

Formulaic Language Research Network 6

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Paper Presentation

Title: *Any dangers which may arise ...: Collocational frameworks as formulaic language*

This paper explores formulaic phraseologies specific to regulative texts, but, unusually, it does this by examining in detail two phraseologies consisting of grammatical words. The general determiner *any* is much more frequent in regulative texts than in general English and is often co-selected with the modal verb *may* to form one of two collocational frameworks: *any may* and *may any*. These formulaic frameworks were found in the results of a corpus linguistics project using software which fully automatically finds co-occurrences of words irrespective of constituency variation (e.g. AB, A*B, A**B) and positional variation (AB, BA). The software generated a list of all the co-occurring words found in two corpora related to engineering- and financial services. Further investigation showed that these collocational frameworks were not evenly spread throughout the corpora. They were significantly more frequent in certain text types in the corpora that were regulative in nature. The paper describes the role of the two frameworks, what they typically frame, and discusses the important functions performed by these examples of register-specific formulaic language. The paper also explores the implications of its methodology for future studies seeking to uncover formulaic language which exhibits constituency and/or positional variation with further examples of lexically-rich phraseologies.