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The most frequent phrasal verbs in English language EU documents – A corpus-based analysis and its implications

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Abstract

This study explores the use of phrasal verbs in English language documents of the European Union (EU) as part of a larger-scale project examining the use of English in EU texts from various aspects including lexical, lexico-grammatical and textual features. Phrasal verbs, known to represent one of the most difficult aspects of learning English, are highly productive and widely used by native speakers. The purpose of this study is to identify the most frequent phrasal verb combinations in EU documents. To this end, an EU English Corpus of approximately 200,000 running words was built using texts which are representative of the fields of activities of the EU. The analysis revealed that the top 25 phrasal verbs account for more than 60% of all phrasal verb constructions in the corpus. The results also show that in terms of the frequency of phrasal verbs, EU documents show some similarity to written academic English. The paper also illustrates

some instructional activities and the pedagogical relevance of the findings.



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Keywords

Phrasal verbs; Corpus analysis; EU documents; Course and materials design; English for Specific Purposes

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