verbs *to demonstrate*, *to reveal*, and *to include*, which are often mentioned in instructions on how to give examples, resulted in an extremely limited number of occurrences and these were not especially relevant to giving examples in the lectures where they were mentioned. The same applies to 'illustration'.

#### 4.2 Linguistic and pragmatic features

After looking at the frequency and distribution of the lemma 'example', this section focuses on its linguistic and pragmatic features. Out of all the occurrences of the word 'example' found in the TAEC corpus, some come with pre-modifiers (post-modifiers are used to a very limited extent). Adjectives refer to the following semantic fields:

- quantity (few, further, other)
- order (first, initial, last, next)
- quality (bad, negative, good, best, perfect)
- variety (different, same, typical)
- magnitude (extreme, little, long)
- complexity (concrete, simple)
- worthiness (actual, illustrative, important, interesting, personal)

Possessives are only found in the case of "our" (5 occurrences) and "my" (1 occurrence).

Considering verbs with 'example' as object, the following occurrences can be retrieved from the corpus:

Table 4.4.

*Frequency of verbs occurring with 'example' as object.*

Verb (lemma)	No. of occurrences
be	35
see	6
give	5
take	5
have	5
use	3
put	2
make	2
show	1

Apart from the occurrences introduced by the verb to be, it can be observed that the other verbs are typical collocations, except for 'put' and 'make' that may be more indicative of non-native language use.

When verbs are queried in combination with 'example' as subject, the corpus concordance tool provides an output of 39 occurrences. However, only a smaller sub-set is relevant to the use of 'example' as subject followed by a verb, such as to be (9 occurrences) and to illustrate (2 occurrences). All the other verbs actually refer to either a previous subject in the same sentence in which the word 'example' is embedded together with the preposition for, as in 'for example', or to a subsequent sentence in the form of imperative or interrogative clauses.

you can for	<b>example</b>	do something called SQUID magnetometry (L20)
eh then take away the self-interest eh and then eh think of it that was also the initial	<b>example</b>	think of it as for example climate change (L10)
geography, eh, trade integration, institutions, culture linguistic, ethnical religious aspects for	<b>example</b>	do you hav-_ are you aware of_ have you ever heard of Max Weber?, in your high school? (L26)

As regards prepositional phrases, the output obtained from the concordance tool highlights the following prepositions used in combination with the word 'example': for, per, in, to, at, of, about. The most frequent one, 'for example', occurs 318 times, followed by non-standard 'per example' uttered 28 times by the same lecturer (L2). Further prepositions come as part of phrases introduced by other terms. The preposition 'in' is usually followed by a determiner (in this example, in the example) or a possessive (in our example), but it is

also found in the non-standard phrase 'in example' (with no post-modifier), which is uttered 13 times by the same lecturer (L25). This can hardly be related to the lecturer's native language (Italian) and seems to be an idiosyncratic use. All the other prepositions come in combination with phrasal verbs (come back to, stick to) or quantifiers, such as 'plenty of examples', 'a lot of examples', and set phrases ('think of an example', 'by way of example').

Other than prepositional phrases, the word 'example' appears in object position to a much greater extent than in subject position (26.4% vs. 1.3%). More generally, positioning may be identified before, mid-way or after the actual sentence conveying the example-related content, with more than half of the occurrences appearing prior to the example (53%, part of these in combination with 'so' and, to a lesser extent, with 'like'), followed by mid-positioning (27%), i.e. after initiating the formulation of the example (this positioning may well come right after the initial subject or verb), and post-positioning (20%), thus framing (or re-framing) the content previously conveyed as an example.

that is produced in this oligopoly so whatever happens, with, the demand, or with the production, of this company, the quantity that they produce the quantity they decide to produce is going to affect the total market quantity because for

**example**

in this case, QA is Q diwi- divided by three. right? so whatever happens with that one third is going to affect, the rest of the, world or whichever market\_ size of the market it is. so for example in your assignment if i tell you to write to draw (L3)

of the metal. right? so eh and the rule of thumb is the higher the oxidation state of the metal the greater the splitting. okay? the greater the oxidation state the greater the splitting so if you have iron two-plus and iron three-plus for

**example**

iron three-plus iron will have a high\_ a greater splitting. the other thing is eh as you go down the group... let's say for example from iron to ruthenium to osmium those three metals are in the same group, delta-O increases. okay? so those are (L20)

also for next year. so it's not just a problem this year it's definitely also impacting on next year. okay that's just to illustrate a little bit that these impact on climate where i mentioned here loss of buds and berries. that is a very good

**example**

of of this happening, and of course we very can do very little. in the first place we could choose a good, eh site for your vineyard, eh but we come back to that more again when we talk more about climate. for now eh looking a bit more onto this with (L12)

In terms of syntax, there is a prevalence of paratactic structures with the use of main clauses in nearly 70% of the occurrences. Hypotactic structures, with subordinate clauses, are less frequent, with a prevalence of if-

clauses (about half of the occurrences), followed by temporal adverbial clauses introduced by when (about 18% of occurrences). In constructing conditional or temporal adverbial clauses, the auxiliary verb forms 'would' and 'will' are often introduced (incorrectly) in the dependent clause as well.

Only 10% of the occurrences are related to examples formulated as direct questions, often without the standard verb-subject inversion but only with rising intonation patterns. Half of these are directed to the students, or else the lecturer and the whole group of participants in the lecture (with the use of second or first person plural pronouns 'you' and 'we' respectively). These you/we questions may be considered as a strategy to keep higher levels of interaction between the lecturer and the students, as is the case in academic presentations (Anderson & Cirillo, 2022). In addition to questions, other interaction-oriented strategies accompanying the use of examples are expressed by means of imperative verb forms to draw the attention or prompt a certain course of action:

at your left side you see the sympathetic division or sympathetic innervation of the organs and for	<b>example</b>	let's see eh let's see stomach you see the stomach and, you see the sympathetic fibres (L5)
okay now we have an	<b>example,</b>	so help me with this. you bought a machine, and the purchase price of the machine was 40 400,000 kuna (L1)
eh you should note this down without the other members of the group knowing what you vote okay? so note the points down for	<b>example,</b>	eh you can say (Name) so gives to number three four points, to number five two points and to number eh seven one point for (L18)

Explicit references to the content displayed in the slides, board or course material being used during the lecture are also made and framed as examples in some cases (nearly 9% of occurrences) by introducing determiners such as 'this' and 'these' or the adverb 'here'.

drugs. because it's eh again eh there is an influence (on) what we are talking about yes very strong look look at this	<b>example</b>	in a few words, this is more recent you see New England Journal of Medicine is the top journal for eh me and you, for pra- (L25)
no, you have the possibility to modify these phospholipids to use, different types of phospholipids and here you see an	<b>example.</b>	phosphatidylinositol phosphate. it's a long name, but you should realize it's just a phospho- eh eh eh fatty acid (L22)



, Belgium is one of the top receiver otherwise,  
<POINTING\_ON\_SLIDES> this would be, they would  
be somewhere here per

**example** Belgium. eh this actually explains us the changes,  
eh in the priorities, eh so agriculture was the top  
priority area of

In some cases (still about 9% of the occurrences), examples are especially foregrounded as they come with adjectives (see 4.1), qualifiers and pragmatic comments (Björkman 2011) with which the lecturer adds cataphoric or anaphoric references, thus creating expectations and anticipation or retrieving cross references to content already delivered prior to that moment.

in the older versions of your, book, eh in this, other,  
eh, market structure that we are going to learn  
about next time the

**example** that is given\_, actually two **examples** do not reflect  
the situation that we're having Croatia not even in  
America (L3)

everywhere at every moment okay? we must use it  
with very\_ with a lot of of brain thinking very much  
about it we will see an

**example** but the silence we have these five key elements for  
working for the radio verbal language oral  
language, music, the (L14)

me feel good or there\_ that at least does not eh  
make things more difficult. okay? before we we  
were talking about the

**example** of the exam that we all have had at least once in  
our lives right? that we are so nervous that we  
cannot perform good, so the (L17)

The analysis of pronominal use can be extended beyond interrogative clauses (see above), which clearly purport to increase interaction levels and involve more the target recipients of a lecture. Of all the occurrences of the lemma 'example' found in the corpus, 86 are linked to the second-person plural pronoun 'you' (or possessive 'your') while 41 are expressed with first-person plural pronoun 'we' (or possessive 'our'). Such explicit references to the learners and the lecturer may mirror the membership and altercasting strategies typically found in academic presentations as mentioned earlier. Self-references expressed by using the first-person singular pronoun 'I' appear just 20 times (only 3 in lectures pertaining to Life Sciences). In most of these examples, lecturers introduce personal anecdotes or experience, which mirror storytelling practices (Alsop et al. 2013) (see 4.3).

, ordinary everyday language, are they academic terms with a certain, history, and baggage, eh attached to them. so for	<b>example</b>	i was just supervising two students the ones that will come next week, and they write on gender-based violence, and they (L11)
but i read them on my eh laptop so most_ like you know the the paper support is becoming more and more up- outdated like i for	<b>example</b>	i i told you i love reading but i buy most of my books, eh in digital format and it's not even_ i like books i like them (L13)
twelve encara estan no? a sisè [si ] so it's it's different, what are these factors? biology, one one of these factors for	<b>example,</b>	i am a very active person very nervous person in the terms of traditional eh, vocabulary, maybe someone here is very (L17)

Other uses of the first-person singular pronoun (to a much more limited extent) are linked to expressing a personal opinion or becoming part of the example itself that is co-constructed with the learners and within the classroom setting.

on firms, on people and, will weaken, eh weakens bas- basically individual initiative and sense of responsibility for	<b>example</b>	i would say that Cochrane is very much against reddito di cittadinanza . why? reddito di cittadinanza does not eh is not (L26)
by one per cent, Y is going to change by beta per cent. this is the interpretation just what we have seen for ex- for	<b>example</b>	education or experience. if i increase my education by one per cent my wage was to increase by zero point forty-four (xx) (L28)
not maybe we can just eh go ahead and express everything but sometimes we may need, to regulate our emotions okay? for	<b>example,</b>	i may be angry with [Name], [Name] said something that he finds very innocent but i find it very, bothering and i'm (L17)

As was observed in the use of 'example', paratactic structures also prevail (two thirds of the occurrences) over hypotactic ones when examples are marked by the operator 'instance'. If-clauses and questions can again be detected in slightly more than 10% of all the occurrences, along with membership and altercasting strategies. The only major difference concerns lecturer's self-references (with the use of first-person singular or personal pronouns) that are rarely used (only 3 occurrences) with 'instance'.

#### 4.3 Linguistic and cultural management

Browsing the kinds of examples encountered in the TAEC corpus, various linguistic and content-related salient features can be subsumed into a number of categories. First, hyponyms appear to be far more preferred than

hypernyms and synonyms when examples are simply built around individual terms or clusters of terms. That is not surprising, as it follows the logic of going from the general to the specific and mirrors the use of repetitions and paraphrasing observed in other EMI lectures for giving emphasis, not just in response to a disfluency (Björkman 2013). This is especially relevant to Life Sciences, where more specific content is also included in the examples, possibly relying on a technical knowledge-base that is shared with learners.

Upon the occurrence of the token ‘example’, only four cases of code-switching and translanguaging could be detected among all the lectures in the TAEC corpus. In fact, the first example (from L18) seems to be the result of L1 interference (with Spanish “por ejemplo”). In the same lecture, students are invited to provide some examples; two of them perform translanguaging in dealing with terminology they may not be totally familiar with (i.e. smuggling). A similar situation arose in L26, where again students are not familiar with a specific term and express themselves in their native language (they say “brevetti” in Italian for patents while the lecturer paraphrases the same concept in English). Similarly, in L17 the lecturer provides an example of a specific kind of emotion and complements the term in English with the same term in Catalan (prior to that, the lecturer openly admits that she is not sure about the translation into English of a certain school grade category). The same situation occurs in L29, yet the lecturer cannot find the English words for “sci alpinismo” (Alpine skiing) in developing an example and decides to discard the example altogether.

going to take, and then the time members which usually are the experts so the people working on this process so por- for

**example** in a kitchen so the the people who is cooking the food and probably also the people who is serving the food. okay? so we (L18)

<S3> smuggling <FOREIGN\_ES> es tráfico? </FOREIGN\_CA> </S3>

**example** there is a guest (xx) eh birds smuggling </S9>

<S1> smuggling is yeah like yeah eh it's <FOREIGN\_ES> contrabando </FOREIGN\_ES> more or less </S1> <S9> és correcte </FOREIGN\_CA> for

<S1> eh eh what? </S1>

<S3> contrabando de pájaros <LAUGH> </S3>

<S1> oh yeah yeah this could be yeah yeah. exactly birds smuggling yeah yeah yeah. good idea (L18)

comes with the possession of something yeah for example what is intellectual property right? </S1> <SS> (xx) </SS> <S1> eh? </S1> <S10> <FOREIGN\_IT> brevetti </FOREIGN\_IT> </S10>

**example** <S1> for example [<S?> <FOREIGN\_IT> brevetti </FOREIGN\_IT> </S?>] if you are going to, invent a new way of\_ a new a new type of pasta (L26)

the ones that are in the initial cycle medium cycle superior cycle i don't know if the translation is correct but more or less eh <FOREIGN\_CA> cicle inicial cicle mitjà cicle superior </FOREIGN\_CA> so, for

**example** anguish , that is face a threat that is, relatively little known it's like <FOREIGN\_CA> angustia </FOREIGN\_CA> eh that we say doesn't appear until children are at least, eight years old (L17)

francese eh co- come si chiama lo sci alpinismo in inglese? va beh. forget about it. it doesn't matter i take i use another

**example** ... forget about sci alpinismo sorry i... this thing is important because, it happens not only with the, ARVA in sci (L29)

Another case in which the lecturer encountered a lexical challenge was managed through collaboration with the students, who eventually provided the term that the lecturer was looking for, but still in English and without resorting to anyone's first language:

like i remember i **for example** in the Ripollès there's a textile eh industry eh itinerary. and there are a lot of like old eh, <SNAPPING\_FINGERS> warehouses and old eh what's it called. now i cannot come up with the word <P04> not companies the other thing <CLAPPING\_HANDS> where you make things where you manufacture things? the eh [<S19> factories </S19>] factory thank you very good you see you can help me so there's the factories the very old factories (L13).

Focusing on the content *per se*, another category concerns the presentation of practical examples (55%), among which the references to external situations are twice as much the references to the very content already addressed in the same or other lectures. Depending on the disciplinary area and the topic of every lecture, examples revolve around a range of items, e.g., brands, buying/selling, companies, countries, formulas, molecular structures, course material and assignments/final tests. Fictional or made-up examples are twice as much real life examples, while storytelling is employed to a very limited extent. As regards particularly culture-bound examples, on some occasions lecturers take advantage of the multicultural composition of their target audience, thus making reference to the country of origin or other items that are known to be typical of the local setting *vis-à-vis* non-local settings. However, this is not always the case, especially with proper names (of companies or persons) that the lecturer may deem to be known by the target audience.

Below are five illustrative cases.

Aperol Spritz (L4)

<S1> i tend to agree with you, i understand what you meant i'll i'll i'll tell you but eh yes it's basically you change the warranty instructions eh you give free delivery or you don't give free delivery eh **for example** do you know the Aperol Spritz? drink </S1>

<S?> yes </S?>

<S1> yes you are from Italy. and, how\_ if you order Aperol Spritz in Italy, what do you get? </S1>

<S?> (xx), lemon or orange, a slice of orange [<S1> mhm </S1>] and the Aperol Spritz </S?>

<S1> and what else? </S1>

<S?> ice </S?>

<S1> and what else? </S1>

<S?> (xx) </S?>

<S1> do you get something to eat? finger food </S1>

<S?> ah no </S?>

<S1> what do you mean no? [<S?> no </S?>] i always get in Italy something to eat <SS\_LAUGH> </S1>

<S?> no </S?>

<S1> really? </S1>

<S?> yes really [<S1> ah </S1>] </S?>

<S1> it's a new thing change they copied Croatians. i\_ have has anybody else been to Italy? or doing Aperol Sprits </S1>

<SS> yes </SS>

<S1> did you get something? </S1>

<S?> no </S?>

<S1> no? </S1>

<S?> just a orange </S?>

<S1> oh my God okay so it's it's\_ i'm not up to date eh but eh, okay maybe it has to do with the time of the day, like around seven, p.m. </S1>

<S?> yeah i know but [<S1> no really oh my God </S1>] (xx) </S?>

<S1> <LAUGH> so yeah this is cultural change. eh they used to give you something like the, eh olives and some cookies or e- even s- small pizza, part [<S?> (xx) </S?>] like you would really get fat, of the Aperol Spritz <LAUGH> and now and this is interesting now if i go to Trieste and i order Aperol i would be very disappointed. because i expect to get that but if you order it in Croatia you don't expect to get that.

#### Romania vs. Croatia (L4)

<S1> when nobody sees they are perfect <LAUGH> masterpiece when when it's just just the everyday routine they don't care about it right? <LAUGH> eh yes okay i- it can be an **example** but but, i- but i don't know in Romania but in Croatia okay i- i- less women are chefs but, it would not be a problem for me if she is a chef but there there could be an example if it's a problem like i don't want to eat because, it's a woman. or i don't want, i don't know maybe, gynaecologist, to be a man. or i don't know. so there are these things that you need to, to think about what is, appropriate. can you think of something else that that, could be a problem because the attitudes are different or the underlying assumptions <P05> eh eh eh... attitudes toward , eh... what about s- eh s- psychologists?... is it okay to go to psychologist or psychiatrist?

#### Local references, multiple languages (L6)

now eh certain specializations of those saints, were, eh constructed, out of linguistic association so **for instance**, what you have in, Croatia as a protector of sight as a protector of the eyes and that is (xx) Saint Sant San Vito Saint vit- Vitus or Vitus and so on, eh it usually is not eh venerated as such in other countries because <FOREIGN\_HR> vid </FOREIGN\_HR> means also sight in Croatian that's why the Croats did relate his specialty with the sight it is also the protector of, this town of of the city of Rijeka. eh on the other hand eh Saint Blasius, eh which is <FOREIGN\_HR> (xx) </FOREIGN\_HR> or <FOREIGN\_HR> (xx) </FOREIGN\_HR> in Dubrovnik is eh the protector, of, the throat, because of the German, word <FOREIGN\_DE> blasen </FOREIGN\_DE>, which means to actually, eh inhale or or actually exhale eh eh so eh only in those parts that are under German influence it was, eh eh eh it was considered to be specialized for this eh you have also other\_ or Saint <FOREIGN\_IT> San Lucia </FOREIGN\_IT> **for instance**. <FOREIGN\_IT> Santa Lucia </FOREIGN\_IT>, eh that is

actually <FOREIGN\_LA> lux lucis </FOREIGN\_LA> which is light that's why she is protectors , from again the diseases of the eye. eh sometimes the specialization comes out of, iconographic details so **for instance** you have, eh, Saint, eh Anthony the Abbot.

Kodak (with explanation) (L21)

you probably can reduce it. but the question still remains do you want to shield your employees from all of these uncontrollable factors? okay you can reduce the risk premium that's true. but, think about eh, i would like to give the Kodak **example** here. do you want to\_ i mean you all know Kodak they were very good in the analog cameras and everything or? and all of a sudden the digital camera came and they completely, the- their entire market segment broke away. so there was a shift in the

Mònica Terribas (without explanation) (L13)

to be in a TV in a TV set as we were saying it's very different to be in a radio because in the radio for example people cannot see you so they don't have the visual information and you as communicators would have to provide this information so **for example** if you listen to i don't know, Mònica Terribas in the morning you will see that sometimes she describes a little bit eh her eh... colleagues, the people she invites in she says oh eh... today this person eh you will excuse him or her because you

## 5 Conclusions

This chapter focused on the use of examples in teacher talk in EMI lectures. In particular, the analysis looked at all the 541 occurrences of the lemma 'example' in the TAEC corpus. While this is a clear limitation of the study, as examples are also marked by other operators (or no explicit operator at all), corpus linguistics methods have afforded the opportunity to systematically identify at least a prominent sub-set of examples and to investigate them in detail. Another limitation concerns the representativeness of the TAEC corpus, which includes 30 lectures, i.e. six lectures from each of the five project partners, delivered by lecturers with different backgrounds, teaching styles, and from a variety of disciplines among Social Sciences, Humanities, Physical Sciences, Engineering, and Life Sciences. While the overall scope of the corpus is possibly much wider than many of the datasets used in other EMI research studies so far, the resulting observations cannot be generalised as they essentially mirror the composite nature of the corpus itself.

The relative frequency of the occurrences of the lemma 'example' shows considerable variation across the EMI lectures in the TAEC corpus. This variation seems to mirror disciplinary differences, as higher frequency rates are found in Social Sciences and Humanities, whereas lower frequency is more common in Life Sciences.

Among the linguistic features, typical collocations (e.g. with verbs and adjectives) and standard use of prepositional clauses go hand in hand with non-standard and idiosyncratic patterns (e.g., 'per example' and 'in example' without post-modifiers). Questions and hypotactic structures, especially with conditional and temporal adverbial sentences, also tend to follow non-standard patterns, yet these are common features of ELFA where "language practices are diversified and hybridized for multiple meanings and knowledge construction processes" (Alhasnawi ,2021: p. 51). Indeed, knowledge is also co-constructed in examples through membership and altercasting strategies, along with mediation, which can be seen in translanguaging practices and in the (partial) cultural management of local examples.

Although the prime focus of EMI is not on second language learning, EMI lecturers inevitably find themselves in a position of influencing learners' second language development, and this can be channelled at best with effective formulation of examples in teacher talk. Echoing Nicaise (2022: p. 136), "given the large proportion of teacher talk within the classroom, it really makes sense to use it strategically, not just as a means to an end, but as a powerful pedagogical tool which provides the greatest learning opportunities for our learners". Hopefully, this study can be a modest step in that direction with the following recommendations derived from the observations made in analysing the TAEC corpus with respect to examples explicitly marked by the lemma 'example'.

On a linguistic and pragmatic level, the use of modifiers that may come before or follow the word 'example' can be a simple and yet powerful strategy in example design. For instance, adjectives of various semantic fields can be introduced to draw learners' attention: quantity (few, further, other), order (first, initial, last, next), quality (bad, negative, good, best, perfect), variety (different, same, typical), magnitude (extreme, little, long) complexity (concrete, simple), worthiness (actual, illustrative, illustrative, interesting, personal).

Determiners and possessives may also be used for directing learners' attention to visual content displayed on a screen or board.

Subordinate sentences, in particular if- and when-clauses, along with direct questions appear to be challenging for some EMI lecturers. This is likely to be a common challenge beyond example use in lecturing, and could be the focus of more targeted linguistic support to EMI lecturers.

Prepositional phrases (like 'for example') can be introduced before, mid-way or after the example-related content. Positioning and the introduction of pragmatic comments (e.g. about the final exam) can be helpful to better frame examples and create anaphoric or cataphoric connections to content already delivered or to be delivered respectively, thus repeating a point or generating expectations. Non-standard prepositions instead may lead to ambiguous formulations (e.g., per example, in example) to the detriment of lecturers' face and credibility.

There seems to be once again disciplinary variation in the use of hyponyms and more specific content introduced in examples during LS and PE lectures, as they tend to refer to technical items (e.g., molecular models, mechanical parts) which seemingly belong to an internationally-shared knowledge base. On the other hand, SH lectures are more prone to examples that are linked to current affairs and external items, such as a piece of news or a particular figure from a certain country, along with both real and, especially, fictional cases.

On a more interactional level, the use of first- and second-person plural pronouns like you and we, and possessives (our) can be beneficial to make learners feel more involved and identify themselves with the example being offered. The co-construction of examples is also a way to involve learners, especially with references to the local country and by making comparisons with international students' countries of origin. Students' participation may even be prompted in case of linguistic challenges, when a lecturer is not sure about how to express a certain example in English, with possible code-switching to the lecturer's native language and translanguaging practices (this also applies to students' speech production). When more local, specific cultural references are made in examples, whether these are supplemented with explicitation and expansion or not may determine potential exclusion of those learners who are unfamiliar with such references.



Greater awareness of all the features of example design reviewed in this chapter may turn challenges and weaknesses into strategies for effective lecturing. These can be used in teacher training to identify and promote best practices in combining the linguistic, pragmatic, interactional and cultural dimensions of example design.

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