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LEVERAGING PROFESSIONAL WORDLISTS FOR PRODUCTIVE VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE

Abstract

Productive knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary is essential for successful professional communication. This article puts forward the case for an innovative approach to course and materials design in English for Professional Purposes (EPP) that highlights the importance of careful analysis of the vocabulary of specific professional discourse. It argues that EPP courses would benefit from being informed by corpus-based analysis of vocabulary and collocational choices in texts used in professional contexts. The argument is supported by the results of the corpus-based analysis of the discourse in the professional context of the European Union institutions. The analysis was carried out using the 1-million-word English EU Discourse (EEUD) Corpus, which was created based on a target needs analysis. The present study contributes to knowledge in the field by establishing the first comprehensive EU word and collocation list, which comprises 405 word families and is complemented by collocational patterns specific to English EU discourse. The results underpin the article's central argument that collocational information should be used to enrich professional wordlists as they reveal subject-specific patterns that are fundamental for productive vocabulary knowledge in efficient professional communication. The pedagogic applications of the word and collocation lists are also demonstrated.

Key words

ESP wordlist, ESP collocation, English for Professional Purposes, English EU discourse, corpus-based analysis.

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