Describing Lexico-Grammatical Features of English as A Lingua Franca in Kurdistan and The Issue of Intelligibility

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Abstract: Due to the widespread use of the English language, the number of non-native speakers has increased rapidly and lately exceeded the number of native speakers. Now the vast majority of communications are taking place among non-native speakers in international settings, often without the presence of native speakers. Consequently, this dominance of the English language has led to the emergence of a new conceptualization of using the language, which is that as a result of being used in international settings, new varieties of the language have emerged which might not necessarily conform to native-speaker standards. This is known as English as a lingua franca (ELF). The current study fills a gap in the literature by identifying systematically repeated lexical and grammatical features of proficient users of English in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The research compares against other ELF features previously identified in various contexts. The corpus of this study included data collected from both written and spoken interactions. A corpus of 42,094 words of authentic English use by 10 master's students in one of the English-medium universities in the Kurdistan Region. The analysis resulted in identifying a number of deviations which were both similar and different from those found in previous studies. The results indicated deviations in the use of articles, prepositions, the third person singular -s, redundant marking and non-marking plural nouns, and verbs with high semantic generality. The findings of this research suggest that although a number of lexico-grammatical deviations occur systematically in the ELF in this context, their occurrences did not seem to impede intelligibility or the flow of communication amongst the participants.

Key words: English as A Lingua Franca (ELF), Lexical and Grammatical Features, Standard English, Non-Native Speaker Deviations, Non-Native Users of English

1. Introduction

1.1 The Status of English Language in the ELF Context

Nowadays proficiency in the English language is considered compulsory and a major requirement in different domains around the world. English is by and large the language of technology, business, tourism, and academia. This need for the English language in these various domains has led to its widespread use worldwide, and as a result of this spread in what Kachru (1992) calls the Expanding Circle countries, particular features have appeared which do not necessarily conform to native-speaker standards. English

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is now used differently in different parts of the world, in varieties which are called world Englishes, English as an international language, global English, and lately English as a lingua franca (ELF).

Hülmbauer, Böhringer and Seidlhofer (2008) stated that English became a lingua franca globally at the beginning of the 21st century when the number of non-native speakers exceeded its native speakers. This unprecedented phenomenon consequently led to a need for the recognition of the language as being derived from its main cultural origins and varying communicative environments. According to House (2009), the way English is used has changed as a result of globalization and internationalization, which consequently led to the emergence of a new variety of English in international settings. This variety is called English as a lingua franca and is used by speakers whose L1 is not English, usually in the absence of native speakers.

1.2 The Context of the Study

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq is considered one of the expanding circle regions, where English is used as a lingua franca. This research is the first of its kind to investigate the lexico-grammatical features of the English variety used here.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The concept of English as a lingua franca is relatively new in applied linguistics. Despite that, there has been much interest in it evident in the substantial body of publications aimed at investigating this new variety of English and its implications in various contexts and domains, such as understanding its lexicogrammatical features, stakeholders' perceptions, or how this might affect English teaching and teachers; however, no previous studies have been conducted in regard to ELF in the context of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, nor have any studies focused on identifying the lexical and grammatical features of ELF in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. However, since this study is the first of its kind in the region, it makes use of existing studies on ELF features elsewhere. It will therefore take established features of ELF identified in other studies as the basis for this investigation.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1. Which lexico-grammatical features identified in previous studies are available in the English used in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq?
- 2. Do these lexical and grammatical features constitute any threat to intelligibility and mutual communication?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Lexico-grammatical Features

Lexico-grammatical deviations constitute the most obvious feature in ELF; however, few studies have investigated this feature. An enormous corpus is needed to get dependable results, which can be achieved through setting up research that includes big and convenient corpus devoted to catching the use of ELF by a variety of L1 speakers and in various fields. This corpus is represented in the VOICE corpus (the Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English) which is under Seidelhofer's direction at the university of Vienna (Seidelhofer, 2004). Spoken ELF is caught in VOICE which is characterized as unscripted and including

direct communication among speakers of a variety of L1 whose English language was not included in their raising and education. A wide range of situations, purposes, in addition to various members' roles and relations were included in the transcribed and recorded speech events. Particular regularities had been brought to light through a number of theses and conference projects showed on VOICE data, such as typical "errors", which are considered by most English teachers as errors that require direct adjustment and treatment which in turn requires a lot of time and energy during the lessons, do not really constitute an obstacle in communication. Those errors are summarized as the following:

- Eliminating the third person present tense –s
- Confounding the relative pronouns which and who
- Misusing the definite and indefinite articles, such as omitting them where they should be used, and inserting them where they shouldn't according to ENL norms.
- Using wrong forms for tag questions (e.g., isn't it? or no? instead of, shouldn't they?)
- Adding unnecessary prepositions as in (We have to study about...)
- Overusing verbs with high semantic generality, such as make, do, have, put
- Using that-clauses instead of infinitive-clauses, as I want that
- Exaggerating in the explicitness, as (black color rather than just black)

Seidelhofer (2004) added that problems in communication and misunderstandings can occur due to some recurrent events through the interactions. Lack of knowledge about some vocabulary can cause communication problems, especially if the speaker did not have the ability to paraphrase. "Unilateral idiomaticity" can also give rise to problems especially when the interlocutors are unfamiliar with these types of idiomatic speech which are represented in metaphorical language use, idioms, phrasal verbs, and some expressions of ENL that are fixed, such as can we give you a hand (Seidlhofer, 2004, pp. 219-220).

Mauranen (2010) also confirmed that lexis and grammar are considered the areas in which ELF differs greatly from Standard English. Using grammatically non-standard forms looks acceptable by ELF speakers. The results of her study were almost similar to Seidelhofer's, as a consequent, Mauranen argues that such repeated findings cannot be dismissed as arbitrary errors. Some of them are only passing tongue slips which conversationalists tend to ignore just as the case in L1 interaction. The inclusivity of the anomalies does not demand an explanation specific to ELF, but their frequent characteristics. For example, morphological over-productivity tends to derive from the nature of morphology, which is highly productive and is retrained by tradition rather than rules. By constantly creating new vocabulary, academic language makes good use of this flexibility. Mauranen adds that she tends to understand new formations by comparison, such as femininish which was not accompanied with any significant interlocutor reaction in MICASE possibly because -ish is vastly productive.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For identifying the lexical and grammatical features, a corpus-based study was conducted, which represents the qualitative method of this study. The corpus included both written and spoken corpora. The written corpus consisted of both final papers and response essays of MA students at one of the public

universities in which English is the medium of instruction. The spoken corpus was collected to achieve more authentic data, as speaking in natural settings is considered more spontaneous and, unlike the written data, is not adjusted, edited. Four MA sessions were recorded by the researcher to collect the spoken data. One session was attended in person while the other three sessions were recorded online due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In addition, the researcher was making systematic observations to identify any instances of breakdown in communication, cases of unintelligibility, and/or difficulties in interactions.

3.2 Participants

The sample included 10 master's students majoring in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at an English-medium public university in Erbil, the Region's capital and largest city. The students were all specialized in English language and graduated from different universities in Kurdistan.

3.3 Instruments

To identify the lexical and grammatical features of a language variety, a relatively large database is required. A corpus study was conducted to analyze patterns in a database of language use in natural settings and for authentic purposes rather than for the study.

3.3.1 The Corpus

The corpus included 42,094 words in total. The written data included 23,398 words which were taken from both 10 final papers and 10 response essays of 10 MA students at an English-medium university in the Erbil city.

On the other hand, the spoken data consisted of 18,705 words. The spoken data was collected through naturally occurring recordings of students' discussions during one of their modules in the second semester of their first year of coursework. The major reason for including the spoken component was to get more authentic and spontaneous use of the English language by those students in an ELF setting.

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of this research was based on investigating the lexical and grammatical features identified in earlier studies. A number of previous studies conducted in various contexts (e.g., Turkey, Europe, Asia) were taken as the backdrop to inform the current analysis.

For identifying the verbs with high semantic generality represented by Seidlhofer (2004), Wordsmith tools were used for finding the frequency of the lexical items used in the corpus. However, it was also necessary to do the analysis manually as the Wordsmith tools show the total frequency of each word regardless of its part of speech.

As for the other parts in the grammatical analysis of the corpus, first, the written corpus was analyzed. Each final paper and response essay of the students was analyzed individually by going through the papers thoroughly and carefully, highlighting any deviations from the standard English found in each of these final papers and essays, and classifying each deviation in tables.

After the analysis of the written data, the spoken data was analyzed. The total time of all the recordings of the attended sessions were six hours, after excluding the lecturer's presentation at the first hour of each attended session. All the transcribed data was surveyed manually and meticulously for several times, and all the ELF usages were highlighted, copied and identified according to their deviation from the standard English form in a number of tables.

In all the sessions the researcher attended, both in person and online, an observation sheet was used to detect any occurrences of breakdowns in communication or lack of intelligibility. The researcher was looking out for cases of requests for clarifications, reformulation, or repeating a verbal account.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Subject-verb Agreement

4.1.1 Dropping the Third Person Singular -s

In the analysis of the collected corpora, non-marking the third person —s was evident as it appeared in 46 sentences out of 292 sentences that requires the addition of the morpheme —s in both the written and spoken data.

In the first example below taken from the speech of Student 3, the third person singular –s appears at the end of the student's speech in "he wants". This can be considered an instance of a "prefabricated chunk":

If someone doesn't like something, it's so difficult he learns it. So, first of all he needs to think about it, and he need to like it and he need to digest all of the information in his mind, and his brain do a brainstorming what he wants to learn and put an aim. Student 3

4.1.2 Overgeneralizing the Third Person Singular –s

On the other hand, there were four sentences showing the overgeneralizing in the usage of the 3rd person singular –s, which means it was used with the verbs which do not require the addition of this morpheme. For instance, in the following sentence, the subject has plural –s the schools but the verb is found with an -s suffix:

The students who are out of control and the schools which lacks facilities are found everywhere. Essay 7

In this sentence, the writers might have been misled by the existence of the relative clause which as it extends the distance between the subject and the verb, makes it difficult to establish the connection between the clause's component, which was schools, which is a plural noun that requires a verb in the base form to follow it.

This deviation might have resulted from the suffix –s does not have any semantic meaning but only a syntactic nature. As can be assumed, native speakers do not face difficulties in using this non-semantic feature because they have acquired it as part of their overall first language repertoire, non-native speakers need to learn the rules mostly explicitly and perhaps in relation to similar features in their L1. Therefore,

this could potentially be a source of difficulty because they may not comprehend the necessity of using them.

Cogo and Dewey (2012) also referred to this feature as one of the prominent ELF features in their corpora.

4.2 Redundant Marking and Non-Marking of Plural Nouns

Generally, ELF users deviate in regard to irregular plural nous; they tend to add the suffix –s to the uncountable nouns, such as 'informations' (Seidlhofer, 2004). This might be attributed to overgeneralizing the rules of L1 to the English language, as the word information in most languages, such as Arabic and Kurdish, is a countable noun. In the interactions of the ELF users of this study, the users tended to apply their L1 rules at times. However, the analysis of the data showed only one case of this deviation, as shown in the following example taken from the spoken data:

Interventions in positive psychology refers to some kind of humours and jokes or some kind of activity that can be included into the class of language or language forging language learning. Student 7

Despite being considered an uncountable noun, the word humour was used in the corpus in the plural form, which reflects the ELF user's tendency to add the plural -s to uncountable nouns. The addition of plural -s to the noun 'humour' might be attributed to the existence of the quantifier some preceding it, which might have confused the user as it can be followed by both countable and uncountable nouns.

The deviations by the users in the collected corpus were evident in the regular plural forms. The analysis of the corpus identified 23 sentences indicating non-marking of plural –s. The written data included 9 sentences which were supposed to indicate regular plural nouns, such as definition, village, human, and level. On the other hand, the spoken data included 14 sentences lacking the marking of plural nouns, as in teacher, type, and themself.

There was a tendency by the students in both the written and spoken corpora to drop the plural –s despite the existence of determiners such as some, all, a lot of, and many which require the plural form of the countable nouns that follow them, as in the example beneath:

As we know that this conception is totally wrong because we don't have just British English, American English we have many kinds of Englishes nowadays. Student 2

This might be attributed to the students' confusion as most of these determiners such as some, a lot of, and all can be followed by both plural countable and uncountable nouns.

Imperiani and Mandasari (2020) reported the same results with almost the same frequency of this deviation in their corpus, which appeared in 30 sentences. Hence, these results reflect ELF users' tendency toward non-marking plural nouns in both academic and non-academic settings.

4.3 Verbs with High Semantic Generality

ELF interlocutors tend to use some verbs that have high semantic generality such as make, take and do in novel collocations which deviate from the standard English native-speaker usage (Cogo & Dewey, 2012). Although the participants used these high semantic generality verbs quite frequently, the deviation was limited.

The first deviation was noticed in the use of the verb make in two sentences. In the first sentence, the verb make was combined with the noun action. However, in the standard native English, this is considered incorrect because the verb make is not normally used with action; it is usually preceded by one of the following verbs: take, call for, agree on, leap, carry out, bring and keep (Ozdic Collocation Dictionary):

In agreement with Dörnyei (2001), motivation is essential for second language learners because it is the force which encourages them to make an action in a specific direction and with specific goals. Final paper 4

The third deviation occurrence was in using do instead of making. Usually, in standard English, the verb do is a "general-purpose verb" which takes numerous usages, and it is possible to confuse this verb with the verb make at times. On the other hand, the verb make is often used for talking about generating or constructing something (Swan, 1995, pp. 162-163). In the data, the verb does was used instead of the verb make in a collocation with the word change; however, the correct verb to be used with the word change is make as in we will make some changes. This sentence reflects the ELF users' deviated usage of collocations and their inability to differentiate between make and do in this particular collocation:

He believed that step by step he could do a great change. Response essay 1

Nonetheless, the use of the collocation does a change did not seem to impact the intelligibility of the meaning among the students.

The data analysis also revealed an innovative usage of the verb take in the collocation take extra hours, which is not found in the standard English. The student should have used the verb taught instead:

Mr. Escalante took the challenge, he asked for and took extra hours and convinced the students to come to the extra hours in the summer. Essay 6

The last innovative usage of collocations in ELF interactions was found in the data was regarding the unessential use of the verb have which was used with the word behaviour. However, this is considered as a deviation from the native-speaker standard, and the user had to use the verb show or only behave instead:

The students in the beginning also were having bad behaviour due to the lack of support and encouragement from their schools, friends and family. Essay 10

Seidlhofer (2004) and Cogo and Dewey (2012) results indicated a wide range of deviation regarding the use of verbs of high semantic generality. The current study included the innovative use of the verbs have, make, do and take only.

4.4 Definite and Indefinite Articles

The deviations in the data analysis can be divided into three types as the following:

4.4.1 Non-use of Definite and Indefinite Articles

According to the standard English, the indefinite articles a and an precede singular countable nouns., However, the data analysis revealed the absence of these articles before singular countable nouns in a number of occasions. Possibly this reflects a feature of ELF in that a/an articles are not used regularly with all singular countable nouns as in the native-speaker standard. Below are some examples of the absence of use of a/an by ELF users:

Stand and Deliver is a 1988 film based on true story of a math professor who had a goal to teach potentially failing students in a Los Angeles high school AP calculus class in one academic year. Response essay 10

The definite article the was also not used in a number of cases where its use was obligatory, such as with the superlative adjectives and some fixed expressions, e.g., the UK, the USA. Below are some examples from the data which lack the definite article the:

In this movie, teacher's tolerance and morale had a great impact on me in such a way that encouraged me to use the same power in class and toward my students. Response essay 9

Here, the speaker refers to the teacher in the movie Stand and Deliver, who are known to both the speaker and the hearer. As such, the use of definite article the is necessary. However, the user did not use it.

Similar results were found in a study conducted by Yamaguch's (2018), Imperiani and Mandasari (2020), and Mauranen (2010) in which both definite and indefinite articles were not used in cases that required their use.

4.4.2 Redundant Use of Definite and Indefinite Articles

The second obvious deviation found regarding the articles was the insertion of articles where they were not needed. This deviation was found in 29 sentences. Redundant use of indefinite articles was obvious with both uncountable nouns and plural nouns as in the sentence shown below:

This paper can also be a significant guidance for anyone who is interested in this field. Final paper 9

In the sentence above, the deviation is probably due to the user's wrong application of the indefinite article a to a phrase which starts with an adjective and then an uncountable noun. The user would probably mean to say a guide rather than guidance.

According to the standard English norms, the plural countable nouns do not require the use of the indefinite articles a or an. However, the data analysis demonstrated the use of these articles with words like results, as shown in the extract below taken form the corpus:

The students will get progressed and also they will get a great result in learning the language. Student 2

The use of the indefinite article a in this sentence is redundant, as the word following the indefinite article a is plural countable noun. Hence, the use of this indefinite article is considered a deviation from the native norms and another innovative way of using articles in ELF contexts.

The definite article was also used redundantly in 20 sentences, particularly and repeatedly in referring to generic nouns in a number of sentences. According to the standard English rules, the reference is generic when a noun phrase indicates an entire class rather than a particular person or object. The rule for uncountable nouns is to use zero article to express generic references as in "if there is wine on the table, then have a drink". With the countable nouns, generic references are represented in a number of means. The most resilient form uses zero article with countable plural nouns "Roses are red, violets are blue. I'm writing to tell you, I'm in love with you". On the other hand, less common mean for generic references is the use of definite and indefinite articles with singular countable nouns "The Americans are so jealous because they haven't got a Royal Family of their own" (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad & Finegan, 2000). The data analysis resulted in a number of deviations regarding the use of articles with generic nouns as shown in the following extract:

Nowadays, the people are obsessed with the social media and spent most of their time on Facebook, Instagram and etc. Final paper 6

The redundant insertion of the definite article the can be attributed to the impact of the users' mother tongue as the definite article is found in both Kurdish and Arabic languages.

4.4.3 The Use of the Wrong Article

As mentioned earlier in this section, the use of indefinite articles a/an, and the definite article the, is subjected to a number of rules. However, the data analysis revealed wrong uses of these articles in four sentences.

When mentioning a new entity in any sentence in the standard English, the indefinite articles a and an are supposed to be used. However, in the corpus, the students tended to use the definite article for mentioning an unknown entity instead, as shown in the following extract:

The movie based on the true story in California, which talked about a math teacher who joined a high school in an underprivileged community. Response essay 2

In this extract taken from the corpus, the student used the definite article for introducing the noun story which is an unknown noun for the reader, hence requires the use of the indefinite article a.

4.5 Prepositions

The analyses showed frequent deviations in the use of a number of prepositions, as shown in Table 4.4 below. The users' deviations were found in three different categories as explained below.

Table 1: Most frequent preposition in the written and spoken corpora with the deviations

| Preposition | Frequency | Percentage | No. of deviations | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Of | 1358 | 28% | 13 | 28% |
| То | 1460 | 30% | 6 | 13% |
| In | 1118 | 23% | 11 | 24% |
| As | 339 | 07% | 4 | 09% |
| On | 236 | 05% | 3 | 06% |
| For | 359 | 07% | 9 | 20% |
| Total | 4870 | 100% | 46 | 100% |

4.5.1 Using Wrong Preposition

The use of a wrong preposition had the largest percentage among the other categories related to prepositions, in which 19 deviated usages from the standard English norms were found in the dataset. As mentioned previously, this might be attributed to the multi-functionality of some prepositions, as in the case of in and at which can be substituted by another similar preposition without much change in the communicative function of a sentence.

The preposition of was substituted by other prepositions in five sentences throughout the dataset. In two cases, the preposition on was used in place of of, as shown in the extract below:

From my understanding on concept, every learner is able to acquire second language skills and achieve high levels of language proficiency with proper motivation. Final paper 4

Another preposition which was frequently substituted with other prepositions was the preposition in. This preposition was substituted in 6 sentences in the corpora of this study. In four out of these six sentences, the preposition in was substituted by the preposition at, which reflects the ELF users' confusion regarding the use of these two prepositions.

The data analysis found substituting the preposition in with the preposition at for referring to the word 'class' in the sentence shown below, which, according to the English grammar rules mentioned above, is considered an innovative or a deviated usage of prepositions:

The movie that we have just watched at the class and is based on a true story shows the reality of the teachers' life in which they suffer from bad systems as well as students. Response essay 5

The preposition for was also substituted by other prepositions, such as, with, by, of, and on in four different sentences. The first extract shows the substitution of for by on when used with the word purpose:

Motivation should become a part of curriculum on the purpose of increasing awareness about how to be a creative person. Final paper 1

Moreover, in the extract below, the user substitutes the preposition for with of:

And if we blame learners of demotivation, we have to search for the reasons why learners do not have motivation in second language learning. Final paper 1

The word blame is usually followed by for, rather than of; however, the student here deviated from the standard English forms. This, therefore, represents an innovative use of prepositions in this ELF context.

In contrast with the current study, the use of wrong prepositions was the least frequent deviation in Imperiani and Mandasari's (2020) study; however, both studies showed major deviations in the use or the replacement of the preposition in with other propositions. It seems that this replacement of the preposition in is due to the influence of the mother tongue, although this has occurred in speakers of different mother languages as suggested by Ji (2016).

4.5.2 Inserting Redundant Preposition

This deviation has been identified earlier by Seidlhofer (2004) as "inserting redundant prepositions, as in: We have to study about...". A similar result was obtained in this study as well. The data analysis resulted in 17 sentences containing the use of redundant prepositions in both the written and spoken corpora.

The preposition of was used redundantly in the data with the verb lack, as shown below in the extract taken from Response Essay 7. The word lack can be used in native English as a verb and as a noun as well. When using lack as a noun, it can be followed by the preposition of. However, the students here tended to use the preposition of with the verb lack, which is considered grammatically wrong:

The students who are out of control and the schools which lacks facilities are found everywhere. Response essay 7

The insertion of the preposition is grammatically incorrect in this structure. However, the insertion could be obligatory if the sentence structure was different, for example in the lack of facilities in the schools. This indicates that adding the preposition in this case was not arbitrary, but it is rather attributed to previous uses. Nevertheless, the writer might have been unaware of the difference in the structure of the sentences and consequently added it based on its prior use.

The results also showed the redundant use of the preposition of, although it was clear that there was no need for the insertion of this preposition. This error may be attributed to the confusion between two words that are closely related and have the same meaning as in the example shown below from Final Paper 2:

To be honest, despite of the low percentage of teachers who are aware of the concept of self-regulation, but they are there and found. Final paper 2

The writer here might have been confused between despite and in spite of, which have the same meaning and almost the same form and utterance.

Imperiani and Mandasari (2020) showed a major deviation in the redundant use of prepositions, unlike the present study in which the redundant use of the prepositions was the second frequent deviation.

4.5.3 Omitted Prepositions

The data analysis also showed ELF users' tendency towards omitting prepositions in situations where their usage is obligatory. The omission of the prepositions was evident in both the written and spoken corpora in 12 sentences.

The data analysis showed that the omission took place in three prepositions in particular which were of, in, and at. Each of these prepositions were omitted in four sentences in the analysed data.

As for the preposition to, it was omitted in four sentences in the data. The first case is shown in the following extract:

I think it refers to the way how we have to have good attitudes towards life how we need think positively, how we, how people make use of our behaviours and our ideas to be positive in life. Student 5

In the standard English, when followed by another verb, the verb need must be accompanied by the preposition to; however, the user here tended to use the verb following need in the base form without adding the preposition to.

In another case of the omission of the preposition to was with the word relevant, which requires to be collocated with the preposition to. The user however omitted the preposition and used this noun in an innovative way:

Well so there are two points I would like to mention is that the first one is the second language curriculum should be relevant local linguistic ecology. Student 10

5. Conclusion

A number of features found in previous works were also identified in the current study. The findings showed that ELF in this context is characterized by deviations in the use of both definite and indefinite articles in three categories: redundant use, non-use, and using wrong articles. Moreover, the findings showed major deviations from the standard English in the use of prepositions, which were also identified in three categories: redundant use, non-use, and using wrong prepositions. The omission of the third person singular –s was also one of the features that the English as a lingua franca in this context tended to have which is similar to ELF in other contexts, in addition to a less tendency for overgeneralizing the addition of the third person singular –s. The fourth identified feature was regarding redundant marking and non-marking plural nouns which interestingly, unlike previous works on ELF in other contexts, the major deviation was in non-marking regular plural nouns with the plural –s. The last finding of the current study was identified in the innovative use of verbs with high semantic generality, especially make, do, take and

have, which were all found in innovative collocations that deviated from the standard English, albeit in a limited frequency.

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