



Explicitness of Thai ELF Users in Tourism Writing

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ABSTRACT

Previous research in English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has revealed that deviations in lexicogrammar are not always random, but a result of underlying communicative processes (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Guziurová, 2020; Jafari, 2021; Ranta, 2013, 2022). Most previous studies relied upon spoken interactions, particularly in business and academic contexts; however, little attention has been paid to written communication in tourism contexts where the use of ELF has constantly increased. In order to understand how a communicative process motivates innovative forms in the lesser studied area of written communication, this study examines the kinds of lexicogrammatical features associated with the process of explicitness that underlies Thai ELF tourism writing. Data were based on a corpus of listing descriptions of 200 Thai hosts, compiled from the Airbnb website. The findings indicate that Thai hosts made use of 14 non-standard lexicogrammatical features which were motivated by explicitness in order to improve the clarity of their messages and promote intelligibility. The three most frequently found non-standard lexicogrammatical features in the data included the addition of a preposition after a transitive verb, the extended use of the progressive aspect, and marking of the plural *-s* on an uncountable noun. The findings of this study render further support to the claim that communicative processes, namely explicitness, play a significant role in the use of deviant features and in achieving mutual understanding in lingua franca communication. Pedagogically, teachers are recommended to introduce the concept of ELF and language variations to their students in order to prepare them for actual interactions in today's multilingual society.

Keywords: corpus, explicitness, lexicogrammar, Thai ELF users, tourism writing

Introduction

It is undeniable that English has gained the status of a global language. Of approximately 1,456 million speakers of English, 379 million are native speakers and 1,076 million are non-native speakers (Eberhard et al., 2023). This means that non-native speakers greatly outnumber native speakers (Crystal, 2019) and most interactions in English currently take part in intercultural encounters, among non-native speakers or between native and non-native speakers (Rowley-Jolivet, 2017). In addition, English is used in various domains such as education, government, business, tourism, and media. The increasing number of non-native speakers in these different domains has led to a new role for English as a lingua franca, and a debate on ownership and language variations among users.

As such, the theoretical notion of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) emerged in the second half of the 1990s to refer to “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option” (Seidlhofer, 2009, p. 236). By this definition, although most ELF interactions take place among non-native speakers, ELF also includes native speakers when they engage in international communication. Thus, any interaction can be regarded as ELF as long as English is a means of communication among speakers who share different first languages.

There are two basic concepts of ELF. First, ELF “exists in its own right” (Jenkins, 2007, p. 2), which means ELF is no longer dependent on a native speaker benchmark since the majority of users today are non-native speakers. Second, ELF is the language of users, not the language of learners. In other words, language users can adapt their language to meet their communicative needs. Thus, language use which differs from native use does not necessarily comprise an error but it may be an innovative form.

Early ELF scholars described language use with regard to different linguistic aspects, including phonology (e.g. Jenkins, 2000), lexicogrammar (e.g. Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004), and pragmatics (e.g. Firth, 1996). As regards lexicogrammar, some common features which do not follow standard rules, but are considered unproblematic in communication, were attested in previous studies (e.g. Cogo & Dewey, 2006, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2004). These include, for example, dropping the third person present tense *-s* (e.g. *she believe*); non-standard article usage (e.g. *White House, They have a respect for all.*); non-marking of the plural *-s* on a noun (e.g. *two car*); redundant prepositions (e.g. *discuss about*); and overdoing explicitness (e.g. *black color* rather than just *black*).

The initial findings have shown that due to the various linguistic and cultural backgrounds of speakers, ELF communication contains many non-standard forms, and those non-standard forms are motivated by some underlying processes which are in operation to help achieve intelligibility among speakers from diverse lingua-cultural backgrounds (Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Jenkins et al., 2011). In other words, the non-standard uses in ELF encounters can be the result of underlying linguistic processes which are regarded as “a natural tendency for effective communication” (Dewey, 2007, p. 339). One of the frequently discussed processes is explicitness (e.g. Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Mauranen, 2012; Önen & İnal, 2019; Pietikäinen, 2018). This process means giving additional emphasis to an item, reinforcing an intended message and making a meaning clearer and more explicit (Cogo & Dewey, 2012). As such, recent work in ELF has turned its focus to the linguistic processes underlying language choices in ELF interactions.

While a number of studies to date have relied on spoken discourse based on large-scale corpora such as the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), the Corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings (ELFA), and the Asian Corpus of English (ACE), the study of ELF in written texts is limited (e.g. Mur-Dueñas, 2015; Ranta, 2013; Rowley-Jolivet, 2017) and insufficient to draw any conclusions (Jenkins et al., 2011). Yet, many activities in English today utilize writing such as reports, articles, books, and online communication. In addition, since ELF users have more time to organize and express ideas in written communication, any deviations

from native norms may reveal distinctive features of ELF (Timyam, 2021). With respect to the domains of study, previous studies mainly focused on business and higher education (Jenkins et al., 2011). However, tourism is another rich source of context where ELF is used extensively among tourists and travelers worldwide. For example, a hotel receptionist uses English to welcome international guests and give them information, or travel agencies send an email to confirm a booking with clients.

The tourism industry has played an important role in the Thai economy as it has generated a huge revenue from foreign visitors (Kasikorn Research Center, 2022) and brought many opportunities in employment. Due to its stunning beaches, rich culture and history, beautiful temples, and delicious street food, Thailand was ranked number three on the 'Top Countries in the World' list in the year 2022, reported by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). In 2023, the government is expecting between 25 to 30 million foreign visitors, including at least five million from China and other countries such as Malaysia, India, Laos, and Singapore (Bangkok Post, 2023). As tourism is one of Thailand's main economic sectors, all key aspects related to the tourism industry, including language use, are worth exploring.

In order to understand how a communicative process gives rise to innovative forms in ELF, the objective of this study is to examine the kinds of lexicogrammatical features that are associated with the process of explicitness that underlies the written forms of Thai ELF in tourism. The results of this study provide new insights into variants concerning the characteristics of ELF lexicogrammar. In addition, this research will illuminate the process of explicitness that underlies the choice of features in written ELF, particularly in tourism writing. Finally, the purpose of this study is to raise awareness of language variations among English users.

Literature Review

The literature review consists of two main parts: (1) definitions and theoretical concepts of ELF, and (2) research into the process of explicitness.

Definitions and the Theoretical Concept of ELF

The term ELF has been similarly defined by various authors. Jenkins (2009, p. 200) defines ELF as "the common language of choice, among speakers who come from different lingua-cultural backgrounds." Similarly, ELF is defined as "a contact language between speakers or speaker groups when at least one of them uses it as a second language" (Mauranen, 2018, p. 8). Such definitions reflect the function of contemporary English, i.e., a common means of communication for speakers of different mother tongues.

The theoretical concepts of ELF can be briefly summarized into three main points as follows. First, ELF is not a distinct variety of English as other World Englishes (WEs) varieties (e.g. Indian English, Singaporean English). Mauranen (2012, p. 243) describes ELF as "a second-order language contact" where a number of languages are in contact with English. This could be a contact between people with the same L1 and other languages. Accordingly, ELF involves both sharing features due to substrate transfer from shared L1- similects (Mauranen, 2012) and variations where users from other languages adapt their speech in order to make it more intelligible and appropriate for their specific interlocutors (Jenkins, 2009).

Second, achieving a mutual understanding is more important than adhering to the standard rules as ELF speakers are primarily users and not learners of English. ELF users are considered as creative English users (Seidlhofer, 2011) who do not necessarily conform to the norms of the standard language. Instead, they can appropriate their language to be as intelligible as possible by creatively drawing on communicative strategies (e.g. repetition, clarification, self-repair) and a plurilingual repertoire. The previous literature also confirmed that despite divergence from standard rules, there is little or no disturbance in communication since ELF speakers resort to

various communicative strategies to ensure effectiveness of communication (e.g. Björkman, 2009; Kaur, 2009; Mauranen, 2006; Vettorel, 2020).

Third, based on the ELF perspective, any deviance from native norms that does not cause a problem in communication is not seen as an error which is caused by negative transfer, interference and fossilization, but perceived as an innovation (Jenkins, 2006). This is unlike the traditional approach of language teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language), which views any deviance from native norms as a grammatical error that language teachers should deal with and find a way to remediate (Ellis, 1994; Richards, 1974). In the same vein, EFL students should acquire native-like competence, and they are strictly evaluated based on native speakers' norms (Thienthong & Uthai Korn, 2023).

Research into the Process of Explicitness

A number of studies have revealed that regardless of their linguistic backgrounds, ELF users sometimes adapt and adjust their language in order to get their message across. As a consequence, ELF interactions contain innovative forms and uses which “are not subject to random variation” (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p. 32), but are motivated by underlying processes (Dewey, 2007; Jafari, 2021; Kaur, 2011; Timyam, 2021; Vettorel, 2014). Apart from regularization (i.e. making patterns become regular) and exploiting redundancy (i.e. omitting certain grammatical forms when they are not necessary for understanding), explicitness is frequently mentioned in ELF research (e.g. Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Franceschi, 2019; Jafari, 2021; Kaur, 2011; Önen & İnal, 2019; Timyam, 2021; Vettorel, 2014). This process involves duplicating certain grammatical forms to increase semantic transparency and ensure mutual understanding (Björkman, 2017). As proposed by Seidlhofer (2004, p. 200), “overdoing explicitness” is typical of spoken ELF interactions as speakers tend to make their meanings more explicit for listeners.

Prior research revealed that ELF speakers tend to use various “explicitness strategies” in order to enhance intelligibility (Mauranen, 2007). First, ELF users insert certain lexical items, for instance by adding nouns (e.g. *blue color* instead of *blue*) (Vettorel, 2014, p. 149), or adding prepositions (e.g. *she told me about the problem*) (Cogo & Dewey, 2012, p. 90). Second, ELF users raise explicitness through some grammatical constructions. For example, they use a left dislocation pattern in which a full noun phrase co-occurs with a subject pronoun (e.g. *Taiwanese teachers they don't really have some very basic idea*) (Cogo & Dewey, 2012, p. 170). Moreover, in spoken interactions, ELF speakers tend to repeat words or phrases (e.g. *and that takes place that takes place in two ways or has taken place*) and rephrase what was already said (e.g. *cultural approach to the history of technology will bring us new insight will will will enable us to understand the developments*) (Mauranen, 2010, p. 16). These two strategies help prevent misunderstanding and enhance clarity in ELF talk. In addition, ELF users rely on prominent aspects of the verb to make a statement more prominent, such as the progressive instead of the simple form (e.g. *communication is su- so all-embracing a concept like air that we are breathing* rather than *air that we breathe*) (Ranta, 2006, p. 108). By adding *be* and the suffix *-ing* to the main verb, it made the verb longer and more prominent in the utterance. Thus, it can draw the audience's attention. In conclusion, ELF users employ a number of explicitness strategies, including inserting a certain element, using left dislocation, repeating and rephrasing, and extending the use of the progressive, in order to ensure that the intended message is clear, and to facilitate comprehension.

Methodology

This study analyzes and describes non-standard lexicogrammatical features associated with the process of explicitness in the written forms of Thai ELF tourism. The research methodology consisted of three main parts: (1) data collection, (2) data analysis, and (3) validation of the results.

Data Collection

This study is based on written ELF discourse, particularly in the tourism domain. The data were drawn from listing descriptions (descriptive information about accommodation) written by Thai hosts on the Airbnb website. Airbnb is a community-based online platform for listing and renting local homes. The corpus of listing descriptions contains approximately 100,000 words which were drawn from 200 listings of approximately 500 words each. Three steps were taken in order to collect the data. First, the researchers filled in the specific locations in order to find listing descriptions. Five provinces in Thailand, namely Bangkok, Phuket, Krabi, Chonburi and Chiangmai, were selected because they are among the top ten most frequently visited provinces by international visitors according to statistics of Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand (2020), and they are from various regions of Thailand. Second, the researchers used the filter “Superhosts” to view listings only from experienced and highly rated hosts as they are regarded as proficient Thai ELF users who tend to produce longer and well-organized listing descriptions. Finally, the listing descriptions written by the Thai Superhosts from the five provinces were collected for analysis.

Data Analysis

The corpus of listing descriptions was analyzed manually in the following stages. First, all occurrences of non-standard lexicogrammatical features that deviated from native norms in the listing descriptions were compiled. Second, the non-standard features were separated into two groups, i.e. lexical features and grammatical features. Lexical features involve variations at the word level; they mainly include inflections (e.g. *marking the plural -s on an uncountable noun*, as in “*informations*”) and word formation (e.g. *adding a redundant noun*, as in “*blue colour*”). On the other hand, grammatical features involve variations at the phrase level and sentence level. The phrase level is related to the verb phrase level which contains a verb as its head and may contain other categories (e.g. *adding a preposition after a transitive verb*, as in “*discuss about*”). The sentence or clausal level is related to a group of words that have both a subject and a predicate (e.g. *left dislocation*, as in “*Widdowson he’s mentioned*”). Third, given the focus of the study on explicitness, non-standard features associated with this process of explicitness in each group were analyzed in order to understand in which ways this process underlies the written forms of Thai ELF tourism.

Validation of the Results

Inter-coder reliability was utilized to ensure the reliability of data coding. Two experts were invited to cross-check 30% of the data. One of them was a native speaker who had been teaching English in Thailand for more than four years, and the other was a non-native speaker who lived in the United States for 35 years and had been teaching English at a university for more than 40 years. First, they were given a set of items containing non-standard lexicogrammatical features from the corpus of listing descriptions and also a name list of non-standard features (e.g. *the addition of a redundant noun*, *the marking of the plural -s on an uncountable noun*, *topicalization*). Next, they were asked to determine whether a target feature of each item deviated from the standard norms, and to identify the type of non-standard features based on the list. Then, the analysis from the two experts and the researchers were compared. The agreement rates between the two experts and the researchers were in excess of 85% across all non-standard features. If there was any disagreement between the researchers and one or both experts, it was discussed so that a common understanding and a final agreement was reached.

Results

The results reveal that there were 14 unconventional lexicogrammatical features associated with explicitness in the written forms of Thai ELF tourism. The percentages of each of these deviant lexicogrammatical features are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Deviant Lexicogrammatical Features Associated with Explicitness

No.	Categories of Features	Subcategories	Non-standard Lexicogrammatical Features	Percentage %
1	Grammatical	Verb Phrase	The addition of a preposition after a transitive verb	21.83
2	Grammatical	Verb Phrase	The extended use of the progressive aspect	14.08
3	Lexical	Inflection	Marking of the plural <i>-s</i> on an uncountable noun	10.56
4	Grammatical	Sentence	Topicalization	9.86
5	Lexical	Word Formation	The addition of a redundant noun	8.45
6	Lexical	Inflection	Marking of the plural <i>-s</i> on a noun with the quantifier <i>every</i>	7.04
7	Grammatical	Sentence	The repetition of a word or phrase	6.34
8	Lexical	Inflection	Marking of the plural <i>-s</i> on an irregular plural noun	4.92
9	Grammatical	Sentence	Synonyms	3.52
10	Grammatical	Sentence	Left dislocation	3.52
11	Grammatical	Sentence	The use of <i>myself</i> as a subject	2.82
12	Lexical	Word Formation	Double comparatives	2.82
13	Lexical	Word Formation	Reduplication	2.11
14	Grammatical	Sentence	The <i>as...then</i> construction	2.11
TOTAL				100

According to Table 1, the most commonly employed deviation by Thai hosts was the addition of a preposition after a transitive verb (21.83%). The next top three features were found less frequently, including the extended use of the progressive aspect (14.08%), the marking of the

plural *-s* on an uncountable noun (10.56%), and topicalization (9.86%). The remaining 10 features were far less frequent: each of them accounted for less than 10%. These included, for example, the addition of a redundant noun (8.45%), the marking of the plural *-s* on a noun with the quantifier *every* (7.04%), and the repetition of a word or phrase (6.34%).

Each deviant lexicogrammatical feature, with some examples, is provided and discussed as follows.

The Addition of a Preposition after a Transitive Verb

Thai hosts frequently inserted redundant prepositions after transitive verbs. Most of their additions of redundant prepositions are caused by the extension of an already existing pattern, which can be divided into two types, namely grammatical extension and semantic extension. Adding a preposition after a transitive verb helped to lend more weight to the verbs, and therefore emphasized the meaning of the verb, which is regarded as the most essential part of a sentence. Examples are illustrated in (1)-(2).

- (1) *Guests can also easily access **to** Bangkok' riverside along Chao-Phraya river.*
- (2) *Don't mention **about** payment to stay at Airbnb.*

In both examples, the verbs “*access*” and “*mention*,” which are transitive verbs, occurred with the prepositions “*to*” and “*about*,” respectively. In example (1), the insertion of the preposition is probably caused by a grammatical extension. The Thai host presumably compared the verb “*access*” with the noun counterpart, which is combined with the preposition “*to*” in Standard English as in “*the only **access to** the farmhouse.*” As a result, s/he extended a noun-preposition pattern to the corresponding verb-preposition pattern. In example (2), the insertion demonstrates a semantic extension. The verb “*mention*” shares the same basic meaning with several verbs of communication (e.g. *say*, *speak*, and *talk*). In English, many verbs of communication are likely to collocate with “*about*.” Such a principle of analogy with the communicating verb-*about* pattern may explain why Thai hosts added the preposition “*about*” after the verbs “*mention*”, resulting in “*mention about*.”

The Extended Use of the Progressive Aspect

In addition to the conventional context of an ongoing situation, Thai hosts extended the use of the progressive in two types of contexts. These included static situations and factual or habitual activities. Due to the longer form of the progressive aspect (with the addition of *be* and *-ing*), the verbs became longer and more salient, and their meaning involving an ongoing situation becomes more dynamic and expressive. Thus, using the progressive aspect achieves the purpose of increased clarity. Examples are shown in (3)-(4).

- (3) *You **will be needing** your key cards to access all the areas of the building.*
- (4) *I **am living** since more than 20 years on the island.*

In examples (3)-(4), the stative verb “*need*” and the verb “*live*,” which described a static situation and a factual situation, respectively, both appeared in the progressive form instead of the present simple form.

Marking of the Plural -s on an Uncountable Noun

Thai hosts not only added the plural marker -s on plural countable nouns but also on uncountable nouns. They attached the plural -s to two types of uncountable nouns, namely abstract and generic nouns. Abstract nouns refer to intangible things such as actions, feelings, concepts and qualities (e.g. *help, happiness, knowledge*). Generic nouns refer to an entire class of things (e.g. *equipment, machinery, furniture*). With the insertion of the plural suffix -s, Thai hosts tried to highlight the large amount of things they were talking about. Regardless of their awareness of the plural -s marking rules which do not apply to abstract and generic nouns, the addition of the plural -s marking served to emphasize the plural meaning of the nouns being described. Examples are shown in (5)-(6).

(5) *For any inquiries and **assistances**, please feel free to contact me anytime.*

(6) *Please take care of the residence inventory and other **equipments**.*

In both examples, the abstract noun “*assistance*” and the generic noun “*equipment*” were marked with the plural -s.

Topicalization

Thai hosts made use of topicalization or fronting which refers to “the initial placement of core elements which are normally found in a post-verb position” (Biber et al., 1999, p. 900). While a range of grammatical functions can be topicalized and serve as the topic in Standard English, the Thai hosts fronted two grammatical functions including objects and adjuncts. In addition, in contrast to Standard English in which the fronted element conveys given information (Timyam, 2015), it was new information which was often topicalized. By using this construction, Thai hosts aimed to make their fronted elements explicit, ease readers’ understanding by putting the sentence topic bearing new or important information in the initial position, and thus enhance the intelligibility of their writing. Examples are given in (7)-(8).

(7) ***Everything you need** we try to provide.*

(8) ***Any special request upon your visit**, please feel free to contact me.*

In example (7), the direct object “*everything you need*” was moved to the initial position. In example (8), the adjunct “*any special request upon your visit*” was placed at the beginning of the sentence. The topicalized adjunct here is a dangling modifier which is a word or phrase that is meant to modify a word in a sentence, but it is not clear what the word is being modified to, or it is placed in the wrong position. All of these fronted elements conveyed new information which was not stated in a prior context.

The Addition of a Redundant Noun

Thai hosts often added a noun to another noun. The added noun served as the head or modifier that identified the type of entity being talked about. Thai hosts redundantly added a noun to both general terms and culture-specific terms. The addition of a noun not only makes the meaning clearer and more comprehensible to readers, but also prevents any possible misunderstandings, as demonstrated in (9)-(10).

(9) *such as the outdoor swimming pool with Jacuzzi, **fitness gym**, sauna and steam room.*

(10) *5 minute by motorbike or **tuktuk car***

In example (9), the noun “*fitness*” was added to the general term “*gym*” (rather than just *gym*) in order to help clarify the term and make it more specific. That is, it is the place to improve fitness. In example (10), the Thai host added the noun “*car*” after the culture-specific term “*tuktuk*” as s/he was aware that the term could be problematic for readers from various lingua-cultural backgrounds. *Tuktuk* refers to three-wheeled open vehicles that are popular in Thai cities.

Marking of the Plural -s on a Noun with the Quantifier “every”

Every is a type of quantifier determiner which has a special use. That is, it expresses plural meaning, but it is used with a singular noun and takes a singular verb. Departing from the standard norm, Thai hosts marked the plural -s on nouns with the quantifier “*every*.” As in the case of marking -s on an uncountable noun, regardless of their awareness of the standard rule, Thai hosts added the -s on the noun to emphasize the plural meaning and, thus increase clarity for readers. Examples are shown in (11)-(12).

(11) *I need to register **every guests** to the immigration department.*

(12) ***every pieces of furniture and decorative items** are chosen and made with love.*

In both examples, the countable nouns “*guest*” and “*piece*,” which occurred with the quantifier “*every*,” were marked with the plural -s.

The Repetition of a Word or Phrase

Thai hosts repeated the same words or phrases within a sentence. By repeating the word or phrase, they intentionally put emphasis on their repeated expression and made their intended message clear, as shown in (13)-(14).

(13) *Please do not take **durian** inside your room, especially putting **durian** inside the fridge.*

(14) *if my free time allowed me i would meet and greet the guests **by my own** and give them the key **by my own**.*

In example (13), the noun “*durian*” occurred twice in the same simple sentence. In example (14), the prepositional phrase “*by my own*” occurred in two coordinated verb phrases.

Marking of the Plural -s on an Irregular Plural Noun

Thai hosts not only used the plural inflectional suffix -s with regular plural nouns, they also added the suffix -s to two types of irregular plural nouns. These included zero plural nouns (i.e. the nouns that do not change their forms to denote plural meaning) and nouns with a totally changed plural form. In the following examples, Thai hosts were probably not aware that two words (*staff*, *people*) have plural referents. With the plural marking -s on the irregular plural nouns, they attempted to stress the plurality of their nouns, as shown in (15)-(16).

(15) *We have our **staffs** around full time.*

(16) *I love travelling and also meet new **peoples**.*

In example (15), the zero plural noun “*staff*,” which always has a plural meaning referring to “the group of people who work for an organization” (ref. Cambridge Dictionary), was marked with the plural *-s*. In example (16), the noun “*people*,” which is a distinct plural form of the singular “*person*” (ref. Cambridge Dictionary), was marked with the plural *-s*.

Synonyms

Thai hosts relied on synonyms which are words that have the same or nearly the same meaning. Most of their synonyms appeared as the use of double conjunctions. In other words, they redundantly added synonymous conjunctions within the same sentence to emphasize the semantic relation conveyed by the conjunctions and ensure their message was clear to readers, as illustrated in (17)-(18).

(17) **Also** *I can be a good guest for your hosting* **as well**.

(18) *Not only calm and peace on this fine beach,* **moreover also** *culture sources.*

In example (17), the conjunctions “*also*” and “*as well*,” which express the meaning of addition, occurred within the same sentence. Similarly, in example (18), the conjunctions “*moreover*” and “*also*,” which denote the meaning of addition, were placed next to each other.

Left Dislocation

Thai hosts employed left dislocation in which a noun phrase appears in initial pre-clausal position, coreferential with a personal pronoun occurring somewhere else in the clause (Biber et al., 1999; Ross, 1967). While in English the left dislocated noun phrase can perform various grammatical functions (e.g. subject, direct object, and object complement), Thai hosts only placed two grammatical functions, namely direct objects and subjects, in the initial position of the left dislocation construction. In addition, the fronted elements served to introduce the topic which conveyed new information that was not mentioned in prior contexts. Placing the focused elements in the initial position helped to highlight the topic and new information they wanted to convey to readers and increase explicitness in communication. Examples of such practices are illustrated in (19)-(20).

(19) **Deposit of 2000 thb**, *you will get* **deposit** *back when you check-out.*

(20) **The Sky Gallery, This Place** *Serve Thai and western Food open from 07.00 - 12.00.*

In example (19), the direct object “*deposit of 2000 thb*” occurred in the initial position, and there is a coreferential repeated noun “*deposit*” in the core clause. In example (20), the subject “*The Sky Gallery*” appeared in the initial pre-clausal position, followed by the coreferential noun phrase “*this place*.” In both examples, the left-dislocated elements co-occurred with the full noun phrases, instead of using personal pronouns. Such occurrence of the coreferential full noun phrases helped to put additional stress on the topic being fronted.

The Use of “myself” as a Subject

Thai hosts extended the emphatic function of the reflexive pronoun “*myself*.” In the standard norm, the reflexive pronoun “*myself*” is used for emphasis when it functions as a modifier (e.g. *Sue designed the house herself*). However, Thai hosts used it as a subject to emphasize the fact that it was the subject “*I*,” not someone else who was responsible for the relevant action. In

addition, the longer form of the reflexive pronoun “*myself*” made the subject more prominent and salient than the personal pronoun form “*I*”, as shown in (21)-(22).

(21) **Myself** and the Guest Relations Manager will always be there for you.

(22) **Myself**, my wife and our staff will always be more than happy to help you with anything that you need.

In both examples, the reflexive pronoun “*myself*” was used instead of the subject pronoun “*I*” as the subject of the verb “*be*.”

Double Comparatives

Thai hosts used double comparatives in which a comparative word (e.g. *more*) and the inflectional suffix *-er* are combined. Most of the cases were found with short adjectives or adverbs containing one or two syllables. Applying both a comparative word and the inflectional ending *-er* with short adjectives or adverbs made the forms of comparison longer and more salient. Thai hosts attempted to make the comparison more explicit which helped create a clearer message to readers, as shown in (23)-(24).

(23) All **further older** children (Above 11 years) or adults are charged for extra beds with additional charge upon check in.

(24) Coming to our place **more earlier** than your check-in time.

In example (23), the Thai host created the comparative of the one-syllable adjective “*old*” by both applying the comparative word “*further*” and the inflectional ending *-er*, resulting in “*further older*.” In example (24), the Thai host produced the comparative of the two-syllable adverb ending with *-y* “*early*” by both applying the comparative word “*more*” and the inflectional ending *-er*, resulting in “*more earlier*.”

Reduplication

Thai hosts used reduplication in which a word or sound is repeated. Different from repetition, reduplication occurs at the lexical level where reduplicated forms are put in the adjacent position to the material they copy (Wang, 2005). In all cases, Thai hosts repeated the exact form (full reduplication) of a degree adverb. By using this construction, Thai hosts attempted to express a high degree of concepts they were describing, as shown in (25)-(26).

(25) We live in a **very very** lovely area with a nice neighborhood.

(26) thank you **so so** much.

In both examples, the Thai hosts reduplicated the degree adverbs “*very*” and “*so*” to give extra emphasis to the adjective “*lovely*” and the adverb “*much*.”

The “as...then” Construction

Thai hosts used two conjunctions to link sentences, which led to double conjunctions. They used the conjunction “*as*” with the meaning of “*because*” by pairing it with another conjunction “*then*.” With the insertion of the conjunction “*then*,” Thai hosts attempted to emphasize the cause-effect relationship of the clauses combined, as shown in (27)-(28).

(27) **As** a Thai traditional is taking the shoes off prior to getting into the house **then** Please take your shoes off prior to entering to the room.

(28) **As** I have been traveled all around **then** I found that spending a quality time with all beloved-ones like a family and a group of friends is the best therapy.

In both examples, the conjunction “*as*” was placed at the beginning of the subordinate clause to express the cause of an event, and the conjunction “*then*” was additionally inserted in front of the following main clause to express the result.

Discussion

The findings above reveal ELF communication in several aspects as follows. First, previous studies indicate that explicitness plays a crucial role in ELF discourse, particularly in spoken communication (e.g. Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Kaur, 2011; Mauranen, 2007; Önen & İnal, 2019). This study adds weight to those findings, as it showed that explicitness is also typical in written communication. Although Thai hosts had more time to focus on accuracy in writing, they deviated from the ENL norm and used unconventional features in lexicogrammar as the consequence of explicitness. Through explicitness, Thai hosts added extra elements such as nouns, prepositions and inflections to make their writing clearer and more explicit. Although the manifestation of this process probably indicated that the Thai hosts were unaware of some grammatical rules or possibly ignored them, it can also be interpreted that Thai hosts directed their attention to core meaning rather than adhere to Standard English as their key objective in communication.

Second, some of the deviant features observed in this study have been reported in other ELF settings (e.g. in other Asian countries and Europe) and domains (e.g. academia and business). For example, Björkman (2008) found double comparatives/superlatives and the extended use of the progressive form in academic spoken ELF in Sweden. Based on the Chinese component of the Asian Corpus English (ACE), Ji (2017) revealed the additional use of prepositions after transitive verbs, left dislocation, and self-repetition in Chinese ELF communication. On the other hand, some unconventional features found in this study occurred in native speakers’ interactions as well. For example, based on the Freiburg English Dialect Corpus (FRED) and the Radio Wales Corpus (RWC), Roller (2016) reported the extended use of the progressive construction with habitual verbs and fronting in Wales.

As the above examples demonstrate, Thai ELF hosts shared similar features with other ELF users and even with native speakers of English. Thus, it can be interpreted that the group of non-standard lexicogrammatical features observed in this study was not only caused by a writer’s level of proficiency or first-language (L1) transfer. The overlap of features supports the early ELF assumption that lingua franca English is not merely a collection of random errors (Björkman, 2010) but that “the non-standardness has a direction” (Ranta, 2013, p. 175). That is, some features could possibly indicate universal features, such as deviations that occur in both native and non-native production due to similar cognitive processes or reasons (Ranta, 2022).

Third, some unconventional features in the present study were likely related to non-native English users having the same L1 background, which resulted in a Thai-based similect, to use Mauranen’s (2012) terminology. Examples of such features specific to Thai speakers were reduplication and the “*as...then*” construction. In Thai, reduplication is commonly employed to intensify the meaning of various word categories (e.g. the reduplicated adjective [*sūay sūay*] ‘extremely pretty’, the reduplicated preposition [*nāy nāy nāy*] ‘sit deep inside’) (Timyam, 2015). Also, the practice of using two conjunctions in a sentence having an adverb clause is allowed in Thai (e.g. [*tĥŭj mĕēwāa...tĕē...*] ‘although...but...’).

Because of the presence of all of these features, this study supports Jenkins (2017), who noted that ELF is a “multilingual practice,” in which large numbers of users with different backgrounds come into contact. In this sense, English itself is employed together with other languages. In order to ensure communicative efficiency, ELF users often draw on their plurilingual repertoires according to the needs of the communicative situation and target audience. As a result, their communication is varied and diverse in nature. It contains common features of ELF (non-standard features shared among ELF users), universal features (non-standard features that occur in both native and non-native production), and specific features (non-standard features shared among non-English speakers with the same L1 background) (e.g. the Thai-based similect).

Conclusion and Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to analyze the deviant use of lexicogrammar associated with explicitness in tourism writing. The findings reveal that explicitness plays a role in written communication in the tourism domain, and results in a number of unconventional patterns which occur at both lexical and grammatical levels. First, variations at the lexical level involved the marking of the plural *-s* on an uncountable noun, the addition of a redundant noun, the marking of the plural *-s* on a noun with the quantifier *every*, the marking of the plural *-s* on an irregular plural noun, double comparatives, and reduplication. On the other hand, variations at the grammatical level involved the addition of a preposition after a transitive verb, the extended use of the progressive aspect, topicalization, the repetition of a word or phrase, synonyms, left dislocation, the use of *myself* as a subject, and the *as...then* construction.

The results of this study provide some implications as follows. In terms of the ELF theory, the results of this study give strong and concrete evidence that many non-standard forms of ELF motivated by the process of explicitness enhance the efficiency of communication. The results of this study suggested that communicative processes play a vital role in achieving mutual understanding. In this study, explicitness helped Thai hosts create a clearer and more comprehensible message to global readers. It also helped preempt potential misunderstandings. For example, the insertion of prepositions after a transitive verb (e.g. *discuss about*, *mention about*) does not affect understanding. The repetition of the same word or phrase in writing (e.g. *Please do not take **durian** inside your room, especially putting **durian** inside the fridge.*) helps enhance clarity of the message.

As for English language teaching, this study showed variations are present in actual communication. In lingua franca interactions, users of English adjust and adapt how they use the language all the time in order to convey their message (Toomaneejinda & Saengboon, 2022). Therefore, teachers should introduce the concept of ELF and variations in language use to students in order to prepare them for real-life communicative scenarios and to interact in today's multilingual society (Ambele, 2022; Namtapi, 2022). Moreover, teachers should raise their students' awareness and confidence so that they can operate efficiently outside the classroom and make use of their linguistic repertoires according to the particular situation and the interlocutors involved in order to negotiate meanings and reach mutual understanding.

This study has some limitations. First, this study relied on a small corpus which is confined to only one type of writing (i.e. listing descriptions) in a tourism context. Therefore, the data cannot be generalized to represent all contexts in tourism. Future research should use larger corpora which consist of additional types of writing such as blogs, reviews, emails, and magazines to analyze the occurrence of non-standard forms and their frequency and consistency of use. Second, this study focuses on one communicative process, i.e. explicitness. In fact, various communicative processes such as regularization, redundancy reduction, simplification, and added prominence are at work and reinforce each other to negotiate meaning. Future research should investigate how these processes work cooperatively to help achieve intelligibility in ELF. Third, all the data were based

on the written forms of Thai ELF. Future research should examine communication from writers of different lingua-cultural backgrounds to ensure the coverage of a wider range of first languages.

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