

Developing Authentic Materials on Formulaic Language: An Example

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ABSTRACT

It is now widely accepted that formulaic language dominates both oral and written discourses lexically and grammatically. Learners' difficulties in mastering this important aspect of the language is documented (Granger & Meunier 2008). Major approaches to teaching formulaic language include those of Willis (1990), Nattinger & DeCarrico (1992), and Lewis (1993, 2000) and current literature on teaching formulaic sequences in ESL classrooms (Jones & Haywood 2004; Hatami 2015; Alali & Schmitt 2012) shows a variety of activities for teaching formulaic language for students of different proficiency levels. However, ways of developing such activities which can truly empower classroom teachers have not been the focus of any of the approaches or implementational literature. This paper attempts to explicate the process of a lesson development using iWeb and Corpus of Contemporary English for advanced level ESL students in light of the available information on formulaic language.

INTRODUCTION

Formulaic language has been termed differently, reflecting the diversity of construal and interpretation of the term. There are around “40 terms that have been used to refer to one or more type or subtype of formulaic language” (Wray & Perkins 2000: 3). Some of them are chunks, clusters, prefabs, fixed expressions, frozen phrases. There is a growing body of literature (Erman & Warren 2000; Hayland 2008; Liu 2011; Liu & Lei 2017; Pawley & Syeder 1983; Wray 2000, 2002, 2008; Biber 2009, 2004;