Charles University

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Obecná Linguistika

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Dissertation Summary

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Výjimka z pravidla?

Jak může být ELF v akademickém prostředí výjimkou z nové koncepce ELF jako způsobu komunikace.

An Exception to the Rule?

How ELF in academic settings may be an exception to the new conceptualisation of ELF as a mode of communication.

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2025

Introduction

This thesis is about English as a Lingua Franca, or ELF for short. More specifically, it concerns itself with the gulf between the way ELF is viewed by researchers and academics and the way it is perceived by its users in ELF settings. One key focus of this thesis is to address whether ELF is used endo- or exo-normatively in academic settings in Prague. Research for this thesis was carried out at a series of seminars on the Ethics of the Hebrew Bible at the Charles University Faculty of Protestant Theology.

The reason why this gulf between the views of researchers and those of users is important is that the way a language is used is arguably affected by the way its users perceive it. The gulf in question here is between the perception of ELF as a multilingual mode of communication and, in contrast, as an L2 interlanguage that can only be fully mastered by attaining native speaker level. The point here is that if speakers view their language as an interlanguage, they will use it differently. They will focus, at least partially, on the grammatical accuracy of their utterances, rather than focusing exclusively on communicative efficacy. This shift in focus would arise from their awareness of the need to bring their language up to native speaker mastery. This in turn could be detrimental to the communicate efficacy of these utterances. Additional cognitive load required to produce utterances could make communication slower, less fluent, and more error-prone (Skehan and Foster 1999).

On the other hand, if ELF is and is to be used as a multilingual mode of communication, then this emphasis on attaining native-like grammatical accuracy is irrelevant and may impede communication. The communication between two ELF speakers who believe themselves learners and two who, although at the same level of linguistic competence, believe themselves masters of a multilingual mode of communication should be different. The former having some focus on grammatical accuracy, the latter focused purely on communicative efficacy. Therefore, this thesis will argue that before we begin studying ELF as a multilingual mode of communication, it makes some sense to find out if speakers of ELF generally hold this view, otherwise data obtained will be analysed inaccurately as the purpose of languaging will have been inaccurately assessed as purely propositional and not also for presentational display purposes. This idea will be developed in more detail in the literature review below.

This thesis is focused solely on ELF used in spoken academic contexts. It may well be that ELF used in other contexts shares some of these aforementioned issues, but this question is to be established by subsequent researchers.

In addition to this different approach to the use of ELF, the accurate classification of ELF is of course a problem fundamental to the entire nature of research. Without being able to define what a thing is, it may not be studied. ELF has been classified as a multilingual mode of communication and not a language variety because it has been argued that language varieties must have certain common or unique characteristics that define them. These characteristics are what allows a variety to be defined as a specific closed system, and what allows it to be studied as such. Although there were a number of initial attempts to apply these kinds of characteristics to ELF in the first decade of the 21st century (c.f. for example Jenkins 2011), it has been increasingly found that these characteristics are neither common to all ELF interactions nor unique to ELF interactions and can be found in English interactions among L1 speakers. For example, Firth (1996) describes the let-it-pass principle which subsequent researchers (for example, Murray 2012: 321) have argued is a key defining characteristic of ELF. However, it has been subsequently argued (Mortensen 2013) that this is a feature not just of ELF but of all language-based interactions and thus cannot be used as a

defining characteristic of ELF. Similar observations have been made of other linguistic features of ELF such as zero third person 's' (Mortensen 2013), subject, verb order in indirect questions (Ranta 2010) and use of the past modal in both sides of conditional clauses. In the absence of these characteristics, ELF must be defined simply through the context in which communication is taking place, and not as a system with defined or definable borders.

This thesis will argue that there may be an exception to this rule. It will argue that in spoken academic settings in Prague and perhaps also in spoken academic settings throughout the world or 'outer circle' English, ELF interactions are indeed characterised by a common feature. This feature is the use of exonormative presentational self-repairs.

This study focuses on how ELF is used in academic settings in Prague and, more specifically still, one seminar course at the Faculty of Protestant Theology at the Charles University in Prague.

Literature Review

ELF as a Language Variety

Before we return to the question of the gulf between researchers and speakers in this area, and to the question of the current definition of ELF, it is necessary to address the question of language variety. The ELF that will be the subject of this study has been described as European Variety Lingua Franca English (EVLFE) used in academic contexts. This term may be defined as the English spoken as a second language for the purposes of international communication within the European Economic Area. The term is used by Ranta (2010) in her paper 'Syntactic Features in Spoken ELF', in which she makes the case for a European Variety of Lingua Franca English and draws on the Helsinki corpus as evidence for this (ELFA Corpus 2008).

When a language is allowed to develop among new speakers, it inevitably changes and adapts. The field of contact linguistics is based on this supposition. When it does so among such large and diverse speech communities in so many different countries around the world, it can be assumed that it will undergo a considerable change. As it comes into contact with other local languages, it is influenced by them and in addition it also evolves by itself to suit the needs of the speech community that uses it.

As a result of this evolution, we now have a considerable number of varieties of English of which EVLFE is perhaps one. However, as with 'native speaker' above, the question of what constitutes a variety is a thorny one. The issue here is one of boundaries; of where a variety ends, and where a language begins. It is arguably the case that the only genuinely rigorous test of this is mutual intelligibility. If speakers are able to understand each other, then it can be said that they are speaking different varieties of the same language. It can thus be established that BrE (standard British English) and EVLFE are indeed versions of the same language. From this point on though, the question becomes increasingly problematic.

Varieties may perhaps be defined in one sense as topolects: a variety spoken in one specific geographical area. However, this would presuppose that only one version of the language is

spoken in any one area. In Prague, however, there are native speakers from the UK and the US mixing with foreign-born native speakers of ELF such as those attending the English-only schools and universities, in addition to speakers from most parts of Europe. It is spoken in universities as EAP, a different commerce-orientated version is used in offices, and in the field of diplomacy and politics another version is in use. It can be seen, therefore, that even in one small area of Europe a host of varieties may exist. Indeed, speakers often switch between them according to the situation they are in and who they are speaking with. It could be argued that here variety is being conflated with genre. Genre may be defined as a category used to classify discourse according to form, technique or content (Genre: Glossary of linguistic terms n.d.) This issue highlights the nature of the problem of classifying ELF, as opposed to other country-bound languages. With geographical borders available to define a language, definitions are fairly straightforward. Varieties exist as topolects in different regions and genres exist for use in different speaking contexts such as Academica or business. With Elf, however, we have a language whose use cannot be confined to any specific borders, and this borderless variant is used by the same speakers in different spheres. Perhaps the more competent users switch genres when using in an academic or commercial sphere just as native speakers of another language would, but perhaps not. It could equally be that one user only uses ELF in commercial situations or only in academic and uses their L1 in every other situation. If the language is only being used in one particular setting, does this constitute a variety or a genre? It can be seen that with ELF, apparently simple definitions start to look more complex.

ELF as a Mode of Communication

It could be argued that the best approach is to refer to ELF not as a language as such, but as a mode of communication (Hall in Jenkins et al 2018:74 see also Mortensen 2013) this usage neatly side-steps the problem of the ambivalence of a linguistic variety. The term variety is used to define a language. English is a language and has a number of varieties such as US, GB or Indian and Singhalese. ELF, perhaps, is too amorphous a concept to be defined as such and could be better defined as a mode of communication. The point here is that varieties and topolects can be recognised as such due to their having, as Mauranen (2018) puts it, ‘a single unified form’. There is a very convincing argument that for ELF this is not the case. By repositioning ELF as a mode of communication this problem is avoided.

In ‘International Perspectives on English as a Lingua Franca’ (2015:2) Alessia Cogo writes that

‘Most scholars today would agree that ELF is not a variety, and not a uniform and fixed mode of communication’.

This next section will further investigate the reasons why this claim is now being made. This thesis seeks to establish that this definition of ELF as a mode of communication (in other words, as something that takes place when two or more ELF speakers communicate) does not encompass all ELF contexts. In order to establish this, it is first necessary to look into precisely what this definition is and the case that is being made for it.

Subsequent writers (c.f. Hall 2018) credit Mortensen (2013) for first positing this idea. In order to establish the need for a new definition of ELF, Mortensen criticises the previous

definitions of ELF as a variety (see Maureen's definition of EVELF above). He does this by pointing out that the features that are described as being common or unique to ELF, thus the features that typify or characterise ELF, are in fact common to L1 English and to other linguistic interactions. For example, most definitions of ELF mention Firth's (1996) definition of ELF as typified by the Let-it-pass principle. In fact, as Mortensen points out, Firth himself did not posit this as a unique feature of ELF, rather as something that happened during ELF interactions, but not a defining feature. Later writers such as (Murray 2012: 321) have gone on to suggest it is such, but Mortensen argues that it is present in all languages (Mortensen 2013).

If a variety may not be characterised by the nature of the interaction, then perhaps there are common or unique linguistic features that may be identified. Here, however also, this appears not to be the case. Jenkins (2011) presented a list of features that, she suggested may be common to all ELF interactions. However, she herself admits that her research was carried out over a short period of time with a very small sample of ELF speakers who were studying English in London. Subsequent research has not established that any of these features are common throughout the ELF world (Mortensen 2013). Moreover, research has also established that these features may be found in L1 English usages (ibid.). Thus, the so-called ELF corpus first posited by Jenkins may have been a somewhat reductionist interpretation. Indeed, Jenkins herself has moved on from this position and now makes the case for Mortensen's definition (Jenkins 2018). Thus, if ELF has no identifiable syntactical or phonological features, and no features common to all ELF interactions, it may not be classified as a variety. Furthermore, Mortensen argues that previous attempts to do so were misguided and have impeded empirical ELF research in that researchers have been wasting their time looking for chimerical features or proof of previously published features where none may be found. This thesis will look at problems with Mortensen's criticism of ELF at a later point.

The next section will go into more detail on the definition Mortensen arrived on, as an alternative to ideas of variety. Specifically, it will detail what is meant by the term 'mode of communication'.

A linguistic system, such as a dialect or variety consists of fixed features which may be recorded in a corpus, and taught and learnt if required. A communicative mode or situation does not consist of any specific features, rather it comes into being whenever communicators are using it. A potential criticism of this approach might be that it is tautological; ELF is what happens when two ELF speakers speak ELF, but this essay will argue otherwise.

In order to subject something to analysis, terminology must be clearly defined and, as has been argued, none of the previously used labels for language fit with what ELF has now become. The only solution is to describe precisely what it is: a situation that occurs when English is spoken by at least one non-native speaker for the purpose of international communication. This allows for analysis without attempting to straightjacket the situation with features it may or may not possess. Similarly, attempting to describe what takes place when two speakers 'ELF' within the framework of the paradigms detailed above, in which language varieties are identified in terms of a fixed set of features would arguably lead to a reductive view of what is taking place. In order to study something, it is necessary first to establish what it actually is, rather than what the researcher might want it to be. If it is

approached with a set of preconceived features, then the researcher will find things that confirm or deny these features, but little light will be shed on the phenomenon itself.

This brings us to one of the central questions of this research, the problem that this new paradigm, although it may be a very effective way of studying a language, may well be very different from the way ELF is perceived by its speakers. This section will discuss why this might be.

This is important because it can be argued that the attitude a speaker has to the language affects the way they use it. For example, if a speaker from the Czech Republic considers English to be owned by native speakers who live in Britain; in other words, to be exonormative, they would then consider themselves to be communicating using a broken, inferior version of English and this would affect the way they communicate. Rather than using whatever multilingual linguistic resources are available to express themselves, they would try to make their every utterance conform to this gold standard. It could be argued that this would impede communication.

The added cognitive load that producing this utterance requires, especially for less-practised speakers, could make communication slower, less fluent and more error-prone (Skehan and Foster 1999). Skehan and Foster's study showed that 'complexity of language was influenced by processing load'. They were studying how language learners in a language classroom carry out communicative tasks, but it may well be possible to generalise the conclusions they reached to cover communicative events in general, especially those taking place in ELF contexts, since, as they studied non-native English speakers, the study took place in an ELF context. They identified three distinct areas of cognition that compete for available cognitive load. These are fluency, accuracy and complexity. Due to our inability to focus on three different things simultaneously, there is inevitably a trade-off between these three elements whenever languaging takes place. When it takes place in an ELF context, it may be the case that fewer linguistic resources are available to dedicate to complexity, due to the possible lower linguistic competence of the ELF user. Therefore, more cognitive load is arguably required to produce complex, fluent utterances. Skehan and Foster argue that if emphasis is placed on one of the three factors it is done so to the detriment of the others. Therefore, if speakers focus attention on producing accurate utterances exonormatively aligned to an inner circle English, then the complexity of the language they are able to communicate will be reduced. This reduction could then have a detrimental effect on the communicative efficacy of the languaging taking place. The following example will illustrate this and make the case for endonormative ELF communication:

Rather than simply using a present tense verb to say,

'I live in Prague 5 years',

a speaker may spend time and effort worrying about which perfect form to use before deciding on the standard British,

'I have been living in Prague 5 years'.

This entire effort is arguably unnecessary as the original utterance,

'I live in Prague 5 years'

is perfectly comprehensible, since the meaning conveyed through the time adverbial is similar to that conveyed by the perfect aspect. The communicative effect of the sentence is not greatly altered by conjugating the verb and adding perfect auxiliaries. It is only done to conform to a 'correct, native' standard of English. This key difference is at the heart of this research. The first formulation may be described as an utterance with a propositional function. In other words, the focus is on the semantic value of the proposition. The second

may be described as presentational. This means that, although the proposition is still present, a presentational layer has been added to display the utterance as being in line with standard British English. This latter construction could be said to be hampered by outness. This propositional/presentational distinction will be examined in greater detail later on in this study.

Critics would perhaps argue that if this approach is taken to its logical extreme, there would be no need for any grammar whatsoever, and speakers could simply communicate with vocabulary alone. This is not entirely true, however. There are some circumstances in which grammar carries the sole semantic information within a sentence. For example, we could use the present perfect progressive with no time markers to say.

'I've been chopping onions'

And here the meaning of a recent repeated action that is being viewed somehow retrospectively, with some present result (e.g. perhaps the speaker is crying) is all contained within the two auxiliary verbs and present participle. Thus, it may not be omitted without altering the communicative effect of the utterance. Thus, it may be seen that there are instances in which the same grammatical construction does and does not carry semantic weight, depending on what lexical items are also present. If speaking is solely focused on the propositional aspect of speech, then it is only in the former instance that these structures may be omitted.

It is also worth noting that this kind of difficulty is more likely to occur in the academic sphere, and thus it makes more sense for this study to focus on ELF used in this field. In the field of business, for example, successful communication is absolutely key as money may be made or lost depending on the clarity of communication, for example when negotiating a deal. In academia, in contrast, communication is of course important, but language's secondary function of identity building is perhaps more prominent than it may be in business. This is perhaps particularly important for lecturers who may use language presentationally to construct an identity of themselves as experts. They are experts in a field and the providers of correct expert information in this field. They may also wish to use English to strengthen their identity as expert users. Thus, it makes more sense to choose the field of academia to carry out research of this nature as speakers are more likely to be negatively influenced as a result of their considering ELF to be exonormative.

Hall (2018) states that 'ELF scholars continue to present ELF as a system' and it is his belief that it is not, as detailed above. It could be argued that, in solving the problems mentioned above, Hall and others have created a new problem. It is this problem, along with a fundamental problem with this definition, that this thesis will address.

As mentioned above, if users believe themselves to be speaking an interlanguage this will affect the way in which they communicate. Therefore, if ELF researchers seek to draw meaningful conclusions about the way ELF users language it is first necessary to establish whether they are using ELF endonormatively as a multilingual mode of communication or whether they are speaking an L2 interlanguage that they consider to be exonormative since, as has been established above, this will affect the kind of language they use. Therefore, the fact that ELF should be a multilingual mode of communication is perhaps less important to ELF researchers than whether the ELF users in question consider it to be so.

Moreover, if speakers think they are using a system, then surely we have to look at the way they use this system, and not a different system or no system at all. It is fine to argue that there is no system, and it is therefore pointless to research one, but if speakers still believe there to be a system and still believe that they are using it, then this stance may become problematic. Speakers will continue to language in such a way as to bring their speech in line with the existing system and therefore research into their speech must take this into account. This thesis intends to use the tools of Language Management Theory to posit the idea that this new system-free approach to ELF research is perhaps premature, at least in academic settings in Prague such as the one studied here.

Problematising Existing Research

Mortensen writes of the problem of reifying ELF, of turning it into

'a bounded object that can be delimited and characterized in terms of specific properties'

He highlights the impossibility of doing this, as we have seen above. This thesis, however, will argue that at least in academic settings in Prague it may well be the case that ELF is not a 'bounded object', but that the ELF extant in the data set studied is subservient to such an object, i.e. the standard English that may be found in grammar books. Thus, although ELF is not itself a system, its speakers appear to be struggling to align it with such a system and thus focus of study should be on the extent to which it differs from or conforms to this system in an exonormative fashion and not any freer endonormative interpretations.

It may be that what is distinctive about ELF lies in the communicative strategies that its speakers use, rather than in their conformity to any changed set of language norms (Seidlhofer 2009: 211 in Mortensen 2013).

This thesis will argue that exceptions to this conceptualization of ELF as a mode of communication exist, specifically in Academic settings in Prague, where incidents of the use of ELF as an interlanguage or a kind of pidgin that is subservient to dominant standard Englishes are equally common. In other words, ELF is arguably used here exonormatively, not endonormatively. This, then, can be seen to problematise Mortensen's distinction.

Mortensen argues that by discussing characteristics of ELF we reify something that does not really exist, in the sense that we can say that a given language system exists. This is a logical argument against attempting to define characteristics of ELF and list them, and Mortensen also cogently argues that attempts to do this have been largely unsuccessful for precisely this reason. However, is it not perhaps the case that ELF may be reified not by its characteristics but rather by that fact of its adjacency to an extant system? Alternatively, may it not be the case that ELF may be reified by observing how conversational moves and aspects of micro-level language management (of which more below) reify the language? This thesis

will argue that the repeated instances of exonormative, presentation-orientated self-repairs may be characteristic of ELF in academic settings in Prague. Thus, the presence of characteristics makes the reification of ELF in this setting theoretically possible. Thus, it may be argued that there is an exception Mortensen's rule; ELF in this academic setting in Prague may be defined as bounded. This, then, is arguably the EFL that is used in this, and perhaps other academic settings, a bounded system characterised and thus reified, not by any linguistic characteristics but by a feature of language management, the repetition of self-repairs that keep the ELF closely aligned with Standard British or US English.

This thesis argues that Mortensen's definition does not take this possible exception into account. It also argues that, if presentational self-repairs may be seen as characteristic of academic ELF (and this thesis will argue that within the data set they appear in sufficient number and have been identically classified sufficiently often for it to be argued that they are), then ELF in academic settings may be once again returned to the status of a reified bounded system in the sense that all such interactions share this common characteristic. Thus, ELF in this sense may be something other than a mode of communication. Whether or not ELF in academic settings should be deemed a 'variety' in the original sense of the word, as in, for example Singhalese or Indian English is beyond the scope of this study. This study will make the case that the Mortensen and Hall's initial suggestion that all sense of variety should be abandoned in favour of characteristic-free mode of communication is perhaps premature. Before moving on, it is necessary to briefly return to Mauranen's description of the language (2019) and discuss how it fits in with this study's hypothesis.

Mauranen makes the distinction between second language use (SLU) and second language acquisition (SLA) with the ELF she described being firmly confined to this former category. This thesis will argue that this too is problematic in terms of describing the ELF used in this study. This is because, as with Mortensen's ideas above, Mauranen posits that SLU should be endonormative. For example, when listeners' acceptance of non-standard multi-word units Mauranen notes that, 'it is a completely different matter to maintain that only certain, prescribed (Inner Circle) units are those that count.' In other words, when describing ELF there is no need to look at anything exonormatively. However, this thesis posits that if the language is being used exonormatively in spoken academic setting like the one in this study, in other words in settings that would normally be described as ELF settings, then describing it as something endonormative would result in a miscomprehension of what was taking place, and furthermore that if speakers are using the language exonormatively, then it should be studied and described as such. To do otherwise might lead researchers to reach inaccurate conclusions about the form, purpose and nature of communication as they would be studying conceptualised differently than how it was conceptualised by its users. It may be the case that the spoken academic English that is the subject of this study is not ELF by Mauranen's definition. At least, if it is established that a prevalence of exonormative self-repairs is taking place. However, by most other definitions, the seminars at the heart of this thesis are ELF interactions, in that they took place between a group of L2 English speakers, the interactions were almost all in English and they shared a common language goal which they used English together to achieve. This problem is what this thesis seeks to address, as will be discussed below.

Previous research has focused on aspects of ELF as a multilingual mode of communication and ELF users' attitudes to ELF, including whether they see it as a multilingual mode of communication (Cogo 2012). To date, as far as the author of this study is aware, no research has been undertaken which seeks to establish the gap between this definition and its perceived use in academic settings in Prague. Although Jenkins (2009) has investigated attitudes to ELF, no research has been undertaken that has used the tools of Language Management Theory (of which more below) to establish what kind of languaging is actually taking place and match this with the users' perception of their language.

Similarly, as far as the author of this study is aware, no research has taken place to establish whether spoken academic English may be an exception to Hall and Mortensen's description of ELF as a mode of communication, or Mauranen's definition of ELF as an endonormative multilingual contact, nor has Language Management Theory, and specifically Neustupny's two categories of self-repair, been used to establish whether such an exception may exist.

This is an area in which this study differs from previous research. Rather than merely seeking to ascertain people's attitudes to ELF, it seeks to do this, but also to support those attitudes with linguistic data obtained through conversation analysis using the framework of Language Management Theory. This study seeks not only to find out how users view their own ELF use, but also to use Language Management Theory to match these perceptions with an analysis of their spoken discourse.

Before moving on to detail how the study was carried out, however, it is necessary to discuss Language Management Theory since this concept is key to the research.

Language Management Theory

Language Management Theory was first developed by Neustupný and Jernudd (1987). Among other things, it highlighted something Neustupný believed was a flaw in the way language was being researched at the time. This was that a key area of interest for linguists was not the language used, or perhaps not just the linguistic choices made, but the mental processes that led to those choices. Therefore, in order to be able to draw meaningful conclusions about what is taking place, it is perhaps not enough to merely record the speech of participants in an experiment.

Before an utterance is made, before and while we 'language', a number of processes take place in our brains that result in that particular utterance being delivered. Therefore, by merely recording and attempting to analyse the utterance, linguists are missing vital aspects of the process. The theory itself deals with individual linguistic choices on this micro level and also draws parallels with the way choices are made on the macro level. Whilst this parallel macro level is vital to Language Management Theory, and is taken into account in most studies that implement this theory, it is not within the scope of this thesis to look at both levels. Instead, this thesis will only focus on what is taking place at the micro level and leave aspects of parallel macro management to subsequent research.

Language Management Theory is arguably crucial in understanding how ELF is used because, as Neustupny points out, we cannot know what is taking place in the brain when people are languaging. Therefore, we cannot say whether they are using this or that genre or topolect merely by recording which utterances people produce. The solution to this problem will be discussed in the 'follow-up interview' section below.

This section will focus on the area of the theory implemented in this research, which is that of incidents of micro-management in self-repairs. When discussing a repair of this nature, a 'four-stage' process of language management has been proposed (Nekvapil 2006:97). The first stage is recognition of a deviation from a norm or expectation(noting). This is then followed by two stages of analysis in which the speaker evaluates the nature of the deviation (evaluation) and conceives a possible new formulation that addresses the problem (planning of adjustment). The process is completed by a reformulation in which the speaker rephrases and repeats the utterance with what they believe to be the correct formulation (implementation). This process of recognition and correction will form the centre of this study. The data in this study consists chiefly of a record of these occurrences.

The Follow-up Interview

To return to the initial problem, if the key area of analysis is not just the speech act but the cognitive processes taking place before that act, the question of how they may be studied necessarily arises. To address this problem, Neustupný conceived the follow-up interview (1999). After initially recording a participant languaging, key instances of acts of language management (for example, ones which the researcher considers to exemplify one category of language management) are chosen by the researcher, and the participant is then recalled for a follow-up interview. During this process, the researcher attempts to identify what thought processes might have been involved that resulted in the correction or reformulation in question. Through this interview, it is hoped that data regarding not just the utterance, but the thought process behind the utterance is obtained and subsequent analysis can then include all the relevant data, both the act itself and, in theory at least, some understanding of what took place before the act. From this, valid and useful conclusions may perhaps be drawn.

Propositional and Presentational Management

Two key terms central to this research are those of propositional and presentational language management. It is therefore necessary to outline them here before we move on. The two terms were taken from Neustupny's chapter in English and Language Planning: A Southeast Asian Contribution (1994). In addition to explaining some of the fundamentals of language management theory, in this chapter, Neustupny adds two subdivisions which may be applied to individual acts of language management on a micro level. These are propositional and presentational. The former refers to acts of language management in which the chief goal of the self-repair is to alter, clarify or otherwise affect the proposition being imparted (1994:59). In other words, this refers to an act of language management whose focus is on the semantic aspect of the utterance. To further elaborate, this entails identifying, evaluating and adjusting language with the goal of producing an utterance whose semantic value is in some way changed and (according to the speaker) improved.

The latter is focused on the language's function of identity building. In addition to semantic communication speakers, when languaging, build their collective and individual identity. Presentational management refers to acts of language management whose chief focus is concerned with the presentation of the speaker, as belonging to a particular linguistic or cultural group.

It is worth mentioning here that self-repairs themselves are not a uniquely ELF activity. Neither, it should also be said are these two types of self-repair. They are a normal feature of English between native speakers and ELF speakers. The act of languaging involves a number of complicated simultaneous cognitive processes, and it is only natural that at times a speaker will notice that they have produced an utterance they are dissatisfied with and undertake a process of self-repair of either type.

However, as will be discussed below, presentational self-repairs are arguably more prevalent in settings where the linguistic competence of one or more speakers may be lower than the standard C2 or C1. In other words, they are likely to be more prevalent in ELF settings. The reasons for this and the significance of this prevalence will be detailed in the section below.

Research Questions

These questions will be addressed:

To what extent is there a prevalence of identically classified instances of exonormative presentational language management during the Ethics of the Hebrew Bible course at the Charles University Protestant Theology Faculty?

Once this question has been answered, in order to ascertain the significance of this, it will be necessary to address the following question;

To what extent can the prevalence of these instances be said to constitute a feature of ELF used in spoken academic settings?

Following this discussion, it may be concluded that an exception to the conceptualisation of ELF as a mode of communication may exist in this setting.

Additionally, owing to the supposed multilingual nature of ELF, a focus on translanguaging has been included:

To what extent can it be said that incidents of translanguaging occur frequently during the Ethics of the Hebrew Bible course at the Charles University Protestant Theology Faculty?

From this question we may be able to ascertain whether ELF was being used as a multilingual mode of communication with speakers drawing frequently and often on their

multilingual resource pools, or, conversely, whether participants were using learner English and avoiding any other languages that might detract from the exonormative Standard British English that they were attempting to produce.

Methods

Having discussed what the current state-of-the-art is and why it is necessary to attempt to establish how ELF is used in academic settings in Prague, as well as discussing Language Management Theory, the key philosophy underpinning this study, this thesis will now detail how the study was carried out, with a view to obtaining answers to the questions posited above.

Initially, a one-hour test recording was made, in order to obtain some basic data from which an initial research question could be formulated. Through a process of presentation and discussions with colleagues, this data was used to produce a research hypothesis and questions. The idea had been that the following year a much larger data set would be recorded.

The following year was 2019 and things were initially held up by the global pandemic of COVID 19 that placed all of the Czech Republic into lockdown and led to the cancellation of many courses. Nonetheless, a similar course was taking place that year, albeit in an online form, through Zoom. One of the two lecturers from the previous course taught another Erasmus course that year and it was agreed that, with the permission of the participants, all of the Zoom sessions would be recorded.

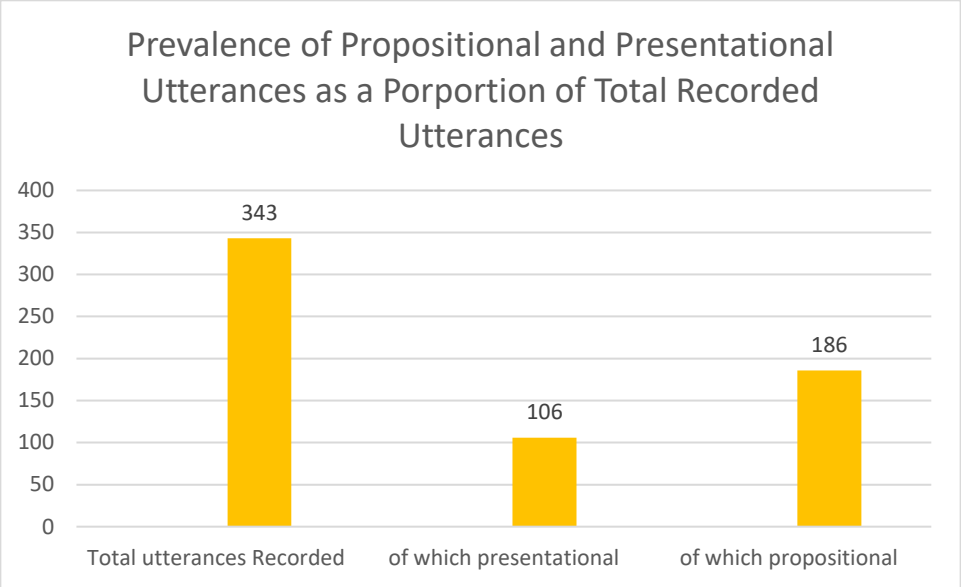
Once this data had been gathered, the next step was to find instances of self or peer correction; incidents of micro-level language management referred to above. These were gathered and recorded in a series of tables as an Excel file. Every seminar was logged as a separate sheet of the Excel file, and each sheet contained a log of noteworthy utterances, along with the time they were recorded and participant who had uttered them.

During this process, each utterance was classified according to whether it appeared to be presentational or propositional (see above). The key criterion was the extent to which the semantic value of the utterance had been changed by the self-repair. If a self-repair resulted in an utterance whose meaning was altered, then it was assumed that the purpose of the reformulation was propositional. On the other hand, if a self-repair took place and the new utterance retained the same basic meaning as the previous one, then the assumption was that the self-repair was presentational. It may also be the case that in this latter instance the self-repair also resulted in the newer utterance being closer in grammatical structure to a so-called inner circle standard, i.e., British or US English. If this were not the case, it might be assumed that the repair arose from an ignorance of the standard English form and the utterance be labelled as presentational, nonetheless.

Results and Discussion

Having discussed which question will be answered and how this will be carried out, this section will now address some of the key results that have been obtained so far. As mentioned above, incidents of language management, during which a speaker repaired their speech,

were logged and classified as being either presentational or propositional. A total of 343 utterances were logged on the table for analysis. Of these 186 were marked as propositional and 106 presentationals (see graph)



The first point to note is that the total of the two categories is not equal to the final total. This is due to the fact that, as mentioned above, a number of other classifications were also applied. During the initial study of the data, the key focus on self-repairs and the presentational/propositional dichotomy had not been entirely decided on. Thus, some instances of 'let-it-pass' and some possible new coinages of new phrases or new endonormative uses for existing lexical items were also logged. In order to address the third research question, instances of possible translanguaging were also logged. Due to restrictions in time and to the very small numbers of these instances logged, it was decided not to pursue these avenues of enquiry. That said, the total of all these other classifications only amounts to 51, less than a quarter of the grand total, so it could be argued that they do not comprise a significant portion of the data.

The next thing to note is that the propositional total, at 186, is far higher than that of presentational, at 106. There are a number of reasons for this, which will now be discussed. As mentioned above, language has two functions. The first is communicating, exchanging information. In this case, exchanging information and views on the topic of the seminar – the ethics of the Hebrew Bible, and the book it is based around (*Let Justice Roll Down* by Bruce C. Birch, (1991)). The second is that of identity building (Baxter 2016:34). When we language, we express and co-create an identity both as individuals and as members of a group. This second function is key to this study and to interpreting these results. The idea of 'ELF-identifying' is key to this study. In other words, the extent to which they feel that, whilst languaging in ELF, they are cocreating an ELF identity. As mentioned above, this study seeks to establish whether the implementation of presentational language management may be a feature of ELF in these settings. In other words, whether there is a sufficient prevalence of these incidents for this study to be able to argue that they are a unique feature of ELF. In order to establish their uniqueness of course, a subsequent study would have to be carried out measuring their frequency in a non-ELF setting or (indeed additionally) a different ELF setting from this one,

but this is outside the scope of this survey. This study is merely concerned with establishing the existence of a prevalence of this nature within the data set. The motivation behind these kinds of self-repairs, and thus the motivation behind this supposed feature of ELF is the idea that speakers are not ELF-identifying. To explain further, if speakers ELF-identify (as detailed above) then they would have no necessity to self-repair in order to bring their speech in line with that of Standard English. Therefore, presentational self-repairs would be largely absent. The amount of presentational self-repairs present in this data set (more than half that of propositional and just under a third than a quarter of the total utterances) suggests that none of participants ELF-identify. In fact, each participant who was interviewed for a follow-up interview also classified some presentational self-repairs. Thus, it could be argued that none of them ELF-identified. This evidence was supported by their own assessment in a follow-up interview. This will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs, but, in summary, one participant was unaware of ELF as a concept and the other two interviewed considered their own language ability too low for them to qualify as ELF speakers. Thus, they did not consciously ELF-identify because they considered that they were not sufficiently proficient to do so. As has already been established, this suggests a different understanding of ELF than the one that is currently in use.

Furthermore, it is this very misconception as to what ELF is that makes this kind of study arguably useful. We could merely interview people and ask them whether they ELF-identify or not, but as the definition of ELF appears to vary significantly from speaker to speaker, it could be argued that this would result in disparate and perhaps meaningless answers. It is difficult to establish whether participants consider themselves proficient ELF speakers if none of them can agree on what ELF is. With studies of this kind, however, a more empirical way of establishing whether ELF users are such is suggested. By the same token, a more consistent way of establishing whether speakers ELF-identify is also available since a prevalence of presentational self-repairs would suggest that this is not the case.

This data suggests that a considerable gulf exists between the EFL speakers mentioned by Hall and Jenkins and discussed in the review of literature above and the reality of ELF used in academic settings in Prague. Theoretically, if all participants were languaging in ELF, a multilingual mode of communication, then the 'presentational' category would be close to zero. This is because EFL users should only be languaging in order to communicate accurate propositions, and not to display standard English. To explain further, the presentational category highlights points at which the speaker has rephrased their utterance due to the fact that they have identified an area where it potentially differs from standard English and where it should be reformulated to bring it into line with standard English. If the participants were genuinely ELF-aware, then this would never happen as they are viewing their language endonormatively, and no such reformulation should ever be made. Whatever language used, if it achieves its propositional effect, is correct per se. Thus, no reformulation is needed. Rather, the only reformulation required would be to bring their language to better propositional effect. All reformulations would be propositional as the norms define themselves as communication takes place. This data shows that, with the sample in question, this is not the case.

As mentioned above, this conclusion was supported by follow-up interviews. The first one took place with participant T1 and, although he stated that he was aware of an ELF paradigm, he said that it was not relevant to academic settings in Prague. He expressed the opinion that the level of English was too low (specifically their knowledge of vocabulary was too limited) to be able to begin cocreating an endonormative ELF. However, as mentioned

above, ELF researchers, for example Jenkins (2018), would argue that this is beside the point. If ELF is multilingual, then a smaller linguistic resource in English can be enhanced through the use of a greater linguistic resource in other languages. In fact, although participant L1 stated that a lack of English vocabulary prevented him from ELF identifying, all participants did in fact draw on different areas of their linguistic resource where needed to efficient communicative effect.

For example,

In the 18th February lecture speaker T1, mentioned above, says,

25'45'' - he writes that human *beings* ***are*** *nebo* that human *being* ***is*** a Satan of the earth

He code-switches here, by using the Czech 'nebo' instead of the English 'or' to introduce to his listeners the fact that he is reformulating an utterance. Although one of his students would not be able to understand the conjunction, this is arguably unimportant as they can readily guess from the context what the purpose of the conjunction was. It does not greatly affect the meaning of the subsequent utterance, so it is arguably not necessary for everyone to understand it. Furthermore, it aids fluency if the speakers use fillers like this in their L1, rather than searching for an L2 filler. It requires greater cognitive load and will lead to a significant reduction in fluency if they have to produce an L2 filler every time (Derwing 2017), so the conversation flows much better when the L1 one is used.

This is an example of exactly what writers like Saraceni (2015) discuss when they argue for ELF being conceptualised as a multilingual mode of communication. If speakers are permitted to freely draw on whatever linguistic resource is most appropriate, then conversation will be much faster, and communication will continue unimpeded.

This brings us to a key point of this thesis. Perhaps, although ELF users in Europe are not as ELF-aware or ELF-evangelised as researchers and linguistics might like them to be, the description of how ELF is used in Europe by researchers like Hall and Jenkins may still be relevant. As was argued above, it is the most effective way of conceptualising what is taking place, without any danger of reductionist preconceptions interfering with research, and it appears to best describe what ELF is becoming around the world today. However, much still needs to be done to convince ELF-users of this. Some key recommendations as to how we may go about this will be set out in the final section of results.

This thesis will now discuss the results that were obtained after follow-up interviews were conducted. The final results taken from all four of the follow-up interviews carried out may be seen below.

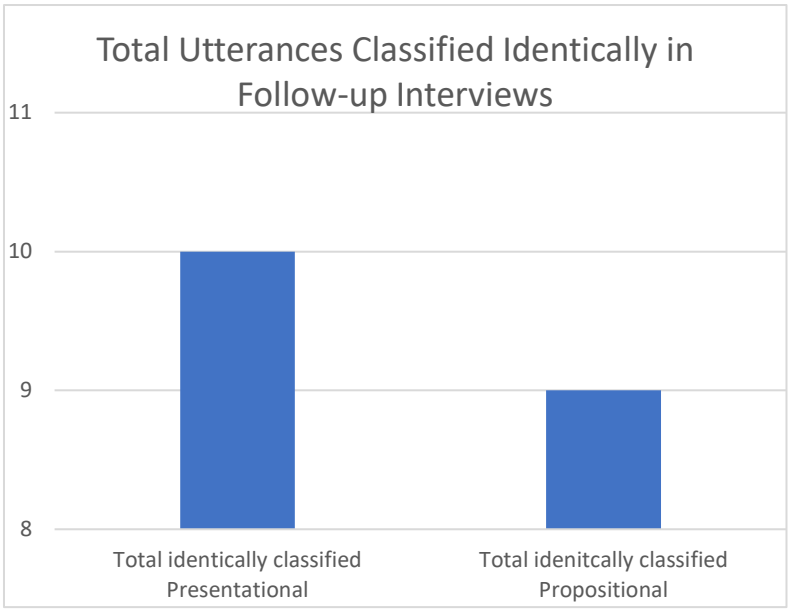


Figure 2. total utterances classified identically in follow-up interviews.

A number of things are noteworthy here. The first is that the numbers of utterances identically classified during follow-up interviews are far lower than the total utterances. It could be argued that this perhaps detracts from their weight, but as has been previously mentioned, quality here is more important than quantity. The research is more qualitative in its focus than quantitative. The quantity is quite small, but it is worth observing that the proportion of identically classified utterances as a percentage of the total number of utterances brought to follow-up interviews is quite positive, as may be seen here:

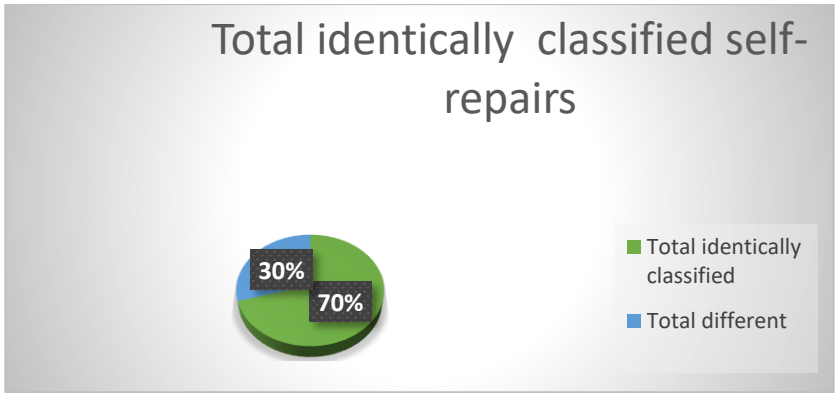


Figure 3 Proportion of total identical and different classifications from all follow-up interviews

This figure points to the possibility that a significant proportion of the original data set may also be correct. Thus, adding weight to the initial results presented above.

As may be seen, the total number of identically presentational utterances is higher than their propositional counterparts with ten identically classified incidents. This may be said to confirm the initial research questions:

To what extent is there a prevalence of identically classified incidents of exonormative presentational language management during the Ethics of the Hebrew Bible course at the Charles University Protestant Theology Faculty?

Presentational self-repairs may arguably be described as the prevailing self-repair, although perhaps only to a small extent since the difference between the two is quite small and, as has been discussed earlier, there is bound to be an element of uncertainty inherent in the process of discussing classifications. Nonetheless, the question may be answered affirmatively that there a prevalence of presentational self-repairs may be found in the data.

This presence of identically classified presentational self-repairs points to the conclusion that ELF, as it is used in at least one academic setting in Prague, is being used exo- and not endo- normatively. This is also further supported by an almost negligible occurrence of incidents of translanguaging. From this, the conclusion may be reached that the ELF community is not yet in a position to move forward with the idea of ELF as it is now; a multilingual mode of communication, or indeed that ELF is extant at all, that it is being used as ELF per se. Rather, many speakers appear still to be adhering to the doctrine of native-speakerism and to native speaker norms for guidance in what is deemed correct. Thus, they are presenting themselves not as ELF users, but as L2 English speakers competent in an interlanguage that is still travelling towards native speaker competency. From this, it may be concluded that there is a gap between the aims of current researchers and the reality of ELF-use in academic settings in this part of Europe. It appears that the ideal of Hall and others of a multi-lingual ELF, a mode of communication rather than a system with distinct features, is neither held nor used. From the follow-up interviews, we can see that speakers do not consider this paradigm relevant to them and from the way in which speakers are engaging in language management during the seminars, we can see that this paradigm, no matter how accurate a description it provides, is not adhered to by the speakers. There does appear to be a gulf between the ELF researchers would like to exist and that used in academic settings in Prague, at least in the one in question. Moreover, during the follow-up interview, participant T1 stated that other academic settings he has worked in are similar. Thus, we can conclude that in this setting at least, language is used exonormatively and cannot strictly be described as ELF. From this it can be argued that to study it as anything else would be inaccurate. However, the question arises whether this is really problematic or not. If participants are languaging using a multilingual lingua franca anyway, then the extent to which they are ELF-aware is perhaps neither here nor there. However, the existence of a large number of presentational reformulations suggests that this is not the case. At least for now, the first step appears to be to raise awareness of what ELF can be, whilst studying the language that is actually being used, which is unfortunately still perceived as an interlanguage and inferior to 'correct' standard English.

Having discussed the first research question, this section will now move on to the second question:

To what extent can the prevalence of these instances be said to constitute a feature of ELF used in spoken academic settings?

From the present data available, it could well be said that the answer to this second question remains outside the scope of this study. The chief reason for this is that in order to

establish whether this feature is unique to ELF, this data set must be compared with another data set taken from a different language context. For example, recordings of a seminar group taken from a university in the UK. With this, once follow-up interviews had been conducted with a number of the participants, the number of identically classified incidents of presentational self-repairs could be compared with the data from this study. From this, it would be possible to establish whether the feature under discussion was perhaps unique to ELF. If a similar count of presentational self-repairs is present in the UK data set, then this cannot be said to constitute a feature of ELF, and the converse would be the case if it did. Without this data, it is difficult to adequately address this second question.

However, although this is perhaps a question for subsequent research, the research carried out in this study does nonetheless go some way towards addressing the question. This research has laid the groundwork for answering this question by positing the idea that this could be a unique feature of ELF. Furthermore, this research has shown that at least within this small data set, this kind of self-repair is sufficiently prevalent to suggest that this feature may well be extant. With this small data set, it is only really possible to suggest that there might be a characteristic of spoken ELF in other academic settings in Prague, arguably something characteristic of the academic version of the Prague similect. The question of whether this might be a feature of ELF as a whole, is outside the scope of this study. Nonetheless, it may be argued that this prevalence points to a possible characteristic of ELF interactions that may make them stand out from how language is used in different contexts, and thus, this study may be taken as a starting point from which to pose a challenge to Mortensen's claim that ELF contains no unique characteristics that could differentiate it and that it contains no defining features that would allow it to be described as a system, instead it must be described as a mode of communication. If it is the case that this kind of self-repair is discovered frequently in ELF and is not discoverable frequently in, for example, standard English, then the central tenet of Mortensen's argument may be called into question. As mentioned above, further studies are necessary before this may be established, but this study may serve as the point at which this kind of enquiry could begin.

Having addressed all the research questions and mentioned the necessity for further research, this study will now move on to a final section that will detail some possible avenues for further research building on the work carried out here.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Having discussed how the research has been carried out and outlined key results, this assignment will finish by summarising the most important aspects of the study.

This study investigated the occurrence of presentational and propositional self-repairs in the spoken language of five participants of an Erasmus seminar at the Protestant Theology Faculty at Charles University in Prague. It was aimed towards identifying the existence of and dominance of presentational incidents of language management in the speech of the participants. The aim of this analysis was to identify whether the language was being used endo- or exonormatively and the extent to which its users perceived it to be one or the other. It was found that the greater part (10 out of 19) of self-repairs were presentational. This fact, when taken together with the views expressed by participants during follow-up interviews, may support the proposition that the language used by participants was exonormative, i.e., subservient to Standard English norms and not endonormative as linguists such as Hall believe ELF should be.

From this it can be argued that studying ELF as a multilingual mode of communication in this context would be misguided as none of the participants believe that this is being used. Rather, they still consider themselves imperfect speakers of exo-normative standard English. Furthermore, the multilingual aspect of this mode of communication is not present as, through the follow-up interviews, it was established that participants did not view code switching as an acceptable way of overcoming breakdowns in communication and very little code switching and no genuine translanguaging took place during the seminars.

In addition to this, identifying whether the speech used in this study was norm-dependent or otherwise, this study also focused on whether or not this prevalence of presentational self-repairs could be seen to be a feature of academic spoken ELF. This was done in order to challenge the idea that spoken ELF contained no unique features and thus was not any kind of language system, but rather a mode of communication. The prevalence of presentational self-repairs leads to the possibility that this may be a feature of ELF, although further research is required in order to establish whether this is indeed a characteristic of ELF in this kind of setting and not an anomaly unique to this particular Transient International Group. Similarly, further research is required to seek to establish whether or not this kind of self-repair is also present in non-ELF settings.

In the review of literature, the case was presented that ELF cannot be described as a variety and that it makes no sense for it to be used exonormatively, tied to the norms of no longer relevant inner circle Englishes. However, this thesis has established that, in this setting at least this is not the case. This thesis will conclude by setting out the case for change that should take place in spoken academic settings.

From the follow-up interviews and from the data gathered it was established that none of the participants were using ELF endonormatively. This thesis argues that in order for ELF users to thrive, to co-create ELF identities and to communicate complex academic concepts in the most effective way possible this needs to change. ELF in spoken academic settings like the one in this study should be endonormative. In order for this to change, ELF needs to be perceived differently from the way it is now perceived. Specifically, the view of the participants on the follow-up interviews and students and lecturers like them need to change.

This change can be brought about through raising awareness. For example, many undergraduate university courses these days include a study skills unit in which students are taught the skills deemed essential for their course such as essay writing, how to skim and scan academic texts, and how to correctly cite sources. An additional unit of this course could be added to help raise awareness of spoken academic ELF, the fact that it should be viewed and used as an endonormative multilingual mode of communication and the idea that languaging in these contexts should be focused on communication rather than on presenting accurate inner circle English for the lecturers to admire. It could be made clear that within academic speech communities effective multilingual communication was seen as more important than presenting accurate language that conformed to inner circle norms, and that academic spoken contexts would work more effectively if everyone agreed this to be the case.

Similarly, teacher training courses, in which lecturers are trained in the use of academic English for their course, should move away from a focus on norm-dependent inner circle English. Instead, lecturers on course like these should be encouraged to use all of their multi-lingual resource pools. If the lecturers are ELF aware and ELF-identifying, then it is likely that this will influence the seminar groups they teach on since students tend to follow their lecturers' leads. If lecturers are happy to translanguage frequently and use ELF

endonormatively with a communicative focus and keep self-repairs largely propositional, it is likely that students will be inspired to follow suit.

These measures, if taken, will help to move academic ELF forward into the world researchers in the field agree it should occupy, as an endonormative multilingual mode of communication and move it away from one where it is perceived as an interlanguage or an inferior version of inner circle English. Then, spoken academic ELF would be one more star in the ELF firmament, instead of being the exception to the rule.

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