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Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English
as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Subject:

**A Corpus-Based Study of Formulaic Language in Iranian EFL
Teachers' Classroom Discourse**

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Abstract

Formulaic language is considered central to learning a new language as formulaic sequences form at least one-third to one-half of language (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008; Erman & Warren, 2000; Howarth 1998; Hyland, 2008). Hence, knowledge of FL contributes to the language users' better understanding, accurate and fluent oral production, as well as native-likeness of their speech (Boers et al., 2006; Granger & Meunier, 2008; Schmitt, 2005; Wray, 2002). Despite the increasing interest in studying formulaic language in recent years, the issue of formulaic language use in EFL teachers' classroom discourse seems to be still under researched. This implies an insufficient understanding of the realities of classroom discourse, particularly in EFL contexts such as Iran. Building on this assumption, this exploratory and descriptive study aims to examine a corpus of Iranian EFL teachers' discourse to extract a typology of the formulaic sequences (lexical bundles and collocations) they use in their classroom interactions. The core purpose of the study is thus to identify the formulaic language features that characterize Iranian EFL teachers' classroom discourse with their associated structures and functions. The study was carried out with ten college-bound EFL teachers from four state universities in Iran. In order to assemble the corpus for this study, 60 sessions of 10 EFL teachers' classroom interaction were recorded and transcribed. Employing AntConc software, a corpus analysis was carried out so as to determine the target formulaic language list with the frequency of occurrence. The findings revealed that formulaic language use comprised only 6 percent of Iranian EFL teachers' discourse, including 2 percent lexical bundles and 4 percent collocations. This small and scattered proportion of formulaic language use in Iranian EFL teacher discourse made it impossible to extract a typology of formulaic sequences features. The findings provide basic information about the reasons for small proportion of formulaic language used by EFL teachers in their classroom discourse. The study might promise implications for second language teacher educators, teachers, learners, and other groups of stakeholders.

Key words: Classroom Discourse, Collocations, Corpus Analysis, Formulaic Language, Lexical Bundles.