

LEXICAL BUNDLES IN ENGLISH HOROSCOPES: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

To increase the fluency of communication and discourse production, lexical bundles can be quite helpful. In natural conversation, combinations of multiple or more words are often referred to as lexical bundles, a multi-word unit. Other researchers have compared lexical bundles across fields using initial classifications introduced in primary studies about the development of functional and structural categories of lexical bundles. To examine and research the structural and operational aspects of the lexical bundles, however, no thorough investigation has been done in the genre of English horoscopes. This study conducted a detailed analysis of lexical bundles in selected English horoscopes. The frequency with which horoscopes appear in daily publications speaks to their popularity. Horoscopes are equally popular in established and emerging nations in the west and east, regardless of whether there is a connection between the motion of celestial bodies and daily decision-making. Horoscopes are a favorite and a religion shared by all readers. The objective of this study was accomplished by compiling and researching a corpus of English horoscopes published on different web pages. Antconc, a corpus linguistics tool for calculating the frequency and co-occurrence of expressions, is used to run the frequency of co-occurrences of the other lexical bundles in the English horoscopes. The decision to employ Antconc is an effort to restrict the scope of the investigation. While a sizable portion of the lexical bundles discovered shared traits with those previously reported in the literature, a sizable amount also revealed novel structural and functional traits. The study's conclusions discuss some theoretical

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and instructional ramifications of the research. It was also recommended that qualitative investigations be conducted to examine the usages of lexical bundles in a limited and focused corpus since content investigations are likely to assist in the growth of writers and the creation of academic writing programs.

Keywords: Lexical Bundles, Phraseology, English Horoscopes, Antconc, Stylistics, Discourse Stylistics, Multi-word.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rationale behind this research comes from how people use language to construct sets of words to better explain themselves. These groups of words are called lexical bundles. These expressions appear in a variety of linguistic settings. The purpose of this research is to examine the occurrence and function of lexical bundles within the setting of English horoscopes. In order to create the frequency of occurrence of the different instances of lexical bundles in the cases of English horoscopes, the data is gathered via the use of a corpus linguistics tool called Antconc. Both qualitative and quantitative data are presented in this research, thanks to the use of a mixed methodology

The multi-word phrases known as "lexical bundles" are an essential aspect of fluent language output and a crucial characteristic that sets different modes, registers, and genres apart. These prolonged collocations, which by coincidence occur more frequently than anticipated, assist in shaping meanings and add to the text's coherence and individuality. Although these strings have received substantial study, particularly in English academic writing, little is known about how they could have evolved.

Lexical bundles are thought to have "a processing advantage over creatively generated language" for speakers from a psycholinguistic perspective (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008: 72), and it is now well-known that these bundles can help readers identify a text as belonging to a specific register or discipline (Biber et al., 2004; Chen & Baker, 2010; Hyland, 2008a, 2008b). these lexical bundles have also been shown to be noticeable in other languages, such as Spanish (Butler, 1998) and Chinese (Ma, 2009; Wei, 2007), and when used as part of an educational program, they improve L2 students' writing in English (Meunier & Granger, 2008).

Lexical bundles have been used to describe the properties of different text registers since they are linguistic components prevalent in a specific discourse. For instance, Biber et al. (1999) observed that academic writing primarily consists of nominal and prepositional phrases, while conversation typically includes verbal phrases or clauses. They contrasted the lexical bundles in literary prose with

those in conversation. By investigating textbooks and classroom instruction, Biber et al. (2004) expanded the scope of the earlier research and created a framework for functional and structural analysis and lexical bundles. Lexical bundles are essential to language teaching and learning because they work as discourse basic building blocks necessary to interpersonal communication, especially as an index to assess students' English language proficiency.

Horoscopes can be derived from a plethora of sources, including palmistry, tarot cards, newspapers, TV shows, websites, emails, and newspaper jokes. One of the parts of newspapers that people tend to read the most is the horoscopes. The frequency with which horoscopes appear in daily publications speaks to their popularity. Horoscopes are equally popular in established and emerging nations in the west and east, regardless of whether there is a connection between the motion of celestial bodies and daily decision-making. Horoscopes are a favorite and a religion shared by all readers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Different studies have accounted for the nature of fixed expressions, wherein some consider them collocations, idioms, or phrasal verbs; these chunks of phrases are evident in all languages and all contexts. These fixed expressions have motivated the need to carry out a plethora of studies to discuss them in contexts and languages. This chapter provides a critical review of the idea of phraseology, the nature, and studies carried out in lexical bundles, and also provides a review of the conceptual framework adopted for this study, which is the discourse stylistics approach.

2.1 A CRITICAL REVIEW OF LEXICAL BUNDLES

Studies have examined the nature of linguistic units frequently combined as chunks by language users. The focus of different studies varies along the lines of cultural projection, semantic collocations, stylistic reflection, and diachronic projections. There have also been arrays of studies in the examination of the nature of the vocabulary of language learners and users at large. The studies, which have produced collections of corpus data, have opened different concerns about what speakers do with language in contexts, possible projections of collocation, and additional contextual interpretations. However, the investigation by Biber et al. (1999) on lexical bundles heralded a new era for all of these studies that evaluate and contrast usage patterns to help non-native English speakers acquire the language. Some may not refer to Biber et al. (1999) as the progenitor of modern studies in lexical bundles, but the researchers provided a new dimension that championed the change in size witnessed today in the study of what is known as lexical bundles. The survey carried out

by Bibier et al. (1999: 590) was the first to argue the lexical bundles within the current interpretation in which they have been described as reoccurring phrases, irrespective of their idiomaticity and irrespective their conceptual status. Other studies on recurrent sequences have been done under different names, such as "lexical clusters" (Hyland, 2008), "n-grams" (Stubbs, 2007), and "conventionalized sequence data" (Wray, 2000).

Below, an attempt will be made to provide a quick definition of this group of words. The term "lexical bundles" is used by Biber et al. (1999: 183) to refer to "the most often repeating lexical sequences" which are neither constant phrases nor structural components or it is crucial to the overall semantic component or conceptual projection of the total expression in the context. Lexical bundles are significantly more common than idioms and consist of three or more words. They are divided into categories in which they are employed. Bibier, a foremost authority on lexical bundles, uses functional taxonomy to categorize lexical bundles and thereby show their specific applications within language.

Since lexical bundles are linguistic elements often utilized in a given discourse, they have been used to define the characteristics of various text registers. For instance, Biber et al. (1999) found that whereas dialogue frequently employs verbal phrases or clauses, academic writing generally uses nominal and prepositional phrases. They compared the lexical clusters used in academic text to those used in speech. Biber, Conrad, and Cortes (2004) broadened the scope of the preceding study and developed a framework for both functional and structural analysis and lexical bundles by looking at textbooks and classroom training. Lexical bundles are essential to language teaching and learning because they work as discourse basic building blocks necessary to interpersonal communication (Biber, 2009), especially as an index to assess students' English language proficiency.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As a brand-new discipline, discourse stylistics has gained popularity. It demonstrates the construction of discourse and the messages it sends, intending to move on to a stylistic interpretation and assessment of a text. Due to the way it shows semantic and stylistic connections, cohesion analysis is essential to discourse stylistics. This strategy is advantageous because many studies from the 1960s and 1970s tended to ignore the stylistic aspects of language. Discourse analysis utilized in the study of literary works is referred to in the modern lexicon as discourse stylistics. The study of discourse stylistics focuses on how to understand the connections between style and meaning in written works. A challenging topic is the problem of conversation style.

The manifestation and expansion of sense in speech, the development of new interconnection, and their sequences, which result in the construction of successive sub-images, together with the visual evolution of metaphorical meaning, are all facets of phraseological meaning. This study investigates lexical bundles in English horoscopes through the lens of discourse stylistics. When a projected meaning is communicated by a lexical bundle rather than by individual words, metaphor identification, interpretation, and enjoyment are more challenging and intriguing. Despite the advantages of a discourse-based strategy being demonstrated by discourse stylistics, much recent research on perceptual form, structure, and colloquialisms is concentrated on sentence-level phenomena. This mistake is considered in the stylistic study because most examples used to explain theory are restricted to single words, phrases, or sentences.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts qualitative and quantitative methods, usually referred to as the mixed method. The adoption of the mixed method in this study is mainly to present both numerical and non-numerical data. The numerical data consists of the frequency distribution of lexical bundles occurrences in the selected English horoscopes. The qualitative data analysis is focused on examining the discourse stylistic implications through the prism of the deductive method and building different themes to analyze the relevance of using lexical bundles in the selected texts. The Antconc, a corpus linguistics tool for calculating the frequency and co-occurrence of expressions, is used in this study. The decision to employ Antconc is an effort to restrict the scope of the investigation. One tool for doing frequency, collocation, concordance, n-gram, and keyword analyses in corpus linguistics is Antconc. Textual and statistical analyses are performed on the data. While the statistical analysis focuses on the frequency of lexical bundle usage, the textual analysis examines the kind of lexical bundle usage in the chosen text. Antconc is also used to generate the data system. One of the corpus linguistic tools will be employed to perform lexical bundle frequency, collocation, concordance, n-gram, and keyword analyses on the texts.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULT

Irrespective of relative prevalence, the Antconc discovered a maximum of 980 distinct lexical bundles from a corpus of about one million, nine hundred thousand words gathered from the selected English Horoscopes. The most typical lexical bundles of three, four, five, and six words include the following:

- i. "as well as"

- ii. "on the other hand,"
- iii. It is important
- iv. Try to avoid
- v. In addition to
- vi. Irrespective of the
- vii. Was performed as described
- viii. Follow the order of
- ix. Allowed/not allowed to follow the
- x. Referred to as
- xi. Usually mediated by
- xii. Was determined by
- xiii. "at the conclusion of the," and
- xiv. "It is significant to notice that."

Some of these bundles are also noted in the literature as standard bundles (Hyland 2008). Words in lexical bundles of various lengths contribute significantly to the discourse of different categories of horoscope sourced, as shown by the 980 recurrent expressions encountered, which total one million, nine hundred thousand words (words in bundles of various lengths multiplied by their frequency inclusive) and account for about 8% of the over 18 million words in different English horoscopes since 2016 gathered through various websites.

There are four main structural categories of lexical bundles in the texts selected. They are:

- a) Three words lexical bundle
- b) Four words lexical bundle
- c) Five words lexical bundle
- d) Six words lexical bundle

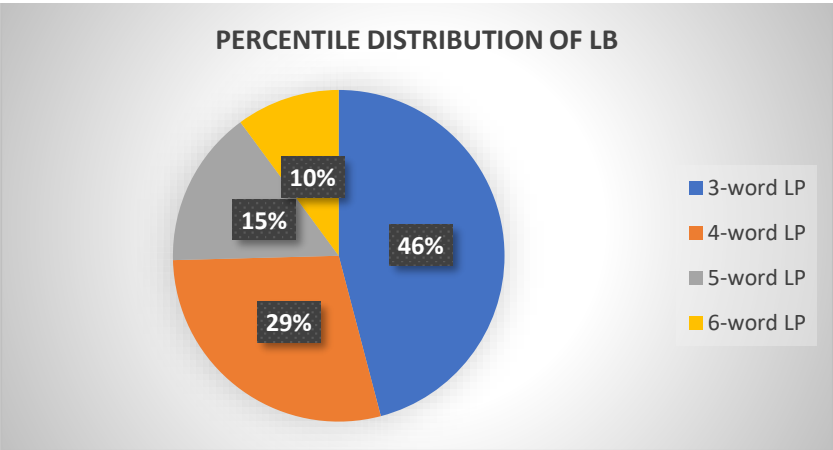
The table below provides details of the occurrences of the structures of lexical bundles in the English horoscope text, the examples, and the percentile values.

Structures	Examples	Frequency	Percentage value
Three words lexical bundles	i. Referred to as ii. May not be iii. Cannot be iv. Should not be v. Would not be	450	45.91%

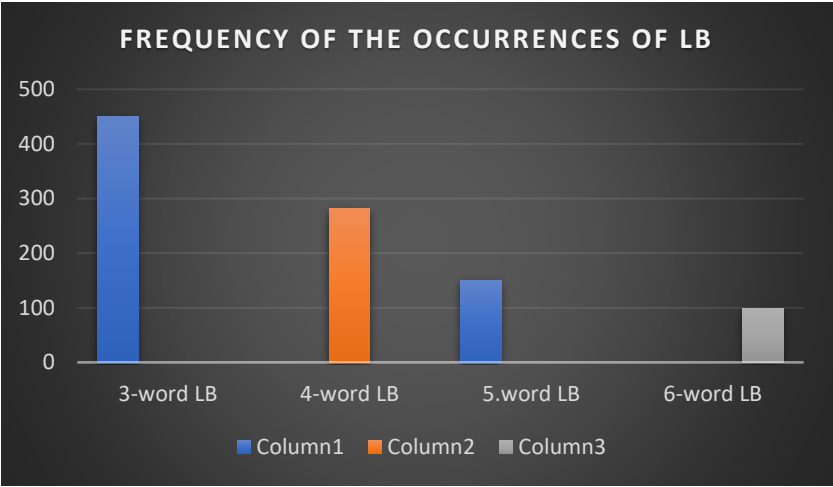
	vi. Found to be vii. Was asked to viii. Was determined to ix. Was mixed with x. Is allowed to		
Four words lexical bundles	i. Can be found that ii. It seems to determine that iii. Was based on this iv. It is shown that v. Had no effect in vi. It was unable to vii. It is proposed that viii. Exclude the possibility of ix. Can be explained by	281	28.67%
i. Five words lexical bundles	i. It is considered to be ii. Can be seen in the iii. Has been found in the iv. Is not included in the v. Can be determined by the	150	15.32%
Six words lexical bundles	i. Was based on the fact that	99	10.10%

	ii. Be explained by the fact that iii. Could be seen through the view iv. May not be known to be		
Total		980	100%

The graph below provides a summary of the statistical distribution and percentile values of the lexical bundles (LP) in the selected English horoscope texts



There is also a need to present a graph representation of the frequency of occurrences of the different structures of the lexical bundles in the text. The graph below summarizes the frequencies.



The graph, as seen in the table, indicates that the 3-word lexical bundles have the highest number of occurrences, slated at 450 out of 980. This is followed by the 4-word bundles, in that order till the 6-word bundle. The percentile values are seen in the chart above.

Below are some structured sentences where the different lexical bundles occur in the extracted English horoscope:

- 1 Sagittarius could need to take their time in 2021 to deal with old and new problems.
- 2 For your job and business, it could be difficult at times.
- 3 The patience and resiliency of Aries might be put to the test this year.
- 4 The first part of the year may be tough and draining at work for you.
- 5 After July, Aries were determined to anticipate experiencing more luck.
- 6 It may be advisable to outline your aim and plan in order to increase your efficiency overall.
- 7 Aries seems to determine to anticipate a successful romantic connection in 2021.
- 8 Aries may not be determined to keep adulterous relationships to a minimum.
- 9 Your family may not always be encouraging of your relationship.
- 10 Spending more time with your spouse may always be crucial for married Aries.
- 11 As far as possible, try to keep your stress at work and away from your relationship at home.
- 12 Aries might want to steer clear of making loans or forming partnerships with other people in business in 2021.
- 13 It is critical to monitor your cash flow and reserve some money for unforeseen expenses.
- 14 Aries may think about purchasing real estate throughout the first part of the year.
- 15 Aries should not be wasting money and consider twice before investing.

DISCUSSIONS

It was shown that the majority of lexical bundles in the Antconc are made up of just three words. Increasing their lexical bundles from three words to four or five is a concession made by some. Despite the bundle being shown to appear over 281, 150, and 99 times respectively in the Antconc, further manual study of the correlation

accompanying this lexical sequence indicated that it had not been coupled with any additional words to produce any of the "4-word", "5-word", or "6-word lexical" bundles. This means that many groups of three words do not grow into bigger groups of words. This group of verbs, one of which is passive, generally referred to situations in which study participants were required to take some kind of active role.

Also, it's important to stress that certain deals could seem controversial since they include many items. It's possible that three distinct recurring phrases, such as "discovered to be," "was found to be," "is based on the," "is based on the fact that," "can be explained by," and "be explained by the fact that," emerge as bigger bundles by combining with certain words. It would be incorrect to categorise this phenomenon into six distinct lexical bundles in this case. In any case, things have changed. Larger lexical bundles were removed from the Antconc before the smaller ones could be examined. A minimum of 10 subsets of the corpus include this phrase, which means it meets both the frequency cut-off point (60 occurrences per 1,000,000 words) and the cut-off range point (4-word lexical bundle like "may be characterised by").

The statistics also showed that the majority of people who read English horoscopes do so in the hopes of learning more about their love prospects and the people in their lives, especially if a soul mate is predicted to enter their lives soon. Lexical bundles analysis reveals that nouns like "connection," "affairs," "family," and "partner," and the participle adjective "marriage," are most often used in conjunction with other words or phrases to provide either direct or indirect context. There is an inference of a string here that reveals a certain tone or manner of speech. In addition to a romantic partner, acquaintances and family members may also be discussed. As an added warning, the author uses the word "avoid," suggesting that they want readers to steer clear of certain actions. Inspecting the syntax of this behaviour, we see the use of the present tense and the auxiliary word may, all of which contribute to the inadvertent formation of lexical bundles.

Some Antconc lexical bundles were shorter than others, and even among those that grew into larger groups, many suffered structural changes. That means that research on the English zodiac may benefit from lexical bundles of varying sizes. In the following examples, a 4-word lexical bundle is used to indicate a logical connection between the propositions, while its expansion to a 6-word lexical bundle is used to show a high degree of confidence, illustrating the difference between the functions of a lexical bundle and its expansion.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In this research, an in-depth examination of the existence of lexical bundles in English horoscopes was carried out. The research questions of the study are linked to the results of the study because those findings are connected to the research questions. As a result, we are able to draw the following conclusions:

- a) Lexical bundles in a variety of English horoscopes often have either a three-word or four-word pattern. There are also examples of lexical bundles consisting of 5 and 6 words, although the bundles consisting of 3 and 4 words are by far the more common.
- b) Lexical bundles are rather common in the English horoscope that was investigated. These bundles present themselves in a variety of linguistic aspects, including as "noun phrases", verb phrases", and "adjectival phrases".
- c) The use of the functional classification of lexical bundles given by Biber et al. (2004) in this research exposed arrays of distinct contextual interpretations, including the expression of affection, care, style, and the continuation of the conversation. The interpretation of the meaning and the structures of the lexical bundles in the texts that were looked at has these characteristics as an implicit component.
- d) The application of the principles of discourse stylistics, as presented by Niciscione (2010), revealed the uniqueness of making use of lexical bundles within the framework of a horoscope.

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