Analyzing The Use of Four-Word Lexical Bundles in Literature and Philosophy Articles: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

Lexical bundles play a significant role in determining the quality of writing in general, and academic writing in particular. While an increasing number of studies investigating the use of lexical bundles in academic writing, studies on examining this use across different disciplines, remain few. The current study aims to investigate the structural and functional characteristics of four-word lexical bundles employed in academic writing by analyzing 400 research articles from the literature and philosophy fields. The study employs Biber et al.'s (2004) framework to analyze recurrent word combinations for frequency, structural patterns, and functional purposes that show how writing practices in different disciplines affect language use. The Findings showed that both literature and philosophy articles use phrasal lexical bundles as their main structural pattern at 77% and 79% respectively. It also showed that the writing style of philosophy articles contains more clausal bundles than their literary counterparts. In addition, the functional distribution of referential expressions in literature writing reaches 80%, while philosophy writing shows equal use of referential expressions (54%), discourse organizers (24%), and stance expressions (22%). The findings support the view that

lexical bundles are closely tied to the communicative purposes of academic disciplines. The study offers implications for English for Academic Purposes (EAP), particularly in helping learners recognize and use discipline-specific language features effectively.

Keywords: Lexical bundles; four-word bundles; academic writing

تحليل استخدام الحزم المعجمية الرباعية في مقالات الأدب والفلسفة: دراسة مقارنة

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<u>الملخص</u>

تؤدي الحزم المعجمية دورًا محوريًا في تحديد مستوى جودة الكتابة بوجه العموم، والكتابة الأكاديمية على وجه الخصوص. وعلى الرغم من تنامي الاهتمام البحثي باستخدام الحزم المعجمية في الكتابة الأكاديمية، إلا أن الدراسات التي تناولت هذا الاستخدام عبر مختلف التخصصات الأكاديمية لا تزال نادرة. وتسعى هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء الخصائص البنيوية والوظيفية للحزم المعجمية الرباعية من خلال تحليل أربعمائة مقال بحثي مستقى من مجالي الأدب والفلسفة. وتعتمد الدراسة على الإطار التحليلي الذي وضعه بيبر وزملاؤه (2004) لفحص التراكيب اللفظية المتكررة، من حيث التواتر، والأنماط التركيبية، والأغراض الوظيفية، للكشف عن أثر ممارسات الكتابة في التخصصات المختلفة على أنماط استخدام اللغة. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن مقالات الأدب والفلسفة تعتمد بدرجة كبيرة على الحزم المعجمية الاسمية، بنسبة بلغت 77% و79% على التوالي. كما كشفت النتائج عن أن أسلوب الكتابة في المقالات الفلسفية يتسم باستخدام حزم جملية أكثر مقارنة بالمقالات الأدبية. علاوة على ذلك، أظهرت الدراسة أن التعبيرات الإشارية تشكل نحو 80% من الوظائف اللغوية في الكتابة الأدبية، في حين توزعت الوظائف في الكتابة الفلسفية بين التعبيرات

الإشارية (54%)، وتنظيم الخطاب (24%)، والتعبيرات الموقفية (22%) على نحو متوازن. وتؤكد هذه النتائج الصلة الوثيقة بين الحزم المعجمية والأغراض التواصلية التي تنهض بها التخصصات الأكاديمية المختلفة. وتطرح الدراسة دلالات بالغة الأهمية لبرامج الإنجليزية للأغراض الأكاديمية، ولا سيما فيما يتصل بمساعدة الدارسين على التعرف إلى الخصائص اللغوية المرتبطة بتخصصاتهم، واكتساب القدرة على توظيفها بفعالية وتمكن.

كلمات مفتاحية: الحزم المعجمية؛ الحزم ذات الأربع كلمات؛ الكتابة الأكاديمية

Introduction

The language patterns in academic discourse among humanities scholars follow specific conventions that represent discipline-specific communication purposes. Academic writing features lexical bundles (LBs) as a major element since these recurrent word sequences occur more often than statistical probability (Biber et al., 2004). Multi-word expressions in academic writing function as essential components that help structure arguments while demonstrating academic stance (Hyland, 2008). Research on lexical bundles in scientific and technical disciplines exceeds studies about their use in humanities fields, especially in literature and philosophy.

This research investigates how four-word lexical bundles function in academic articles that belong to literature and philosophy. The humanities include two separate disciplines that maintain distinct rhetorical styles while using different epistemologies and argumentation methods. The academic writing style of literature articles emphasizes interpretive methods together with narrative

approaches, yet philosophy articles rely on logical analysis to present abstract ideas according to Becher and Trowler (2001). The distinct features between these fields will shape the nature and purpose of the lexical bundles that appear in their content.

A corpus-based analysis identifies and organizes four-word lexical bundles across peer-reviewed literature and philosophy journal articles while conducting comparative research, "Studies which take lexical bundles into consideration target only 4-word bundles because smaller lexical bundles (3-word) are usually combined into bigger ones" (Nasabady et al., 2020, p. 180). Moreover, most research is focused on groups of four words, possibly because they are nearly ten times more common than sequences of five words and provide access to a wider variety of structural and functional patterns for investigation (Samraj, 2024; Siu et al., 2024). The research examines both structural patterns, such as noun phrase + of and verb phrase fragments, and functional categories like stance expressions and discourse organizers according to Biber et al. (2004). The research investigates lexical bundles to understand their role in establishing disciplinary characteristics and academic writing techniques.

The research adds new findings to current studies examining formulaic language use in academic writing. The research offers valuable practical guidance for academic writing instruction, which benefits students and scholars studying various humanities subjects (Cortes, 2004; Hyland, 2008).

Literature Review

During the last two decades, corpus linguistics, along with academic discourse analysis, has shown rising interest in lexical bundle studies. Lexical bundles consisting of word sequences like *on the other hand* or *as a result of*, are identified as essential elements that form fluent conventional academic writing (Biber et al., 2004; Hyland, 2008). Although these bundles lack complete grammatical structure, they serve vital functions to arrange discourse while expressing stance and maintaining cohesion.

Academic discourse receives its distinctive form through lexical bundles, which hold substantial educational value for teaching academic writing. The considerable body of research shows that writing represents one of the most challenging skills for students and non-native academic writers to master because they need constant practice and access to high-quality reference materials (Alahmed & Kırmızı, 2021; Alahmed, Mohammed, & Kırmızı, 2020). The identification of standard bundles used in specific academic disciplines enables students to generate more natural-sounding and connected academic writing. The necessity to learn academic writing techniques exceeds verbal idea expression since the problem exists beyond speaking. The distinctive characteristics of academic writing require authors to create texts that display logical structure along with coherence and order, as well as conviction and clarity, and precision (Hashim, Jomaa & Alahmed, 2025, p.630).

Biber et al. (1999, 2004) initiated the systematic classification of lexical bundles by analyzing their structural features and functional properties. The researchers used large corpora of university teaching materials and textbooks to establish structural types (such as noun phrase + of-phrase and verb phrase fragments) and functional roles (such as stance expressions and discourse organizers, and referential expressions). The research framework established by these authors now functions as a fundamental base for multiple studies about academic English.

Hyland (2008) developed the research of lexical bundles by exploring their use in research articles that span different academic subjects. The study indicated how bundle usage varies by discipline since hard science writers preferred procedural and referential bundles, but education and applied linguistics writers used more stance and engagement bundles. According to Hyland, the disciplinary choices represent distinct epistemological approaches that exist between different fields of study.

Cortes (2004) examined articles in the disciplines of history and biology to analyze lexical bundles. The study revealed various distinctions between lexical bundles occurrence and usage patterns, together with their rhetorical functions. The study confirmed both field-specific discourse patterns and writing instruction methods that need more focus.

Chen and Baker (2010) examined lexical bundles across four academic disciplines: engineering, philosophy, applied linguistics, and biology. The study showed that philosophical texts included argumentation lexical bundles about abstract reasoning (e.g., it is important to note), while the pure scientific texts used standardized methodological and result reporting lexical bundles. The findings showed that bundle patterns emerge based on each field's particular

rhetorical needs and communication standards.

The scientific community has conducted extensive research about lexical bundles in scientific and social science texts, but there is limited research about their employment in humanities subjects such as literature and philosophy. It was noted that the majority of the existing research categorize humanities disciplines under the single label "soft disciplines" without acknowledging their specific rhetorical characteristics. Becher and Trowler (2001) show that literary analysis needs interpretive commentary and figurative language, whereas philosophical writing requires logical structure and conceptual precision. The results showed that researchers need to perform thorough investigations between literary and philosophical writing to understand how different rhetorical elements manifest through lexical bundles.

This study highlights "four-word" lexical bundles usage, exclusively in literature and philosophy journal articles. The analysis uses discipline-specific corpora instead of general academic corpora to provide detailed insights about lexical

bundles in these two academic fields. The study tries to answer the following research questions:

1-To what extent do four-word lexical bundles occur in literature and philosophy research articles?

2-To what extent does discipline affect the structural and functional employment of four-word lexical bundles?

Methodology

1. Research Design

The current study uses a corpus-based, comparative design to examine four-word lexical bundles in academic articles, specifically in literature and philosophy. The research is both quantitative in identifying and counting the frequency of lexical bundles, and qualitative, in analyzing the structural contexts and patterns, and discourse functions. The study follows Biber et al's analytical framework. (2004), focusing on recurrent word sequences that appear frequently across multiple texts within each corpus.

2. Corpus Compilation

Two discipline-specific corpora were compiled for this study:

1-Literature Corpus: Composed of 200 peer-reviewed research articles.

2-Philosophy Corpus: Composed of 200 peer-reviewed research articles

Each corpus contains approximately 1,500,000 words, resulting in a combined total of 3,000,000 words. All articles were selected to reflect a range of subfields within each discipline and to ensure balance in word count and academic style.

3. Data Processing and Bundle Extraction

The texts were processed using **AntConc**, a corpus analysis toolkit developed by Laurence Anthony.

4. Classification and Analysis

The extracted four-word bundles were analyzed according to two main criteria:

- Structural Classification: Following Biber et al. (2004), bundles were

grouped into:

Category	Example
Phrasal	
NP-based	
(connector +) NP with of-phrase fragment	the end of the
NP with other post modifier fragment	the way in which
PP-based	
PP with embedded of-phrase fragment	as a result of
Other Prepositional Phrase (fragment)	at the same time, on the other hand

Stance Expressions
Epistemic Stance
Personal   I think it was
Impersonal   are more likely to

Attitudinal/ Modality Stance
B.1) Desire   if you want to
B.2) Obligation/ Directive
Personal   you look at the
Impersonal   it is necessary to
B.3) Intention/Prediction
Personal
Impersonal   is going to be
B.4) Ability
Personal   to be able to
Impersonal   it is possible to

Discourse Organizers
Topic Introduction/Focus   in this chapter we
Topic Elaboration/ Clarification   on the other hand

 Referential Expressions
 Referential Expressions   one of the most
Imprecision   and things like that
Specification of Attributes
C.1) Quantity Specification   a lot of people
C.2) Tangible Framing Att.   in the form of
C.3) Intangible Framing Att.   in the case of
Time/Place/Text Reference
D.1) Place Reference   in the United States
D.2) Time Reference   at the same time
D.3) Text Deixis   as shown in Figure
D.4) Multi-functional Ref.   at the end of

Table (2) Functional classification of lexical bundles (Biber, Conrad and Cortes, 2004 p.384)

Findings

RQ1- To what extent do four-word lexical bundles occur in literature and philosophy research articles?

Table (3) The frequency of structural lexical bundles in literature articles

Phrasal	Clausal	Other Expressions
745	37	180
Total: 999		

The table above shows the use of structural lexical bundles in literature articles, as it can be seen that the authors used Phrasal (F= 745), Other Expressions (F=180), and Clausal (F=37).

		B-Clausal	C-Other Expressions
(verb/adjective +) to-clause fragment	(VP +) that-clause fragment	Adverbial clause fragment	
22	5	10	180
Total:		37	

							A-Phrasal
NP		PP					VP
(connector +) NP with of-phrase fragment	NP with other post modifier fragment	PP with embedded of-phrase fragment	Other Prepositional Phrase (fragment)	Anticipatory it + VP/adjective P + comp. cl	Passive verb +PPf	Copula be + noun phrase/adjective phrase	Pronoun/NP + be
211	69	59	289	22	18	64	13
280		348					117
Total:							745

Table (4) The frequency of Phrasal lexical bundles in literature articles

This table shows the emplyment of Phrasal lexical bundles in literature articles, as it is shown that the authors used PP (F= 348), NP (F=280), and VP (F=280).

Table (5) The frequency of Clausal and other expressions lexical bundles in literature articles

This table shows the use of Clausal and other expressions lexical bundles in

literature articles, as can be seen that the authors used Clausal, (verb/adjective +) to-clause fragment (F= 22), (VP +) that-clause fragment (F=5), and Adverbial clause fragment (F=10). Moreover, other expressions (F=180).

	Phrasal
the end of the	211
the way in which	69
as a result of	59
at the same time	190
on the other hand	99
it is possible to	22
is based on the	18
is one of the	59
is due to the	5
this is not the	13
	Clausal
is likely to be	2
to be able to	20
should be noted that	5
as shown in figure	1

if there is a	**9**
	Other Expressions
as well as the	180

Table (6) The most common uses of Phrasal, Clausal, and Other Expressions

The table above shows the most common use of Phrasal, Clausal, and Other Expressions lexical bundles in literature articles, as it is shown that the authors employed *the end of the* (F= 211) followed by *at the same time* (F=190). Moreover, the authors rarely used *as shown in figure* (F=1), *is likely to be* (F=2).

Stance Expressions	Discourse Organizers	Referential Expressions
62	99	661
Total: 822		

Table (7) The employment of Functional lexical bundles in literature articles

This table shows the use of Functional lexical bundles in literature articles, as it is shown that the authors employed Stance Expressions (F= 62), Discourse Organizers (F=99), and Referential Expressions (F=661).

A‑Stance Expressions

Epistemic Stance			Attitudinal/ Modality Stance					
Personal	Impersonal	Desire	Obligation/ Directive		Intention/ Prediction		Ability	
2	2	2	Personal	Impersonal	Personal	Impersonal	Personal	Impersonal
			0	11	0	3	20	22
Total:								62

Table (8) The use of stance expressions lexical bundles in literature articles.

This table shows the use of stance expressions lexical bundles in literature articles, as can be seen that the authors used epistemic stance : personal (F= 2), and impersonal (F=2). Also, attudinal/ modality stance: desire (F=2), obligation/ directive: personal (F= 0), impersonal (F= 11), In addition to intention/ prediction: personal(F= 0), impersonal (F= 3). Also, they used ability :personal (F= 20), impersonal (F=22).

B-Discourse Organizers	
Topic Introduction/Focus	Topic Elaboration/ Clarification
0	99
Total: 99	

Table (9) The authors' use of Discourse Organizers LB in literature articles

This table shows the authors' use of Discourse Organizers LB in literature articles. As can be seen that the authors used Topic Introduction/Focus (F=0), Topic Elaboration/ Clarification (F= 99).

C-Referential Expressions								
Identification/ Focus	Imprecision	Specification of Attributes			Time/Place/Text Reference			
		Quantity Specification	Tangible Framing Att	Intangible Framing Att.	Place Reference	Time Reference	Text Deixis	Multi-functional Ref
74	0	3	97	70	72	190	1	154
Total:								661

Table (10) The authors' use of Referential Expressions lexical bundles in literature articles

This table shows the authors' use of Referential Expressions LB in literature articles. As can be seen that the authors used Identification/ Focus (F=74), Imprecision (F= 0). Specification of Attributes: Quantity Specification (F=3), Tangible Framing Att. (F=97), Intangible Framing Att. (F= 70). Time/Place/Text Reference: Place Reference (F=72), Time Reference (F=190), Text Deixis

(F=1), Multi-functional Ref (F=154).

Stance Expressions	
I think it was	2
are more likely to	2
if you want to	2
you look at the	0
it is necessary to	11
is going to be	3
to be able to	20
it is possible to	22
Discourse Organizers	
in this chapter we	0
on the other hand	99
Referential Expressions	
one of the most	74
and things like that	0
a lot of people	3
in the form of	97
in the case of	70
in the United States	72
at the same time	190

as shown in Figure	**1**
at the end of	154

Table (11) The use of Functional LB in literature articles by the authors

This table shows the use of Functional LB in literature articles by the authors. As can be seen that the authors used *at the same time* (F=190) followed by *at the end of* (F=154). Also, the authors rarely used some of Functional LB like *as shown in Figure* (F=1), *a lot of people* (F=3). Moreover, the authors didn't use some Functional LB like *in this chapter we* (F=0), *and things like that* (F=0).

Figure (1) The percentage of structural LBs in the literature articles
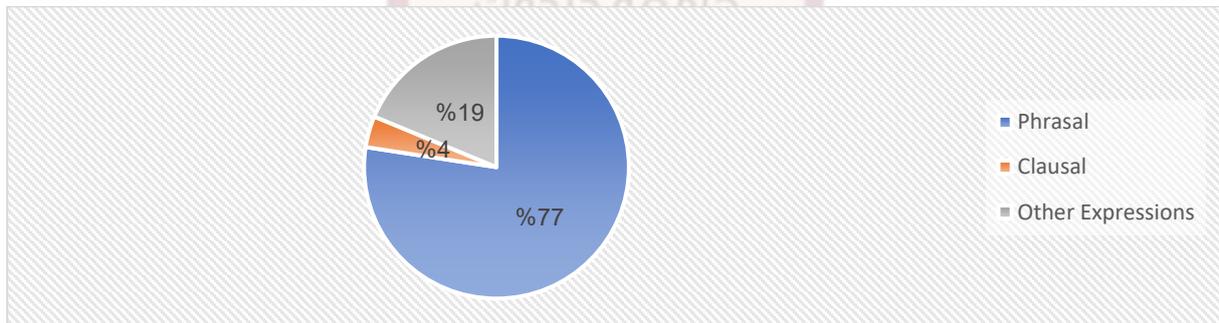
The figure above shows the percentage of structural LBs in the literature articles according to the categories. As can be seen that the authors used *Phrasal* 77%, followed by *other expressions* 19% and *Clausal* 4%.

Figure (2) The percentage of Functional LBs in the literature articles
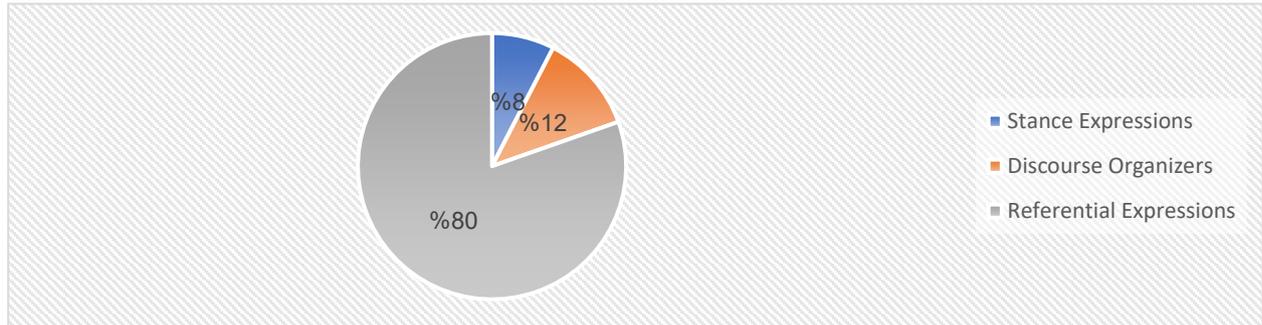
The figure above shows the use of functional LB in literature articles according to the categories. As can be seen that the authors used *Referential Expressions* 80%, followed by *Discourse Organizers* 12% and *Stance Expressions* 8%.

	Phrasal	Clausal	Other Expressions
	828	173	55
Total:	999		

Table (12) The frequency of structural lexical bundles in philosophy articles

The table above shows the use of structural lexical bundles in philosophy articles, as it can be seen that the authors used Phrasal (F= 828), Other Expressions (F=55), and Clausal (F=173).

A-Phrasal							
NP		PP					VP
(connector +) NP with of-phrase fragment	NP with other post modifier fragment	PP with embedded of-phrase fragment	Other Prepositional Phrase (fragment)	Anticipatory it + VP/adjective P + comp. cl	Passive verb +PPf	Copula be + noun phrase/adjective phrase	Pronoun/NP + be
55	93	59	420	64	24	71	42
	148	479					201
Total:							828

Table (13) The frequency of Phrasal lexical bundles in philosophy articles

B-Clausal			C-Other Expressions
(verb/adjective +) to-clause fragment	(VP +) that-clause fragment	Adverbial clause fragment	
117	16	40	55
Total:	173		

This table shows the use of Phrasal lexical bundles in philosophy articles, as can be seen that the authors used PP (F= 479), NP (F=148), and VP (F=201).

Table (14) The frequency of Clausal and other expressions lexical bundles in philosophy articles

This table shows the use of Clausal and other expressions lexical bundles in literature articles, as can be seen that the authors used Clausal, (verb/adjective +) to-clause fragment (F= 117), (VP +) that-clause fragment (F=16), and Adverbial clause fragment (F=40). Moreover, other expressions (F=55).

	Phrasal
the end of the	55
the way in which	93
as a result of	59
at the same time	174
on the other hand	246
it is possible to	64
is based on the	24
is one of the	52
is due to the	19
this is not the	42
	Clausal
is likely to be	14
to be able to	103

should be noted that	**16**
as shown in figure	1
if there is a	39
	Other Expressions
as well as the	55

Table (15) The most common uses of Phrasal, Clausal, and Other Expressions

This table shows the most common use of Phrasal, Clausal, and Other Expressions lexical bundles in philosophy articles, as it is shown that the authors employed *on the other hand* (F= 246) followed by *at the same time* (F=174). Moreover, the authors rarely used *as shown in figure* (F=1).

Stance Expressions	Discourse Organizers	Referential Expressions
217	246	536
Total: 999		

Table (16) The use of Functional lexical bundles in philosophy articles

The table above shows the use of Functional lexical bundles in philosophy articles, as it can be seen that the authors used Stance Expressions (F= 217), *Discourse Organizers* (F=246), and *Referential Expressions* (F=536).

A-Stance Expressions								
Epistemic Stance			Attitudinal/ Modality Stance					
Personal	Impersonal	Desire	Obligation/ Directive		Intention/ Prediction		Ability	
0	14	5	Personal	Impersonal	Personal	Impersonal	Personal	Impersonal
			0	24	0	7	103	64
Total:								217

Table (17) The employment of stance expressions lexical bundles in philosophy articles This table shows the use of stance expressions lexical bundles in literature articles, as can be seen that the authors used epistemic stance: personal (F= 0), and impersonal (F=14). Also, attudinal / modality stance: desire (F=5), obligation/ directive: personal (F= 0), impersonal (F= 24), In addition to intention/ prediction: personal (F= 0), impersonal (F= 7). Also, they used ability: personal (F= 103), impersonal (F=64).

B-Discourse Organizers	
Topic Introduction/Focus	Topic Elaboration/ Clarification
0	246
Total: 246	

Table (18) The authors' use of Discourse Organizers LB in philosophy articles

This table shows the authors' use of Discourse Organizers LB in philosophy articles. As can be seen that the authors used Topic Introduction/Focus (F=0), Topic Elaboration/ Clarification (F= 246).

							C-Referential Expressions
Identification/ Focus	Imprecision	Specification of Attributes			Time/Place/Text Reference		
30	0	Quantity Specification	Tangible Framing Att	Intangible Framing Att.	Place Reference	Time Reference	Text Deixis	Multi-functional Ref
		2	59	193	26	174	1	51
Total:								536

Table (19) The authors' use of Referential Expressions lexical bundles in philosophy articles

This table shows the authors' use of Referential Expressions LB in philosophy articles. As can be seen that the authors used Identification/ Focus (F=30), Imprecision (F= 0). Specification of Attributes: Quantity Specification (F=2), Tangible Framing Att. (F=59), Intangible Framing Att. (F= 193). Time/Place/Text Reference: Place Reference (F=26), Time Reference (F=174), Text Deixis (F=1), Multi-functional Ref (F=51).

| Stance Expressions	
I think it was	0
are more likely to	14
if you want to	5
you look at the	0
it is necessary to	24
is going to be	7
to be able to	103
it is possible to	64
Discourse Organizers	
in this chapter we	0
on the other hand	246
Referential Expressions	
one of the most	30
and things like that	0
a lot of people	2
in the form of	59
in the case of	193
in the United States	26
at the same time	174
as shown in Figure	1
at the end of	51

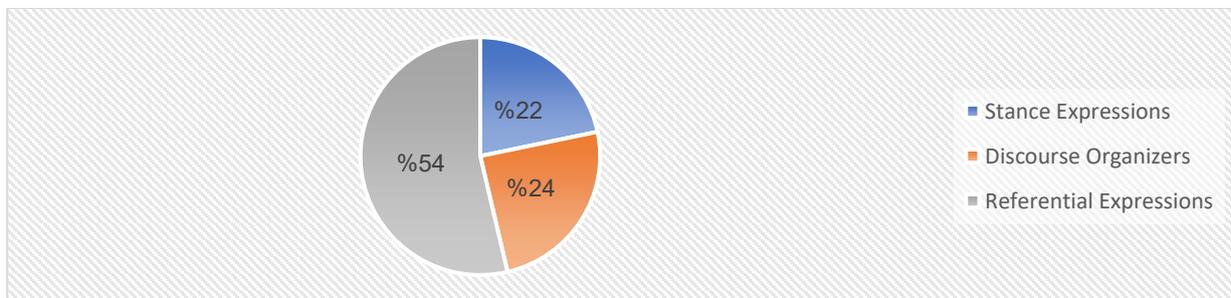**Table (20) The use of Functional LB in philosophy articles by the authors**

This table shows the use of Functional LB in philosophy articles by the authors. As it is shown that the authors used *on the other hand* (F=246) followed by *in the case of* (F=193). Also, the authors rarely used some of Functional LB like *as shown in Figure* (F=1), *a lot of people* (F=2). Moreover, the authors didn't use some Functional LB like *in this chapter we* (F=0), *I think it was* (F=0), and *things like that* (F=0).

Figure (3) The percentage of structural LBs in the philosophy articles
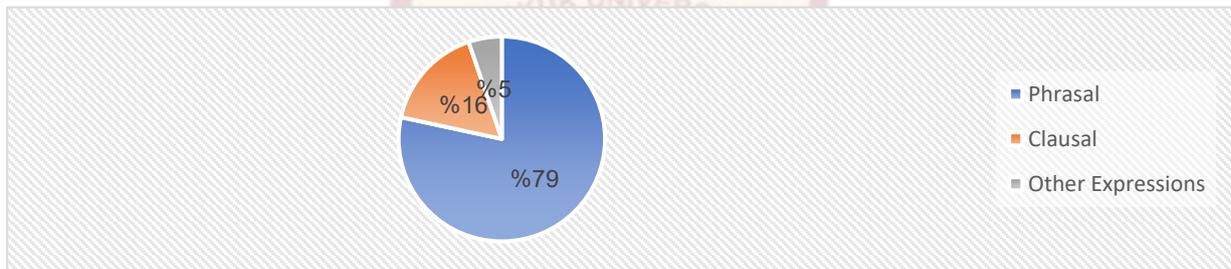
This figure shows the percentage of structural LBs in the philosophy articles according to the categories. As can be seen that the authors used *Phrasal* 79%, followed by *Clausal* 16% and *other expressions* 5%.

Figure (4) The percentage of Functional LBs in the philosophy articles

This figure shows the use of functional LB in philosophy articles according to the categories. As can be seen that the authors used *Referential Expressions* 54%,

followed by *Discourse Organizers* 24% and *Stance Expressions* 22%.

RQ2: To what extent does discipline affect the structural and functional employment of four-word lexical bundles?

Structural Category	Literature (F)	Philosophy (F)	Difference	% Lit	% Phil
Total Structural LBs	962	1056	-94	100%	100%
- Phrasal	745	828	-83	77.4%	78.4%
- Clausal	37	173	-136	3.8%	16.4%
- Other Expressions	180	55	+125	18.7%	5.2%

Table (21) Structural Lexical Bundles: Frequency Comparison

Phrasal bundles dominate both fields, but clausal bundles are used over 4.5 times more in philosophy. In contrast, other expressions are used over 3 times more in literature.

Phrasal Type	Literature (F)	Philosophy (F)	Difference
Prepositional Phrase (PP)	348	479	-131
Noun Phrase (NP)	280	148	+132
Verb Phrase (VP)	280	201	+79

Table (22) Types of Phrasal Bundles

Philosophy prefers PP bundles, while literature uses more NP and VP bundles, suggesting more descriptive and action-oriented patterns.

Clausal Bundle Type	Literature (F)	Philosophy (F)	Difference
To-clause fragment	22	117	-95
That-clause fragment	5	16	-11
Adverbial clause fragment	10	40	-30

Table (23) Clausal Bundles Breakdown

Philosophy articles heavily favor clausal structures, especially to-clause fragments, which support analytical and explanatory writing.

Functional Category	Literature (F)	Philosophy (F)	Difference	% Lit	% Phil
Total Functional LBs	822	999	-177	100%	100%
- Referential Expressions	661	536	+125	80.4%	53.6%
- Discourse Organizers	99	246	-147	12.0%	24.6%
- Stance Expressions	62	217	-155	7.5%	21.7%

Table (23) Functional Lexical Bundles: Frequency Comparison

Literature writing is highly referential, whereas philosophy emphasizes discourse organization and stance, aligning with the argumentative nature of philosophical discourse.

Stance Category	Lit (F)	Phil (F)	Notable Difference
Epistemic (personal)	2	0	Lit uses slightly more
Epistemic (impersonal)	2	14	Philosophy dominates
Desire	2	5	Slightly more in Phil
Obligation (impersonal)	11	24	More than double in Phil
Prediction (impersonal)	3	7	Philosophy uses more
Ability (personal + impersonal)	42	167	4x higher in Phil

Table (24) Stance Subcategories Breakdown

Philosophy uses stance bundles extensively, especially those expressing ability and obligation, reflecting modal reasoning and argumentation strategies.

Lexical Bundle	Literature (F)	Philosophy (F)
at the same time	190	174

the end of the	**211**	—
on the other hand	—	246
in the case of	—	193

Table (25) Most Frequent Bundles (Top Two in Each Field)

Some overlap (e.g., "at the same time"), but philosophy favors contrastive and conditional expressions, while literature uses temporal and narrative bundles.

- **Structural LBs Distribution:**
  ○ Literature: Phrasal (77%), Clausal (4%), Other (19%)
  ○ Philosophy: Phrasal (79%), Clausal (16%), Other (5%)
- **Functional LBs Distribution:**
  ○ Literature: Referential (80%), Discourse (12%), Stance (8%)
  ○ Philosophy: Referential (54%), Discourse (25%), Stance (21%)

Conclusion

The current study explored and compared the employment of four-word lexical bundles in academic writing within literature and philosophy disciplines. In line with Biber et al. (2004)'s structural and functional frameworks, the findings indicate that there are some disciplinary differences in the use of lexical bundles in these two fields.

The Quantitative analysis showed that both disciplines have a very high use of

phrasal bundles and that philosophy articles have a higher use than literature articles (79% vs. 77%). However, clausal bundles were used much more frequently in philosophy (16%) than in literature (4%), which is in line with the argumentative nature of philosophy and its analytical and evaluative discourse (Hyland, 2008). On the other hand, literature articles demonstrated a wider use

of "other expressions" (19%), which indicates a stylistic preference for more varied and context-dependent phrasing, which is most likely linked to the interpretative and narrative nature of literary analysis.

In terms of function, referential expressions were the most frequent type of lexical bundle in literary writing, accounting for 80%. They refer to the frequent need to describe, identify, and refer to certain texts, times, and places. Philosophical writing, however, showed a more equal distribution of functions, with referential expressions (54%), discourse organizers (24%), and stance expressions (22%) all being very well represented. This is because philosophy is a rhetorical discipline that aims at constructing arguments, clarifying complex

ideas, and expressing degrees of certainty or modality (Cortes, 2004; Hyland, 2008).

The high frequency of stance bundles in philosophy articles, especially those expressing ability and obligation, suggests that there is a strong need for authors to assess claims, express necessity, and engage in logical reasoning. In contrast, such evaluative stance-taking is much more limited in literary writing, where

authorial voice is often suppressed to focus on interpretive commentary grounded in the primary texts.

Thus, these findings support the argument that disciplinary discourse practices and epistemologies influence academic writing. As Biber and Barbieri (2007) emphasize, using lexical bundles is not random; it is closely related to a

discipline's communicative needs, audience expectations, and rhetorical goals. The study contributes to the field of formulaic language studies in the genre of academic writing and to the understanding of the different rhetorical features of the two disciplines by examining structural and functional aspects. The differences highlighted in this study also stress the importance of genre and discipline-specific language use and provide some useful implications for EAP (English for Academic Purposes) instruction, especially for students who want to write well in their respective academic communities. The study was limited to literature and philosophy disciplines, allowing other researchers to examine other disciplines in the future, hoping to be a useful addition to the literature

body of lexical bundles.

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