MEDIATING LINGUACULTURAL ASYMMETRIES THROUGH ELF IN UNEQUAL IMMIGRATION ENCOUNTERS

MARIA GRAZIA GUIDO
UNIVERSITY OF SALENTO

Abstract – The cognitive and communicative processes involved in situations of unequal encounters between non-western supplicants (i.e., African immigrants and asylum seekers) and western experts in authority shall be explored in this paper through a number of case studies aimed at illustrating that the variations of English as a 'lingua franca' (ELF) which each contact group uses obey different linguacultural conventions entailing a detachment of ELF from the norms of English as a native language (ENL), since ELF is seen as developing from non-native speakers' processes of transfer into their English uses of their respective L1 typological, logical, textual, lexical-semantic and pragmatic structures. A number of case studies will illustrate how the lack of acknowledgement of other ELF variations – due to the fact that they are often perceived in intercultural communication as formally deviating and socio-pragmatically inappropriate – may have serious consequences in contexts involving social, legal, or health matters, thus giving rise to misunderstandings that often raise ethical issues about social justice. It is therefore argued that principled pedagogic initiatives aimed at making western experts in authority aware of the mediating strategies for achieving a 'mutual accommodation' of ELF variations could, on the one hand, protect the social identities of the participants in unequal encounters and, on the other, facilitate the conveyance of their respective culturally-marked knowledge. This would foster effective communication in cross-cultural immigration encounters with the ultimate aim of developing a 'hybrid ELF mode' of cross-cultural specialized communication that can be acknowledged and eventually shared by both interacting groups.

Keywords: ELF immigration encounters; ELF variations; ELF-mediated accommodation; L1 typological and pragmalinguistic transfer.

1. Research context and topic

This paper intends to enquire into the extent to which ELF used in immigration domains typically reflects the power/status asymmetries between the participants in cross-cultural interactions (Guido 2008), which are here explored with reference to legal, social and health contexts. It will be argued that in such contexts, the conditions for achieving successful communication through ELF may not occur because of the difference in the participants' native linguacultural backgrounds from which they appropriate English without conforming to native-speaker norms of usage (Seidlhofer 2011). Such a communication failure, together with possible solutions for successful interactions, will be explored by means of a number of ethnographic case studies investigating the cognitive and communicative processes of ELF use in unequal encounters between *(a)* 'non-western' (African) immigrants coming from the so-called 'outer circle' (Kachru 1986) – namely, from former British colonies where English is a second language used for institutional/interethnic communication – and speaking ELF variations that make endonormative reference to sanctioned non-native grammar codes, and *(b)* 'western' (Italian) experts in authority from the 'expanding circle' (Kachru 1986), speaking ELF variations typical of countries (like Italy) where English is a foreign language that is used for international communication and that, as such, makes exonormative reference to the native 'inner-circle' (Kachru 1986) Standard-English code. This explains the fact that western

experts perceive the immigrants' ELF variations as defective 'inner circle' ones – in fact, they evaluate such variations against the native Standard English code and, therefore, they consider 'ELF deviations' as 'errors'. This is so because it is common belief in Global-English research (Brumfit 1982; Crystal 2003; Trudgill and Hannah 1995) that the Standard-English grammar code and the pragmatic behaviours conventionally ascribed to the 'English as a native language' (ENL) variation are shared norms in ELF intercultural interactions and international transactions. The contention in this paper, instead, is precisely that the enquiry into the Global English has so far actually eluded the full acknowledgement of different non-native speakers' unconventional ELF uses and of their consequent non-conformity to ENL specialized conventions.

2. Theoretical background

The present research is grounded on the notions that ENL is not the authentic English variety against which non-native registers and interlanguages are assessed, and that ELF is not a unique and shared international English variety meant as a pre-constructed 'foreign language' for efficient interaction (Bhatia 1997; Firth 1996; Knapp and Meierkord 2002; Pennycook 1994). On the contrary, ELF is viewed principally as developing from the transfer of the speakers' L1 structures into L2-English. In Interlanguage research (Selinker 1969, 1992), the notion of 'L1→L2 transfer' justifies L2-speakers' syntactic errors (Corder 1981), but in ELF research such a notion entails instead the speakers' L1 schemata interfering with L2-English grammar, thus generating ELF variations. The term 'schemata' encompasses the background knowledge of the L1 social-semiotic (Halliday 1978), its grammaticalization, and the sociopragmatic behaviours shared by a speech community (Carrell 1983). The focus of this paper, therefore, is on different ELF variations in contact, regarded as the speakers' processes of language 'authentication' (Widdowson 1979) – or appropriation – by means of their different native linguacultural conventions. Consequently, ELF variations are here regarded as:

(a)   independent from – and not approximating to – ENL (Guido 2008, 2012; Jenkins 2000, 2007; Seidlhofer 2001, 2004, 2011; Widdowson 1994, 1997);
(b)   inclusive of 'fossilized interlanguages' and pidgin/creole Englishes, all of them considered as diatopic variations;
(c)   not accounting for 'interlanguage errors' in need of defossilization and for 'code deviations' produced by 'uneducated' L2-speakers;
(d)   also inclusive of ENL that, when dislocated in non-native contexts of intercultural communication, becomes just one among other ELF diatopic variations which are likewise liable to cause misunderstandings.

An instance of the lack of acknowledgement of ELF variations is contained in the Italian Ministry of Education's TFA test for the admission of ESOL school-teachers to attend in-service training courses. The specific question was:

> The non-native speaker's language system that contains features of his/her mother language, features of the target language, and features that are peculiarly his/her own" is defined as:
> (a) interlanguage
> (b) idiolect
> (c) dialect
> (d) lingua franca

The expected answer was 'interlanguage', not 'lingua franca', as the reference was still to the native speaker's 'target language', which would entail disregarding any possibility of teaching 'lingua franca' variations and, thus, of preventing misunderstanding by promoting ELF accommodation strategies in intercultural communication.

3. Research rationale and hypothesis

Misunderstandings in ELF intercultural interactions are here held to be less frequent when the participants' L1 grammar structures are typologically similar (Greenberg 1973), hence, once transferred to ELF, they are perceived as cognitively shared, linguistically convergent – and, thus, familiar and 'unmarked' (Eckman 1977), facilitating pragmatic accommodation. Misunderstandings, instead, are here deemed to be more frequent when the participants' L1 grammar structures are typologically different and thus, when they are transferred to ELF, they come to be perceived as linguistically divergent, unfamiliar and 'marked' (Eckman 1977), formally unavailable and conceptually inaccessible to the participants' respective L1 schemata, and pragmatically inappropriate (Kasper 1992; Scotton 1983) with reference to the participants' respective ELF variations. The hypothesis in this study is that to non-western immigrants' native schemata, also the western conventions of Standard-English specialized discourses may be perceived as cognitively and linguistically inaccessible, conceptually unavailable (Widdowson 1991), and socio-culturally and ethically unacceptable – thus affecting the immigrants' own pragmalinguistic behaviours and interpretative strategies, ultimately leading to communication failure (Thomas 1983).

4. Research objectives and case-study method

The objective of the research reported in this paper is instead the possible achievement of a 'mutual intelligibility' (House 1999) also in such power-asymmetry cases of interaction with non-western immigrants. This can be attained by developing in the western experts in charge of the interactions an awareness of ELF variations at different levels of markedness – more precisely, in the cases in point, between: *(1)* two different L1 typologies in contact through ELF, i.e., Accusativity and Ergativity; *(2)* two different culture-bound textual typologies in conflict, i.e., 'western' forensic and 'non-western' ethnopoetic patterns; *(3)* specialized lexis (i.e., in conventional psychiatric discourse) and native idioms (i.e., idioms of distress); *(4)* different uses of epistemic and deontic modality; *(5)* culturally-marked, divergent notions of counterfactual and factual logic; and *(6)* opposite schemata (i.e., 'utopian' vs. 'dystopian' socio-political schemata in responsible tourism). The ultimate aim is in fact a co-construction of ELF specialized discourses that groups in contact may find accessible and acceptable. For this reason, some case studies will enquire into possible hybridization strategies of reformulation aimed at making ELF discourse conform to the immigrants' different native linguacultural backgrounds in order to protect the social identities of participants in unequal encounters, facilitate the mutual conveyance of their culturally-marked knowledge, foster successful intercultural communication through ELF, and finally promote the social inclusion of marginalized immigrants.

The method adopted in the four case-study enquiries (the first three of them having been implemented at the turn of the century, when migrations from Africa were induced mainly by poor economic or by civil-war conditions at home) has initially entailed an

ethnographic data collection, consisting in recording exchanges in unequal encounters to explore how western experts and non-western migrants interact through ELF and make sense of the situations they are involved in. The investigation followed the procedure of protocol analysis (Ericsson and Simon 1984) when transcribing the taped exchanges. To this purpose, a Conversation Analysis (Moerman 1988) was then applied,[1] consisting in annotating the transcribed exchanges by using both formal and pragmatic tags, such as:

Pref/Dispref M → Preferred/Dispreferred Move
Acc-St / Erg-St → Accusative/Ergative (typological) Structure
NP-ELF → Nigerian Pidgin English as ELF variation
Krio-ELF → Sierra Leone Krio English as ELF variation
It-ELF → Italian-English as ELF variation
(NPE/Krio) TM → (NPE/Krio) pre-verbal Tense Marker
(NPE/Krio) AM Perfect/Continuous/Habitual → (NPE/Krio) pre-verbal Aspect Marker
[Ment→Mat] → Mental processes → Material processes

5. Case study 1: Accusative and Ergative L1 typologies in contact through ELF

Case study 1 is an instance of ELF accommodation failure. It consists in an Italian intercultural mediator (IM1) interrogating a Nigerian asylum seeker (AS1), who is an illegal immigrant suspected of hiding the identity of the smuggler who brought his boat to the Italian coasts. Here, miscommunication is caused by the two participants' unawareness of their respective L1→ELF transfer processes. The focus is precisely on two event conceptualisations in contact, transferred from the participants' typologically-different L1s (NPE and domain-specific Italian-ELF) into their respective ELF variations.

On the one hand, there is the Italian intercultural mediator's Accusative L1, where the animate Agent is grammaticalized as a 'dynamic cause' foregrounded in Subject position. This is the typical transitive SV[O] structure that emphasizes the Agent's responsibility in determining the action, as in the examples that follow:

Active transitive clause:
The smuggler   sailed   the boat
Subject: Agent   →   Object (Medium)

Passive transitive clause:
The boat   was sailed   [by the smuggler]
Subject: Medium   →   Agent (in the background)

On the other hand, there is the African immigrant's Ergative L1, where the inanimate Object, or Medium (e.g., *the boat*, *the car*), is grammaticalized as animate Agent in Subject position in the typical OV[S] structure, in which the 'dynamic cause' of the illegal journey is not represented by the actual animate Agent (i.e., *the smuggler*), as in the following example:

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[1] The following conversation symbols are also employed in transcription (Edwards 1997): [ ] → overlapping speech; <u>underlining</u> → emphasis; ° ° → quieter speech; (.) → micropause; (..) → pause; :: → elongation of prior sound; hhh → breathing out; .hhh → breathing in; > < → speed-up talk; = → latching.

Ergative clause:
The boat sailed
Intransitive Subject: Medium (action as self-caused)

The point is that Ergative structures do not deliberately leave Agents unspecified (as in transitive Passive clauses). This is due to the fact that Ergative conceptualizations of events, which are typical of Proto-Indoeuropean and Proto-Afroasiatic languages, are believed to have evolved from the primordial experience of perceiving natural inanimate objects as animate agents with their own autonomous force controlling people's lives. The Ergative account of facts as 'epic events' can be found in ancient oral narratives that report the early human beings' unsettling sensations of being at the mercy of natural phenomena – which is also reflected in today's animist belief that every natural element has its 'spirit' (as in African animist religions). Indeed, Ergative structures are still evident in Central Saharian and West-African languages (DeLancey 1981).

A past example of oral Ergative journey reports, which today is considered as written 'epic poetry', is represented by Homer's *Odyssey*. What follows is an extract from Book XII, translated from Ancient Greek into English.[2] This is the episode in which Ulysses and his crew are going through the Scylla and Charybdis Straits between Sicily and Calabria and, like today's immigrants, undergo the traumatic experience of feeling at the mercy of natural elements – i.e., a huge 'tsunami' wave, a vortex in the rough sea, the furious wind, the lightening, and the ship struggling against them – which are all personified in Ergative Subject position (italicized in the extract) within the clauses:[3]

> Then we entered the Straits in great fear of mind, for on the one hand was Scylla, and on the other *dread Charybdis* kept sucking up the salt water. As *she* vomited it up, the *spray* reached the top of the rocks on either side. […] While we were taken up with this, and were expecting each moment to be our last, *Scylla* pounced down suddenly upon us and snatched up my six best men, and in a moment I saw their hands and feet struggling in the air as *Scylla* was carrying them off. […] Then *Jove* let fly with *his* thunderbolts, and *the ship* went round and round, and was filled with fire as *the lightning* struck it. The men all fell into the sea. *The wind* got into the South again and *the waves* bore me along all night.

Another typical past example of oral Ergative journey reports that today is considered as 'poetry' is the anonymous Anglo-Saxon verse-tale *The Seafarer*, where again natural elements threatening the seafarer's life are in Ergative Subject position. Here is an extract translated into Modern English:[4]

> I can tell the true riddle of my own self, and speak of my experiences – how I have endured cruel anxiety at heart and experienced the terrible surging of the waves. […] There *storms* would pound the rocky cliffs whilst the *tern*, icy-winged, answered them; very often the *sea-eagle* would screech, *wings* dappled with spray. […] *The shadow of night* would spread gloom; it would snow from the north, *rime-frost* would bind the ground; *hail*, coldest of grains, would fall upon the earth.

Modern reproductions of such early Ergative journey narrative are, in 'western' cultures, cast into the literary category of 'epic poetry', thus losing their characteristics of ordinary oral reports of emotionally-charged events, as in S.T. Coleridge's ballad *The Rime of the*

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[2] http://www.online-literature.com/homer/odyssey/12/
[3] In this and in the subsequent extracts, three dots within square brackets, […], indicate omissions.
[4] http://www.apocalyptic-theories.com/literature/seafarer/mesea1a.htm

Ancient Mariner (1834), where, again, the natural elements are personified in an Ergative Subject position as in the extract reported below:

> And now the *STORM-BLAST* came, and *he*
> Was tyrannous and strong:
> *He* struck with his o'ertaking wings,
> And chased us south along.
> With sloping masts and dipping prow,
> As who pursued with yell and blow
> Still treads the shadow of his foe,
> And forward bends his head,
> *The ship* drove fast, loud roared the blast,
> And southward aye we fled.
> And now there came both *mist and snow*,
> And it grew wondrous cold:
> And *ice*, mast-high, came floating by,
> As green as emerald.

This typical feature of the Ergative clause structure can be identified in case study 1. In it, the Conversation Analysis is aimed at identifying whether, on the one hand, the Nigerian immigrant's oral report in Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) – which, when dislocated from the original context of use becomes an ELF variation (NP-ELF) – contains Ergative structures transferred from his L1 (Igbo – cf. Nwachukwu 1976). Furthermore, NPE contains structural and phonetic traits that may induce misunderstanding – which are: the phonetic traits of African speakers, reproduced in the phonetic transcription (Faraclas 1996), with the interdental fricatives /θ/ /ð/ replaced by the alveolar stops /t/ /d/, and with no indefinite schwa /ə/ sound; the addition of the pronoun *dem* ('them') after nouns to mark the plural; the 'all-purpose' preposition *fo* ('for') indicating all directions in spatial orientation (a concept differently developed at a cognitive level by populations who have been living in unstable geophysical environments and climate conditions which have always been 'hostile' to human beings), and the use of pre-verbal markers to signal Tense and Aspect in place of the auxiliary verbs and suffixation indicating time orientation in the Standard-English code. On the other hand, the conversation Analysis shows that the Italian intercultural mediator associates Ergative features transferred by the African migrant to his NP-ELF variation with his own Accusative use of Passive constructions in Italian. Hence, he misinterprets the immigrant's report as a deliberate attempt to shift responsibility away from the Agents (*smugglers*) who made his illegal journey possible. It is important to remark that, although English is an Accusative language, it possesses a flexible clause structure that allows also the expression of Ergative structures.

What follows is the transcription of Exchange 1 – an interaction between the Nigerian asylum seeker (AS1) and the Italian mediator (IM1). Since the NP-ELF and Italian-ELF variations used by the participants in this exchange may sound unfamiliar to some readers of this paper, their cues are here also reformulated into Standard English for a better understanding of the conversation development:

Exchange 1:
(1) *IM1:* .hhh who bringed you to Italy? *[Who brought you to Italy?]* [Elicit-M – Pref; It-ELF: Acc-St.]
(2) *AS1:* a-after (.) after di <u>waterwork</u> dem (.) for Libya (..) <u>hard</u> work o o (.), °for money°. .hhh di <u>ca::r</u> bin don drop for Al <u>Zuwa::rah.</u> (..) .hhh di b-<u>boat</u> bin sai::l against won <u>stro::ng</u> wind. .hhhh °won night° (.) di <u>se::a</u> bin <u>swe:::ll</u> (.) <u>bi::g</u> big round di boat, =di boat bin <u>sink</u> (.) <u>heavy</u> (.) and <u>dee:::p</u> o o. (..) .hhhh di boat bin don <u>fight</u> di sea and <u>di::ve</u> = and fight (.) til i bin <u>stop</u> >mek water <u>cold</u> cold bin <u>break</u> against di <u>boat</u>< .hhh <u>water</u> don de kom for di boat <u>every</u>

wie, no use di hand dem bin de thr̲ow dat water o̲ut, out, o̲ut, o o.= *[After the waterworks in Libya, a very hard work, for money, the car had dropped at Al Zuwarah. The boat sailed against a strong wind. One night the sea swelled tremendously around the boat, the boat sank, heavy and deep! The boat had fought against the sea and dived and fought till it stopped so that the freezing water broke against the boat. Water started entering from everywhere, it was no use that the hands were throwing it out, out, out.]* [Inform-M – Dispref; NP-ELF: Erg-St.; TM Past *(bin)* AM Perfect *(don]*

(3) *IM1:* =sorry (.), d'you mean that the pil̲ot stopped the boat in the mi::ddle of the big sea? (.) or that the bo̲at (.) uh b- was st̲opped (.) itself (.) to him (..) who is he *[Sorry, do you mean that the pilot stopped the boat in the middle of the rough sea? Or that the boat got stopped on him? Who is he?]* [It-ELF; Acc-St; Focus-M; Elicit-M]

(4) *AS1:* (..) di bo̲at (.) .hh di all boat bin st̲op (..) for di sea (.) >big big<. *[The boat, the whole boat stopped for the tremendous sea.]* [Inform-M – Dispref.; NPE Erg-St.]

IM1, as the participant in authority (assisting the police officers in their questioning), starts this exchange in cue (1) with an Elicit Move that is preferred in the official interview register as he is enquiring into the identity of the smuggler – which is done in a straightforward way by means of the Accusative structure built on a cause-effect Active-Transitive clause in which the animate Agent (*who*) is in Subject position. In fact IM1 uses an Italian-ELF variation, marked by a standardization of the irregular verb (*brought*) turned into its deviating regularized form (*bringed*). In cue (2), AS1 replies with an Inform Move which is perceived as dispreferred from IM1's perspective, because AS1 does not provide the required information (i.e., revealing the smuggler's identity). This is so, however, not because IM1 is reticent, but simply because the clause structures that shape his journey report are formulated in a NP-ELF variation that accounts for AS1's transfer of his L1 (Igbo) Ergative structure in which the Subject is the inanimate Medium represented as an animate Agent (*car, boat*). Such a variation is also characterized by the use of the pre-verbal Past-Tense marker (*bin*), and of the pre-verbal Perfect-Aspect marker *(don)*, which signal the recollection of past events marked by high emotional intensity, strengthened by the use of the metonymic image of the immigrants who perceive only their *hands* as if they were endowed of a life of their own, in their frantic action of trying to remove the sea-water from the sinking boat. Such an emotional intensity is also emphasized by the adjective and adverbial reduplication (*big big*; *cold cold*; *out out out*), and by the Igbo interjection (*o o*) as emotional intensifiers. IM1 interrupts AS1 in cue (3) with a Focus Move aimed at making AS1 concentrate on the required information – though his use of the Italian-ELF variation makes the clause structure almost convoluted in the attempt to transfer the Italian structure of the Reflexive Passive. Indeed, such a Focus Move is also deceptive insofar as it conceals an Elicit Move aimed at inducing AS1 first to blame the smuggler for his inability as a sailor and, then, to reveal his identity. But AS1 reply in cue (4) is again perceived as dispreferred by IM1 because with the Inform Move AS1 indicated the *boat* as the animate cause of the difficulties experienced in the journey. To express this, AS1 makes once again use of the NPE-ELF Ergative structure with the inanimate Medium as the animate Agent (*boat*) in Subject position. Noticeably, the final outcome of this exchange is communication failure.

6. Case study 2: culture-bound forensic and ethnopoetic textual patterns

Case study 2 is about two different culture-bound textual typologies in conflict – i.e., 'western' forensic and 'non-western' ethnopoetic patterns – which are here shown to

cause, respectively, ELF communication failure and success. The topic regards an ELF-mediated welfare interview between:

(1) on the one hand, a Sierra Leonean asylum seeker (AS2) – the interviewee – held in a reception camp in Italy, who typically transfers into his Krio-ELF variation the metaphors of mental processes rendered as material processes (Guido 2008; Halliday 1994) – which are characteristics of his native L1 (Fula) – in order to express his distorted perception of the Italian legal procedure as being not an objective application of the norm, but instead an example of the Reception-Camp Staff's subjective and deliberate psychological abuse of him. Indeed, the Camp Staff had only tried to make AS2 understand the Italian immigration law, but AS2 did not appreciate this fact, considering their attempts as a cause of inner anguish and acts of psychological torture against him;

(2) on the other hand, an Italian intercultural mediator (IM2) – the interviewer in authority – who, in his forensic reformulation, or 'entextualization' (Urban 1996), tries to disambiguate AS2's report but, in doing so, misunderstands it as an account of physical abuse because he misinterprets the metaphors of mental processes literally, as actual material processes. Misunderstandings of this kind may indeed give rise – in such asymmetric circumstances – to undesirable socio-political and ethical consequences.

The focus of this case study is, therefore, on non-western immigrants' ELF variations as displaced and 'transidiomatic' (Silverstein 1998) due to the fact that their culture-bound systems of metaphors and idioms come to be dislocated from their original contexts of use and, once relocated in a 'western' context, come to be reinterpreted – and indeed, misinterpreted – according to the different linguacultural schemata of the experts in authority. Furthermore, misunderstanding in this case study 2 is also due to the Krio lexis and pre-verbal Tense and Aspect markers that IM2 erroneously assumed to be phonetically-deviating Standard-English forms because of assonance, as well as use of pre-verbal particles similar to those typical of NPE – thus misidentifying AS2's nationality, taking him to be a Nigerian economic migrant who has to be repatriated according to Italian law, rather than as a Sierra-Leonean asylum seeker fleeing from a civil war and, as such, eligible for refugee status.

Another cause of communication failure in case study 2 is represented by IM2's adoption of a traditional entextualization based on the application of parameters of coherence and cohesion typical of the western forensic editing process carried out according to the textual structure of the 'paragraph' (Blommaert 1997), with no recognition whatsoever of other non-western entextualization parameters that immigrants may transfer from their own L1s into their ELF reports. This case study intends to illustrate that accommodation strategies capable of hybridizing divergent textual structures are possible, and the strategy that is proposed here is Ethnopoetic entextualization (Hymes 1994, 2003), consisting in the editing of ELF oral reports that reveal non-conventional 'verse patterns' of relevant information. In the context of this specific case study, the application of the Ethnopoetic approach entails the recognition of the 'experiential' origins of material processes expressing mental ones in some African languages. This is due to the fact that early human beings started making sense of the world by physically exploring it and, later, expressing related thoughts and emotions through concrete, 'embodied'

metaphors (Sweetser 1990). Such primary metaphors, indeed, still persist in a deactivated form in today's languages – they are the so-called "metaphors we live by" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Also Ethnopoetics can be regarded as a kind of 'deactivated poetics' because, in today's native oral narratives, verses are not used for deliberate aesthetic effects, but they actually reflect the earliest human experiences of sequences and rhythms of bodily actions and perceptions of natural phenomena. Hymes (2003) identifies in the native-American oral journey narrative *(a)* 'three-&-five verse' patterns, reproducing the sequence *he went → he went on → he arrived*, and *(b)* two-&-four verse' patterns, reproducing the perception of *this action & that action*. A sonnet-like pattern of '5-line & 3-line verses' has been identified in the corpus of West-African ELF oral reports upon which the present analysis is grounded (Guido 2008).

What follows is Exchange 2, initially reported in its original tagged transcription with a Standard-English version of AS2's Krio cues facilitating accessibility to this ELF variation for those readers who may be not familiar with it. This is then followed by a proposal of ethnopoetic entextualization. Finally, IM2's forensic entextualization of the exchange into a paragraph is reported, showing misinterpretation evidence. To this purpose, a comparison between the original and the entextualized versions of AS2's report will be carried out to show how IM2 omitted to account for any native metaphorical usage, thus encouraging in readers the inference of presuppositions that were absent in the original version. The following Extract 2 contains cues from the interview-protocol and is meant to be illustrative of an unequal encounter where what the weaker participant (AS2) says is systematically taken 'out of its context' and misinterpreted by the more powerful one (IM2) (cf. Sarangi and Slembrouck 1996). The ultimate purpose is to suggest a possibility for ELF accommodation by applying the Ethnopoetic approach. Hence, Exchange 2 is provided first in its original transcript (A),[5] then in a possible Ethnopoetic entextualization (B), and finally in an extract from a version provided by IM2 (C).

Exchange 2
(A) Original field transcript
(1) *IM2:* so (.) you are <u>oka:y</u> here? [It-ELF; reference to present time & place]
(2) *AS2:* [1] o (..) hhh dehn de blow blow mi / *[[1] Oh, they give me many blows /]* [Krio-ELF; [1] AM Continuous (*de*); [Ment→Mat]]
(3) *IM2:* how say (.) they <u>blow</u> you?= [It-ELF; literal-sense misinterpretation]
(4) *AS2:* [2] =yeah, dehn se >lehk pipul lehk mi na <u>awtloh</u>< dehn foh go <u>bak</u> na dehn kohntri / [3] hhh dehn kin de <u>push</u> mi te a lehdohn >kpata-kpata <u>shatta</u> na grohn< / *[[2] Yes, they say like, those like me are outlaws, they must go home/ [3] they go on pushing me till I lie down completely shattered all over the ground /]* [Krio-ELF; [2] *awtloh = outlaw*; *foh =* deontic *must*; [3] [Ment→Mat]; AM Habitual/Continuous (*kin de*); *lehdohn = lie down*; [Ment→Mat]]
(5) *IM2:* uh (..) they push <u>you</u>? [It-ELF; literal-sense misinterpretation]
(6) *AS2:* [4] hhh dehn se >bega-bega noh de pik ehn chuz> / [5] (.) dehn no noh se pohsin dehn we noh de tot lod no noh se lod hebi (.) / *[[4] they say that a beggar can't pick and choose / [5] they don't know that people who are not carrying the load don't know that the load is heavy /]* [Krio-ELF; [4] [Ment→Mat]; [5] [Ment→Mat]]
(7) *IM2:* [have you (.) have you (.) uh] <u>pain</u> in your body? [It-ELF; literal-sense misinterpretation]
(8) *AS2:* [6] o (..) a kin geht <u>pain</u> insai tu <u>fut</u> dehn <u>joint</u> °ehn leg dehn masl° / [7] .hhh we dehn bin <u>kam</u> na mi ples dehn bin <u>tek</u> mi wit dehn bay <u>fo::s</u> ehn dehn bin fos <u>mi</u> foh tot wata, ebi <u>lod</u> (.) foh [<u>feht</u> wit dehn]/ *[[6] Oh … I have pains in the joints of my feet and the muscles of my*

legs / [7] *when they came to my place, they took me with them by force and they forced me to carry water, heavy loads, to fight with them /]* [Krio-ELF; [6] literal sense; [7] reference to past time & place; TM Past (*bin*]

(9) *IM2:* [you must <u>refu::se</u>] to work for them, you know? [It-ELF; reference to present time & place]

(10) *AS2:* [8] (..) afta a bin dohn <u>rohn</u> frohm rebel dehn a bin mit di Nigerian <u>a::rmi</u> (.) boht mi <u>nohto</u> Nigerian lehk we dehn say na ya >a kohmoht na Salone< / *[[8] After I had run from the rebels I met the Nigerian army, but I'm not Nigerian like they are saying here, I come from Sierra Leone /]* [Krio-ELF; [8] reference to past time & place; T/AM Past Perfect (*bin dohn*); *kohmoht* = "come out/from"; *Salone* = Sierra Leone]

The opening cue (1) shows IM2 using his Italian-ELF variation, characterized by the lack of auxiliary fronting in the interrogative clause, and introducing the indexical co-ordinates of time (present) and place (the reception camp) by means of the deictic adverb 'here', thus setting the contextual circumstances of the whole exchange. This implies that also AS2 is expected to embed all his ensuing utterances in the situational context of his recent experience in the reception camp. Therefore, when AS2 replies in (2) to IM2's query about his conditions in the camp, he makes exophoric reference to the Camp Staff by simply indicating them as implied Agents by using the pronoun *dehn* (*they*). Moreover, AS2 attributes to them specific mental processes which he typically renders into his Krio-ELF variation as material processes. Thus, in [1], AS2 describes the Camp Staff's continuous determination to make him understand the limits of the Italian immigration law by resorting to the Krio-ELF Continuous Aspect marker (*de*), as well as to the folk metaphor expressing the sense of 'undergoing insistent mental conditioning' in terms of 'forceful and painful tactile sensations' (*blow blow*) (cf. Sweetser 1990). In cue (3), IM2, still using an Italian-ELF variation characterized by the absence of auxiliary fronting in the interrogative clause and the dropping of the personal pronoun, misinterprets the metaphor in its literal sense. AS2, in cue (4), tries first [2] to disambiguate the metaphorical *blow* through an exemplification based on relational processes of an intensive type (i.e., "those like me are outlaws, must go home"), rendered through his Krio-ELF variation (*awtloh* = *outlaw*; *foh* = deontic *must*). Then, in [3], AS2 again employs the Krio metaphorical ways of expressing mental processes by means of actions from the material, physical domain. He conveys the sense of an 'unrelenting attempt to exert an influence on a person' by means of the folk physical metaphor of 'pushing'. This is assumed to refer back to a proto-semantic use of the vocabulary of 'forceful and painful tactile sensations' to express the disturbing emotional experience of 'undergoing persistent mental conditioning' (Sweetser 1990, p. 43; Talmy 1988). The sense of a continuous and insistent conditioning is conveyed by the Krio Habitual/Continuous Aspect markers (*kin de*). AS2 also specifies in [3] that such psychological pressure on him has had the effect of the 'tactile pressure' of knocking him 'down completely shattered all over the ground'. This is rendered in Krio-ELF by a phrasal verb perceived and transcribed as one word (*lehdohn = lie down*). Furthermore, in this way, AS2 resorts to another concrete image informed by the proto-semantic bodily metaphor of the 'crushed Self' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999, p. 276), according to which the well-balanced 'stable Self' is perceived as an 'intact container', whereas a confused 'crushed Self' is represented as a 'shattered container'. The presupposition, in this case, is: the Staff's conditioning has been so persistent as to make AS2 lose the sense of his own normal Self. This is triggered by the temporal clauses that, by introducing change-of-state verbs, metaphorically convey the emotional effect of the 'pushing' experience on AS2. In cue (5), IM2 poses another question (again, characterized by a lack of auxiliary fronting) to AS2 which presupposes a literal misinterpretation of the metaphor ("they push you?"). To this, AS2 replies in cue (6) with a transidiomatic

expression in Krio [4] in which the notion of the 'immigrant with no legal rights' is metaphorically rendered into the image of a 'beggar with no decisional rights'. Moreover, in [5], the notion of 'distress' is metaphorically rendered into 'loads', whereas the notion of 'lack of distress' is rendered into the metaphor of the 'ignorance of physical strength needed to carry loads'. In cue (7), IM2's question "Have you pain in your body?" not only introduces another literal-sense misinterpretation, but it also works as a 'time/place-shift trigger on AS2 since this very question suddenly prompts him to shift the indexical co-ordinates, set by IM2 at the beginning of the exchange, from the present of the reception-camp context to the past of the Sierra Leonean civil war. In cue (8), therefore, AS2 refers to the actual, physical perception of pain he feels in his legs and feet [6] as the 'present effect' of a more 'distant cause' (Sierra Leone civil war) that he introduces in utterance [7] by using the Krio Past-Tense marker (*bin*). The causal source of AS2's persisting pain is represented by the circumstances of his past abduction and, then, reduction to slavery and forced labour [7] through the agency of Sierra Leonean Rebel Soldiers, here cataphorically referred to as *dhen* (*they*) (he will explicitly identify them later in his discourse). The processes that AS2 was forced to perform in the past are, thus, actual material processes. In IM2's misinterpretation, in cue (9), on the contrary, the situational co-ordinates of AS2's discourse remain the same as before (i.e., time = present; place = reception camp; *them* = Camp Staff). This being so because IM2 fails to realize AS2's time/place shift into past experience in his home country, as well as his deictic reference to the Sierra Leonean rebels as the new 'actors' of the reported material processes. In fact, IM2 still keeps ascribing agency to the Reception-Camp Staff. In the context of such 'unshared indexicality', therefore, IM2 misinterprets AS2's utterance as the painful physical effect of the Camp Staff's cruel 'material' pushing and knocking AS2 down. Such misattribution of agency is evident in cue (9) when IM2 interrupts AS2 to inform him that he "must refuse to work for" the camp staff (again, deictically referred to as *them*). But, as evident in cue (10), AS2 misses IM2's reference to the present context, so he goes on, in [8], with his account of distant-past events (signalled by the use of the Krio Past-Perfect Tense-Aspect markers *bin dohn*) presupposing, by means of the temporal clause, that eventually 'he escaped from the rebel soldiers' and managed to reach the Nigerian Army which rescued him, finally contending that his nationality is not Nigerian 'like they are saying here' (thus returning to the initial time/place co-ordinates of the exchange), but he comes from Sierra Leone – expressed through the phrasal verb condensed into one word (come out/from = *kohmoht*), and 'Sierra Leone' pronounced as *Salone*.

In the transcription of AS2 report for forensic purposes, a possible accommodation strategy can be represented by a form of 'ethnopoetic' entextualization consisting of a five-line verse, referred to the present context of AS2's report, followed by a three-line verse, referred to the past context of AS2's report. Both contexts are respectively characterized by psychological and physical pain. The concrete metaphors used by AS2 are here entextualized into 'as if' similes and paraphrases in order to disambiguate them. In the first five-line verse, there is an obsessive repetition of *They* at the beginning of each line, referred to the Italian 'Camp Staff' – and emphasizing AS2's sense of distress at recalling the psychological pressure put on him by the Staff informing him of the limitations of the Italian laws. In the last three-line verse, instead, *They* refers to the 'RUF Rebels in Sierra Leone'.

    (B) Ethnopoetic entextualization of AS2's report
    5-line verse (present context)
    [1] *The Camp Staff* give me shocking news, *as if* they were blowing me continuously /
    [2] *they* say that those like me are outlaws, then they must go home /

[3] *they* keep on distressing me till I get a nervous breakdown, *as if* they went on pushing me till I lie down completely shattered all over the ground /
[4] *they* say that a beggar *like me* can't pick and choose *because* I have no legal rights /
[5] *they* don't know that people *like them* who are not carrying the load, *that is*, who have no distress, don't know that the load is heavy, *namely*, that distress is unbearable /
3-line verse (past context)
[6] I have pains in the joints of my feet and the muscles of my legs /
[7] When *the Rebels* came to my place, they took me with them by force and they forced me to carry water, heavy loads, to fight with them /
[8] After I had run from *the Rebels* I met the Nigerian army, but I'm not Nigerian like *the Camp Staff* are saying here, I come from Sierra Leone /

IM2's forensic entextualization of AS2's oral report into a conventional paragraph is instead characterized by his literal misinterpretation of the Krio-ELF metaphors, idioms and pre-verbal markers. The outcome is the following tagged paragraph:

(c) IM2's forensic entextualization into a paragraph of AS2's report
[1] The Camp Staff hit me with many blows. / [2] They tell me that people like me must go back to their own country *[awtloh=outlaw – omitted]*. / [3] Then they are *keen to* [*kin de→keen to(on)*] push me till I *[literally]* lie down shattered all over the ground. / [4] [5] I *beg [beggar→to beg]* them repeatedly not to beat me with their *shoes [chuz=choose]*, because they don't understand that they are *pushing [pohsin=persons]* me with a *tough [tot=take]* load and they don't know that the load is heavy *[literally]*. [6] *As a consequence*, I have *keen [kin→keen]* pains in the joints of my feet and the muscles of my legs. / [7] *Some times* they have come to my place and they have taken me with them by force. They have forced me to take water and heavy loads. *[feht=to fight – omitted]* / [8] When I did not succeed in running away *from the reception camp*, and then *I rebelled against the Camp Staff [rebels→to rebel]*, it was only because I didn't want to go back to Nigeria, under the Nigerian army. *[Salone=Sierra Leone – omitted]*

As evident, IM2 misinterprets the Krio-ELF metaphors of mental processes by rendering them into actual material processes (as in [3] and [5]). in IM2's entextualization of [1], the Camp Staff's decision to give AS2 the information about the restrictions imposed upon him by Italian immigration law is misinterpreted as the physical action of 'pushing' him, while the Staff members themselves are explicitly indicated as the 'actors' of such a reprehensible material process. AS2's specification that he is referring to the Camp Staff's mental and verbal processes is retained in IM2's entextualization (*They tell me that…*), though he misses the meaning of the Krio word *awtloh* (*outlaw*), which he omits. Yet, in [3], IM2 not only opts for the literal reading of the bodily metaphor (*push*), but he even misunderstands completely the Krio Habitual/Continuous-Aspect markers *kin de*, preceding *push* in the original Krio transcript of [3], as they are here misinterpreted by assonance as the Standard English expression *keen to* in 'they are *keen to* push me', where the new presupposition is triggered by the material sense of the implicative verb 'they (the Camp Staff) *push* me'. This also justifies what, in IM2's version, appears to be the logical consequence of such 'physical pushing': i.e., 'till I (literally) lie down shattered all over the ground'. IM2's literal interpretation of [3], however, is already evident from his question in cue (5): ('they push you?'). The Habitual-Aspect marker *kin* is once again misinterpreted by assonance in [6] as the Standard-English adjective *keen* which IM2 attributes to *pains*. Furthermore, IM2 renders [6] and [7] into his entextualization as if they represented other instantiations of the inhuman treatment that the Camp Staff inflict upon AS2. Such a misapprehension is substantiated by the addition of 'link expressions', as in [6] (*as a consequence*) and the adverbial phrase in [7] (*some times*), which are absent in the original version of AS2's report. IM2's failure to render in [6] and [7] the discursive

shift that AS2 makes into his past experience is principally due to a failure to recognize in both utterances the Krio pre-verbal Past-Tense marker *bin*. In fact, IM2 misinterprets *bin* by its assonance with *been*, which is a part of the Present-Perfect structure in Standard English and thus, transferred into the context of IM2's entextualization, is seen as signalling recent actions taking place in the reception camp, rather than past actions occurred in Sierra Leone, as in AS2's original version. Accordingly, IM2 fails to infer also the real identity of the 'actors' in [7] (namely, the Sierra Leonean rebel soldiers) from the pronoun *dhen* (*they*), which he assumes to be still referring to the reception-camp Staff. Also in [8], IM2 again misunderstands not only the Past-Tense marked by the Krio pre-verbal particle *bin*, but also the Perfect Aspect marked by the particle *dohn*, which he associates by assonance with the Present-Tense negative auxiliary *don't* in Standard English, thus presupposing circumstances that are completely different from the actual circumstances presupposed by the original version ('When I did not succeed in running away *from the reception camp*, and then *I rebelled against the Camp Staff*, it was only because I didn't want to go back to Nigeria, under the Nigerian army'). This is due to IM2's erroneous clarification in [8] (*running away from the reception camp*) and (*I rebelled against the Camp Staff*), aimed at making narration consistent with his own interpretation. Furthermore, he omits some words uttered by AS2 because he does not grasp them in their Krio pronunciation, as in [2] (*awtloh*), in [7] (*feht*), and, crucially, in [8] (*Salone*). Other times, IM2 misinterprets the meaning of other words spoken with a Krio accent because he associates them with other Standard-English words by assonance (as in the three cases reported in [5] (*chuz*, *poshin*, *tot*). Then, IM2 misinterprets nouns as verbs, as in [5] (*beggar→to beg*) and [8] (*rebels→to rebel*). Hence, IM2's attempt at disambiguating AS2's report ends up in a case of communication failure because AS2's original claim becomes completely lost.

In conclusion, the pragmatic problem of misinterpretation examined so far reveals how two different conditions of interpretability were brought together into this cross-cultural encounter. On the one hand, in adopting a displaced perspective and a transidiomatic code reflected in his use of Krio English as a lingua franca, AS2 did not seem to acknowledge the official position of the Italian immigration law, as explained by the reception-camp Staff. In fact, he considered it as an arbitrary psychological abuse against his person because he had not been granted refugee status. On the other hand, in preferring concrete to abstract meanings to support his interpretation of 'the refugee undergoing physical abuse in the reception camp', IM2 actually selected the context and topic of the interview on the basis of his own ideological perspective. Accordingly, IM2 distorted the locutionary-reference plan of AS2's discourse and, in this way, he also modified the illocutionary force of AS2's original report in order to justify the perlocutionary effect it had on him and, ultimately, to convince his readers of the existence of linguacultural background schemata that he shared with AS2. This may explain IM2's self-attribution of the authority to 'disambiguate' the pragmatic presuppositions in AS2's report, which, however, turned out to be a case of meaning imposition upon the original discourse, rather than of 'meaning accommodation', revealing only IM2's own biased perspective in interpreting it.

7. Case study 3: specialized lexis and native idioms of distress

Case study 3 introduces other instances of ELF accommodation failure and success by focusing, this time, on the use of 'western' specialized lexis in conventional psychiatric

discourse which considerably differs, experientially and pragmatically, from the native idioms of distress employed by 'non-western' immigrants, as well as from culture-based different uses of epistemic and deontic modality. The topic of this case study is taken from a corpus of African refugees' ELF-mediated Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) reports which, on the one hand, are informed by the structures and idioms of their respective L1 'situated narratives' that acquire pragmatic and experiential significance only by reference to their native contexts of use, but, on the other, they are entextualized by western specialists through the Standard-English registers established by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). APA, in fact, describes clinical cases mostly by reference to western (US) military veterans' war trauma, representing it as a private, individual experience, which may not correspond to the way other 'non-western' cultures experience war trauma and convey it verbally (Mattingly 1998). Indeed, with reference to non-western trauma narrative, Linde (1993) asserts that 'Self' narratives are unknown in many cultures. To this, Mattingly (1998) adds that non-western trauma narratives are more about socio-political welfare than individual wellbeing, thus requiring a therapeutic 'fictional coherence' aimed at a community recovery through processes of socio-political reconciliation.

Hence, reducing non-western immigrants' oral trauma narratives into the written APA PTSD categories is indeed a case of failure in accommodating divergent experiences through the use of a specialized English discourse that should not be intended as a hybrid 'lingua franca' for intercultural communication. The objective of this case study is precisely to develop hybrid ELF registers accommodating divergent western/non-western categorizations of the trauma experience to be used in medical encounters in immigration contexts. To this purpose, a corpus of Standard-English scientific articles was initially selected from the US specialized journal *Transcultural Psychiatry*. It was observed that the use of specialized lexis not only is consistent with the APA PTSD categories, but it is resistant to any semantic change which could comply with divergent categorizations of the trauma experience. Furthermore, in these articles, there is a recurrent use of a tentative tone, mostly conveyed by epistemic modals and hedges, which diminish the therapists' commitment to the truth of their own interpretation of other, different ways of experiencing and narrating war trauma – as evident in the following extract (1):

> (1) *Very little is known* about the consequences of trauma exposure in the survivors' lives. […] After exposure to some traumatic event, one's initial response *may* include symptoms in the domains of physiology (e.g., rapid heart rate, body heat, sleep disturbance, appetite disturbance, nausea, shortness of breath, dizziness and palpitations, chocking sensation, chest tightness, shaking, sweating, chills/hot flashes and numbness/ tingling).

In a series of interviews to some Italian trauma specialists who were asked to comment on the *TP* articles in the corpus by using their Italian-ELF variation, there was observed a clear influence of the western PTSD specialized register marked by the use of APA lexis and epistemic modality, as in the following extract (2), which is also characterized by features of L1→ELF transfer – such as, the lack of the third-person suffixation and the reduplication of the negative specifier:

> (2) Well, the symptoms of trauma *can* be nightmares, the heart that *beat* very fast, suddenly, without reason, and rage, and then depression, and often there is *not no* cure that *work*, no remedy.

Then, to explore the register divergences between non-western trauma narratives and the way they are reported in western specialized articles, a small corpus of West-African ELF

trauma narratives was collected and, for the purpose of this specific case study, explored in particular with reference to the concrete metaphors that inform the West-African idioms of distress in the last three ethnopoetic lines of the immigrants' oral trauma reports. In them, it was noted that the first-person trauma effects are often rendered as third-person animate subjects affecting the patient by 'deontically' compelling him/her to undergo the traumatic symptoms and, afterwards, to take a political action aimed at recovery, as in the following extracts from the trauma narratives by, respectively, (3) a Ghanaian woman and (4) a Sierra Leonean man:

> (3) When I escaped, I saw many bodies on the side of the road and they look straight my eyes for they *want* revenge / and I felt that the worms on them they started crawl up slow slow under my skin. / I often feel the worms creep creep and *must* make my blood to sleep *(skin reaction → loathing)*. (Ghanaian woman)

> (4) I suffer wind sickness, *fonyo kurango* we say [in *Mandinka*], when I smell burning, like my village burning. / Wind attack my brain and rise. I hear wind inside ears, like woo woo *(blood-pressure perception → panic attack)*. It rise rise and press the eyes and I see black and my brain spin and I *must* fall *(fainting)*. / I *must* go for pick all them and burn them and them village and them families and so wind *must* end. (Sierra Leonean man)

Finally, a number of Italian trainee-mediators were asked to reformulate such reports into a possible ELF hybrid register in order to accommodate both western specialized-discourse lexical conventions and the non-western native use of deontic modality and idioms of distress, thus disambiguating native metaphors by *as if* clauses – as in the following extract (5):

> (5) West-African people usually somatise trauma effects and describe them *as if* they were real beings that *must* attack them - e.g., they describe sensations like creeping flesh when they recall disgusting views of worms on dead bodies *as if* worms were slowly creeping beneath their skin to make blood numb, or like feeling woozy, sick and fainting when they recall sensations of panic *as if* wind was blowing in their brain and fog dimming their eyes to make them collapse. Such symptoms *must* be treated by helping patients to achieve social justice within their communities.

However, ELF accommodation cannot always be achieved easily and in every specialized domain of immigration discourse. In fact, the accommodation of different ELF variations in specialized domains is particularly difficult in situations of intercultural communication where the aims of the specialists in charge of the exchange are unclear – if not, indeed, ambiguous. In such cases, miscommunication occurs not because of L1→ELF transfer processes at the syntactic, lexical-semantic and pragmatic levels, but rather because of different culture-bound schemata respectively informing the participants' discourses in ELF, as in the last case study on ELF accommodation failure that shall follow.

8. Case study 4: utopian and dystopian schemata

This last case study shall explore ELF misunderstandings due to different 'migration' schemata in contact, leading to an ELF accommodation failure. The topic regards the specialized domain of Responsible Tourism – namely, an emerging branch of tourism aimed at advertising holidays that allow tourists to experience local socio-cultural situations. To this purpose, it generally involves a hybridization between Voluntary-Work and Place-Marketing discourses. The case study will focus on the local tourist promotion

of places – often seaside resorts – affected by migrants' arrivals that deter tourism. The aim is to bring tourists back, as in the emblematic case of Lampedusa, the Italian island between Sicily and Africa, where migrants' landings take place daily. In these places, administrators often have to act as tour operators, offering tourists accommodation in voluntary-work camps where they can play the role of 'mediators' who help local communities and immigrants to integrate. At the same time, they can also learn how to enhance their own sympathetic understanding of the migration experience. Parallel to the Italian experience of Responsible Tourism can be considered the case of the Mediterranean island of Malta, where a website advertises the need for volunteers willing to assist African refugees massively landing there and educate them in English on "European customs".[6] Another case in point can be found in Africa, where an agency for Refugee-Camp Tourism provides in Rwanda "life-enriching activities" that offer "unique insights into the harsh lives of refugees"[7]. Indeed, also African immigrants in Italy tend to adapt western 'touristic' schemata to their culture-bound ones – often, however, to elude legal control, such as for instance, in the case of family trips to Africa, which immigrants deceitfully define as 'holidays' but are actually aimed at forcing young daughters undergo female genital mutilation (Sperti 2014).

Lampedusa (and other seaside resorts in the South-Italian insular and peninsular regions of Sicily, Sardinia, Puglia and Calabria can in fact be seen as an actualization of the 'Utopia vs. Dystopia (anti-utopia)' archetype. The term 'Utopia' has two Ancient-Greek etymologies: *eu-topos*, meaning 'place of good and harmony', and *ou-topos*, meaning 'no place', 'nowhere'. Utopia in the classical literature (i.e., Thomas Moore's *Utopia*, Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, and – to some extent – Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, to name but a few) is represented as a counterfactual island of happiness and justice which is an alternative to the Observer's real corrupted society. The Observer is portrayed as a traveller who lands in Utopia after a difficult journey, and by this literary device he adopts an estranged stance in the description of the island. In this case study, the ancient utopian archetype has been revisited with reference to the two opposite contemporary schemata of the 'social utopia', typical of left-wing political movements, and the 'recreational utopia', typical of light-hearted touristic resorts, which unexpectedly come to be reconciled in situations of intercultural communication through ELF taking place in contexts regarding Responsible Tourism. In such situations, on the one hand, the Italian tourists – who have undertaken this experience with the aim of playing the role of 'intercultural mediators' with immigrants and asylum seekers – consider the place they arrive at as a Utopia where they end up acting as 'tourist-resort entertainers' who try to brighten up the guests' stay. In this way, they embody the traveller's bottom-up estranged position on the Utopian place, which is however soon reduced to a reassuring top-down familiar stance, turning the 'immigrant-reception schema' into a 'tourist-reception schema'. In doing so, they find themselves playing the 'Robinson Crusoe' role, casting immigrants and refugees in the supporting 'Friday' role to make 'responsible tourists' in the resort (as well as themselves) familiar with the migration experience. On the other hand, the immigrants consider instead this place as a Dystopia in which they embody the traveller's top-down estranged stance on a society that imposes unfamiliar roles on them. This is due to the 'New Touristization' of the migrants, who are expected to tell their stories every time they are asked to (as Ulysses did when he was asked to narrate his

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[6] Retrieved from: http://www.gooverseas.com/blog/volunteering-in-malta-beyond-tourism-websites
[7] Retrieved from: http://newdawnassociates.com/new/signature-tours/akagera-humure-refugee-community-visit/

journey at each landing) and, at the same time, for instance, to play beach games, participate in anti-racist football tournaments, be involved in flashmob demonstrations, disco dances, karaoke singing, card games, boat trips for tourists to experience migration, and even in the tourist promotion of the place – as in the case with Lampedusa, where a group of African immigrants were organized into a reggae band singing songs specifically written by local people to advertise events organized on the island to promote Responsible Tourism, as in the brief extract from a reggae song, reported below, referring to the immigrants' 'epic' journey which also includes the invocation for a safe journey addressed to the 'sweet Muse' (a classical-literature feature not belonging to the immigrants' cultural schemata[8]):

> Row, row, to Lampedusa we go,
> Go, go, for a better life we row, yeah,
> *O dolce Musa, portami a Lampedusa [O sweet Muse, bring me to Lampedusa]*
> *O dolce Musa*, bring me to Lampedusa, yeah […][9]

The case-study data collected in landing places show that ELF variations used by tourists-as-mediators and immigrants are initially aimed at co-creating a new language for successful communication, but then they often report cases of a 'dystopian manipulation' of semantic meanings (e.g., the migrants' 'resigned desperation' comes to be misinterpreted as 'serenity' and even 'intimate joy' by the improvised mediators' dominating schemata, which alienate migrants).

Furthermore, the language issue has always been crucial in Utopian literature (e.g., Moore's *Utopia* was written in Latin which was the 16th/17th-century lingua franca to spread scientific and political-philosophical works so as to reach the wider reading public of the European Renaissance humanists). Dialogue, in particular, is a constant feature in the Utopian literature since it is used as a stylistic device through which the divergences between opposite stances emerge. In this case study, the dialogue is between an Italian female mediator (IM3) participating in a voluntary-work camp in a seaside resort and speaking the Italian-ELF variation, and a Nigerian male asylum seeker (AS3), speaking NPE as ELF variation. AS3 was kept in a CIE (Centre for Identification and Expulsion) after having fled from Nigeria, due to religious persecution by Boko Haram, with his sister (caught and detained in Libya just before he set sail, with his having heard nothing about her since) and his brother (thrown overboard by smugglers as a 'warning' for mutinous migrants on the boat).

Exchange 4
(1) *IM3:* °you see° (.) when I left to come here I was <u>excited</u> to be in a voluntary-work camp (.) we really hoped to witness a <u>landing</u> (.) what <u>you</u> expect from this place?
(2) *AS3:* .hhh a no expect <u>noting</u> special (..) >wen a bin arrive di police bin take mi <u>fingerprint</u> dem< en shut me in de CIE (..) pipul hie sometime give <u>blanket</u> (.) <u>food</u> (..) hhh but dem no help os get di <u>permit</u> fo leave (.) °tis strange° (..) >dem tink se a migrant no lek oda pipul< *[I don't expect anything special. When I arrived, the police took my fingerprints and shut me in the CIE. People here sometimes give blankets, food, but they don't help us get the permit to leave. This is strange, they think that a migrant is not like other people]*
(3) *IM3:* what do you <u>mean</u>?

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[8] Also reggae music, from the Caribbean, is a foreign genre for the African migrants.
[9] Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szZ84o6H7Qw (from the beginning to 0:23 minutes).

(4) *AS3:* .hhh °dem look os lek <u>animal</u> dem° (..) a veks °we no walk wit four leg dem° (.) we no eat pipul (.) dem turn dem head fo <u>fear</u> we dem see os *[They consider us like animals. I'm vexed, we don't walk with four legs, we don't eat people. They turn their head for fear when they see us]*

(5) *IM3:* >but we can help them to <u>change</u> the idea they have of you< (..) no? (.) we had a great <u>fun</u> together (.) we <u>eat</u> <u>sing</u> karaoke <u>dance</u> (.) play <u>football</u> together <u>every</u> day (.) this is <u>wonderful</u> (.) eh? (.) an <u>example</u> that can help the other people >to understand the migrants<=

(6) *AS3:* =no (.) dem <u>no::</u> understand di migrant (.) dem <u>no</u> understand di <u>sea</u> (.) >a never bin look di sea bifo a bin get fo di boat fo come hie< (.) di <u>sea</u> bin >swell swell< fo <u>kill</u> os *[No, they don't understand the migrants, they don't understand the sea. I'd never seen the sea before I took the boat to come here. The sea did swell tremendously to kill us]*

(7) *IM3:* but <u>now</u> your relation with the sea is <u>changed</u> (.) you <u>don't</u> fear it no more no? hhh we made many <u>baths</u> together and you were <u>so::</u> happy

(8) *AS3:* °you know?° (.) >dem bin trow mi <u>broda</u> down di <u>sea</u>< (.) fo <u>warn</u> di oder pipul in di boat >so dem no go complain fo di bad journey<= *[You know? they threw my brother overboard to warn the other people in the boat, so they wouldn't complain any longer about the bad journey]*

(9) *IM3:* =°oh yes° (.) >you told us< (..) °I'm sorry° (..) he know to <u>swim</u>?

(10) *AS3:* a (..) a (..) wen a bin look in di <u>sea</u> mi broda bin de <u>swim</u> (.) yes= *[When I glanced in the sea my brother was swimming, yes]*

(11) *IM3:* =so don't worry (.) he got <u>safe</u> (.) be <u>sure</u>

(12) *AS3:* .hhh a (..) °a hope° (.) °yes° (..) >hhh wen a bin come hie wit di boat dat night< (.) tourist dem bin de <u>dance</u> on di beach (.) but a bin <u>cry</u> >because in Libya dem bin keep mi <u>sista</u>< (.) °en a come safe hie° *[I … I hope, yes. When I arrived here with the boat that night, the tourists were dancing on the beach, but I cried because in Libya they kept my sister, and I arrived safe here]*

(13) *IM3:* .hhh yes (..) we understood <u>more</u> of your journeys when the organizers took us for the <u>trip</u> in the boat that night and we <u>throwed</u> the little <u>paper boats</u> in the sea >in memory of the dead migrants< (..) and when all we made the <u>flashmob</u> on the beach with the liberating <u>shout</u> >to make tourists to understand the migration problem> (.) °that was nice° (.) you remember their big <u>appla::use</u>?=

(14) *AS3:* =a tink tis <u>cra ::zy</u>= *[I think this is crazy]*

(15) *IM3:* =yes (.) <u>crazy</u> (.) <u>wo::nderful</u> moments (..) >like when on the beach we played the <u>wayfarer</u> game< with a word on each <u>card</u> >that started a story< (..) eh? (..) your stories were <u>not</u> sad (.) you seemed <u>serene</u> (.) not a <u>victim</u> (.) for example the story of the <u>dolphins</u> >that say that the sea could <u>not</u> swallow you in the boat< is full of <u>joy</u> (.) because even if many migrants are <u>died</u> you arrived <u>alive</u> [>to become my friends<

(16) *AS3:* wen dem ask mi] to tell mi story a se <u>no</u> (.) because dem <u>no</u> understand (.) but <u>hie</u> a tell someting °so a tink a <u>do</u> what <u>dem</u> want and so dem go <u>help</u> me wit di <u>permit</u> (.) [°di asylum° *[when they ask me to tell my story I say 'no', because they don't understand, but here I tell something so I think I do what they want and so they will help me with the permit, the asylum]*

(17) *IM3:* >but you see?<] we <u>empathize</u> with you (..) >you remember the <u>landing</u> that we saw together?< (..) I'm sure that I could see the joy in the eyes of the migrants even if they looked sad and tired (..) oh I don't want to go away from this <u>wonderful</u> place (.) and <u>you</u>?=

(18) *AS3:* =<u>no</u> (.) a want go away <u>quick</u> *[No, I want to go away as soon as possible]*

As evident, here misunderstanding is not due to differences in ELF semantic, syntactic and pragmatic features, because IM3 and AS3 understand each other very well. Misunderstanding, rather, is due to schematic divergences on migration issues and how to deal and solve them – hence, the outcome is, once again, ELF accommodation failure as the two participants are unable to use the lingua franca to achieve a satisfactory communication.

9. Conclusions

In conclusion, to achieve a successful communication in specialized ELF interactions, each group in contact should, first of all, become aware of those of the other groups' L1 features which are typologically divergent from the equivalent ones in their own L1s – and, as such, perceived as formally deviating and pragmatically inappropriate when transferred to ELF. Then, they should also recover the 'situatedness' (Gumperz 1982) of the immigrants' displaced ELF, by recognizing the original socio-cultural and pragmalinguistic dimensions determining sense and reference in their respective experiences. Finally, they should develop mutual accommodation strategies of ELF reformulation and hybridization in order to make culture-bound discourses conceptually accessible and socio-pragmatically acceptable to each other's native schemata.

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