

Analyzing Lexical Bundles in Legal Discourse: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Court Judgments

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Abstract

Lexical bundles are multi-word frequently or repeatedly used in legal writing. These are the units or building blocks of the language in formal text intended to communicate ideas effectively and efficiently. These multi-words contribute in legal conversation and discourse to maintain flow, cohesion, and coherence in legal texts, especially court judgments. Therefore, the present research study explores the use of lexical bundles along with their discourse functions in court judgments. A specialized corpus of the court judgments was built to study the lexical bundles, including their functions, using AntConc software 4.3.1. The study employed Biber et al.'s (2004) functional taxonomies of lexical bundles for the identification and categorization of lexical bundles. After identifying the lexical bundles, they were categorized according to their discourse functions. The present study analyzed the top 100 lexical bundles obtained through the corpus of court judgments. The study found that referential expressions were frequently used in functional categories compared to stance expressions and discourse organizers. The findings of this research study highlight the significance of the lexical bundles used in legal discourse to create stance, coherence, and cohesion in court judgment.

Keywords: Legal discourse, lexical bundles, Corpus-based study, court judgments

Introduction

Legal discourse refers to the language and text that occurs within the context of law. It encompasses and refers to communication in legal affairs, involving specific language, terminology, and conventions used by those associated with or affiliated with the legal profession. It is all about the language and style used by lawyers, judges, and other legal professionals when discussing legal matters (Bhatia, 1982). Legal discourse concerns complex legal terminology and how legal ideas and concepts are presented. Legal experts, including lawyers and judges, use many distinctive lexicons and technical terms to have perfection and accuracy by providing and presenting evidence in an unbiased and impartial way, without distortion and obscurity (Solan & Gales, 2016). As a result, legal discourse is essential as it contributes to accountability, and legal experts are responsible for their actions and decisions.

Court judgments are crucial aspects of legal discourse concerning applying legal principles to specific cases. Practical legal discourse is needed to ensure that judges' decisions and reasoning are conveyed and communicated, promoting transparency and accountability in the judicial process. Judges employ a distinctive lexicon and technical terminologies that carry accuracy in their judgments, providing neutral and well-reasoned explanations of the law (Solan & Gales, 2016). This assists judges to be fair by providing and presenting evidence in an unbiased way. By ensuring it, judges can guarantee that the decision is based on a profound knowledge of the law without any misinterpretation.

Lexical bundles play an important role in legal language. It refers to how legal professionals convey complex legal thoughts. These bundles are multi-word expressions that are frequently used in legal writing and speaking. Employing these bundles ensures clear and effective communication that is understandable and comprehensible. By using these bundles, legal professionals can give rise to transparency and accountability in the legal system, which endorses the standards of justice. Few studies have been done on court judgments, as Kopaczyk (2012) and Thuannadee and Phoocharoensil (2022) explored lexical bundles in legal text. Therefore, the current study explores the use of lexical bundles in legal discourse, especially in court judgments in the Pakistani context.

Therefore, the current study attempts to determine lexical bundles containing four words employed in court judgments and investigate the functional features of lexical bundles used in court judgments. The work on the lexical bundle in court judgments will be helpful for ESP law learners as well as legal executives in understanding the nature of legitimate language. The study also contributes to legal discourse and corpus linguistics, as this research would be among the preliminary research on court judgments. The present study tries to answer the given questions:

1. What are the four-word lexical bundles incorporated in court judgments?
2. What are the functional features of lexical bundles employed in court judgments?

Literature Review

Language in Legal Discourse

The legal domain is defined and distinguished by its unique linguistic features, which include clarity and complexity. This specialized language plays a crucial role in shaping legal discourse. Linguists studying the features of legal language generally agree on these characteristics. One linguist, Tiersma (2008), describes legal language as archaic, formal, and impersonal, characterized by long, complex sentences, stilted phrases, specialized terms, and extensive vocabulary. As Alabi (2011) points out, legal language incorporates Latin and French words, abbreviations, and unique syntax. By examining the linguistic features of legal texts, researchers can gain insight into the writer's intent, the reader's interpretation, and the power dynamics within legal discourse. Jefferies (2020) notes that critically evaluating legal language can reveal ideological biases and enhance understanding of the legal framework.

The study of legal language has long been a key issue for sociologists and legal philosophers (Atkinson & Drew, 1979). However, it was not until the mid-1970s that legal language began attracting attention from linguists and discourse analysts, especially with the introduction of the Plain English Campaign in the USA and the UK (Renton, 1975). This movement highlighted the need for clear and straightforward language in legal documents, leading to a significant focus on legal language and its application in various contexts (Renton, 1975). Over time, there has been tremendous growth in research on legal language, emphasizing

the formation, evaluation, and usage of legal documents across multiple languages and legal systems (Bhatia, 1982). This expansion has also enhanced the understanding of language's role in constructing and interpreting legal meaning (Eskridge, 1994). Legal language is not about utilizing complex terminology and syntax but focuses on specific discursive and rhetorical strategies to create and negotiate meaning (Bhatia, 2005). Therefore, the recent study aims to explore the discourse function of lexical bundles in court judgments.

Lexical Bundles in Legal Discourse

A distinctive and often complex collection of features sets legal language apart from other forms of communication. Goźdz-Roszkowski (2012) argues that the term "legal language" conceals a variety of specific types of texts (genres) produced and utilized by diverse professional groups operating in different legal contexts.

The framework proposed by Biber et al. (2004) explores the discourse functions of lexical bundles in legal texts. Lexical bundles are multi-word units employed in specific contexts, including legal discourse. These bundles contribute to effective communication and convey messages and ideas. The theoretical framework highlights three main functions of lexical bundles: stance expressions, discourse organizers, and referential expressions. This framework primarily identifies the following functions:

1. Firstly, stance expression is one type of lexical bundle that suggests lexical bundles can be used to express legal stances on specific legal matters and reveal biases that influence clarification and application in the context of law.
2. Moreover, discourse organizers assist in shaping, structuring, and organizing the text, which benefits the effective articulation of legal concepts.
3. Referential expressions refer to the idea that lexical bundles can be employed to enhance cohesion and coherence in legal texts across different legal genres.

These functions can be used to examine lexical bundles in legislative discourse to identify their functional features and how they contribute to the structure and coherence of legal texts. These recurrent language patterns serve as stance expressions, discourse organizers, and referential expressions, facilitating the conveyance of complex legal concepts and ideas (Biber et al., 2004). The strategic use of lexical bundles is vital in legal discourse, enabling legal experts to

articulate arguments and ideas with precision and clarity. This framework helps understand the role of lexical bundles in a legal context, where both precision and clarity play crucial roles. These bundles are not random multi-word units; legal professionals carefully select them to communicate complex ideas and thoughts.

Numerous studies have explored the use and function of lexical bundles in different legal genres. Breeze (2013) utilized the framework of Biber et al. (2004) to examine which lexical bundles are commonly employed within four prominent genres of legislative writing in English, including legislative cases (court judgments, law reports), legislation, legal agreements, and academic law articles. According to the research, legal documentation and papers contain broader lexical bundles than case law and academic legal writings. Legal discourse, as a general understanding, encompasses a wide variety of themes and topics, ranging from the enforcement of law at various levels (considering federal and state), verdicts, decisions, orders, wills, agreements, legal records, directions, letters of attorney, and other related legal materials, to academic writing, including publications and pedagogical content, as well as verbal categories such as notices, inquiries, verdicts, debriefings, and various affirmations of law. The increasing volume of legal corpora, along with various methods that can be arranged either explicitly or implicitly to discuss the complexity and variability of legal discourse, illustrates the diverse nature of legal discourse (Goźdz-Roszkowski, 2021).

Berūkštienė (2017) conducted an in-depth analysis of the structural classification of lexical bundles in court decisions in English and their translation into Lithuanian, identified through corpus-based analysis. This study identified and analyzed the structural categories of frequently occurring four-word lexical bundles prevalent in the Court of Justice of the European Union judgments in English, along with the approaches particularly displayed in the translations of the original judgments into Latvian and Lithuanian. Moreover, Alasmary (2019) examined lexical bundles used in legal agreements, an essential discipline within legal discourse. Based on the results, scholars utilize several lexical bundles, most of which are research-oriented and phrasal. Certain textual features, despite their presence, are underused. Furthermore, the study highlights that contractual language possesses distinct patterns.

The study conducted by Kopaczyk (2012) explored lexical bundles in historical legal texts. It employs corpus methodology to identify and analyze eight-word combinations within

two corpora: the Edinburgh Corpus of Older Scots and the Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots. The corpora consist of legal documents written in Scots from the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. The findings reveal the standardization of the text through the frequency and function of the long lexical bundles. Bundles such as referential, interactional, and textual roles serve essential functions in legal texts as they contribute to the clarity and consistency required in the legal field. The study emphasizes the significance of standardized language patterns to understand changes over time.

Corpus Tools and Research

A corpus is a compilation of texts selected based on specific and comprehensive linguistic criteria (Williams, 2003). It consists of language samples gathered for research on language from naturally occurring speech, encompassing brief lines from collections of written texts or audio recordings (Hunston, 2002). The fundamental concept of corpus linguistics, a linguistic analytic method, is that understanding naturally occurring conversation in its real-world function and context enhances one's comprehension of the meaning within the discourse (Vessey, 2013). Techniques in corpus linguistics include frequency, concordance, collocations, clusters, and keywords. A frequency analysis produces a list of all the words in the corpus, along with their frequencies. A concordance or keyword in context (KWIC) analysis examines words within context, primarily focusing on a target word by presenting the surrounding words (McEnery & Wilson, 2001). Sinclair (1991) defined collocation as "the occurrence of two or more words within a short distance of each other in a text" (p.170). A cluster/N-gram analysis generates N-(1, 2,.....) word clusters or multiword units (Lyse & Andersen, 2012).

Rather than reading through a corpus word by word, corpus linguistics employs computer software to analyze the corpus. This approach ensures the analysis is conducted quickly and accurately, yielding statistically based frequency statistics that usually simplify language use for people to identify patterns (Baker et al., 2008). The advantages of corpus linguistics include the repetition or frequency of specific impressions, allowing us to examine which possibilities are categorized and providing insights into dominant, popular, and specific ways of understanding. Furthermore, results become more reliable due to the large volume of data. The extensive data can also bring attention to, less common (but important) topics that other researchers may have overlooked.

In legal discourse, corpus linguistics is employed to explore lexical bundles. Lexical bundles are a key aspect of corpus linguistics, referring to sets of words used together in specific contexts. According to McEnery and Wilson (2001), corpus linguistics is a powerful tool for investigating language. It can be utilized to establish language training programs for legal professionals, helping to enhance their communication skills and reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

Research Gap

The previous study emphasizes fewer investigations into court judgments concerning the exploration of lexical bundles. Furthermore, due to its complex structure and jargon, legal discourse in Pakistan is often underexplored and overlooked by researchers. Therefore, this current study aims to fill the gap by examining the types and functions of lexical bundles used in court judgments.

Research Methodology

The present study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. Since it has utilized the corpus methodology, quantitative research counts the frequency of lexical bundles. In contrast, qualitative research investigates how lexical bundles are used in the corpus of court judgments and their concordances.

Corpus and Corpus Size

Due to the lack of availability of court judgment corpora, a specialized corpus was compiled. This corpus consists of High Court judgments related to various crimes, such as robbery, murder, rape, and kidnapping. It contained 252459 tokens and 10109 types.

Corpus Tool

The study utilized the AntConc 4.3.1 (Anthony, 2024) corpus tool software to analyze lexical bundles in the corpus of court judgments. This tool is helpful as it facilitates cluster/n-gram and concordance analyses to examine lexical bundles and their discourse functions.

Research Process

The court judgments corpus related to different crimes was compiled for this research study to analyze lexical bundles. AntConc 4.3.1 software was then used to derive the lexical bundles from the text file to analyze the data. This software, the Cluster/N-Gram feature, was utilized to obtain the list of intended bundles. Therefore, the minimum and maximum cluster sizes were both set to 4. Additionally, the minimum frequency and range were fixed at 4 to explore the four-word lexical bundles.

Results and Discussion

Once the list of lexical bundles was generated using the Cluster/N-Gram tool in AntConc 4.3.1 software, manual filtration was performed to analyze them based on the functions discussed by Biber et al. (2004). The present research only analyzed the top 100 lexical bundles that appeared in the list produced by the tool. The total word count and percentages of functions of lexical bundles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Showing Total count and Percentage

Category	Total No. of Occurrence	Percentage
Stance Expressions	35	35%
Discourse Organizers	13	13%
Referential Expressions	52	52%

In Biber et al. (2004), three functional categories of lexical bundles were identified: stance expressions, discourse organizers, and referential expressions. Firstly, the recent research study examined the lexical bundles used in legal texts of court judgments. As a result, this study found that the majority (52%) of lexical bundles came from referential expressions. These expressions rely heavily on legal citations, case references, and procedural terminology. Moreover, the findings of this analysis confirmed that 35% of lexical bundles were from stance expressions and 13% from discourse organizers.

Biber et al. (2004) have extensively researched lexical bundles—recurrent sequences of words and their functions in discourse. Building on their foundational work, they proposed a

comprehensive functional taxonomy that classifies lexical bundles into three primary functions, each with specific subcategories:

Stance Expressions

Stance expressions are defined as how legal experts render judgments or rulings in specific situations. As shown in Table 2, there are five subcategories of stance expressions discussed, including personal intention prediction, personal ability, attitudinal modality stance, epistemic stance, and personal desire.

Table 2

Showing the Subcategories of Stance Expressions Used in Court Judgments

Lexical Bundle Function	Subcategories	No. of occurrence	Lexical Bundles Examples
Stance Expressions	Intention Prediction Personal	10	By the learned trial, the prosecution must show to the learned additional sessions judge that it has proven its case before the learned trial court.
	Ability Personal	08	Learned counsel for the complainant, additional sessions judge, counsel for the appellant, and learned deputy prosecutor general, representing the parties.
	Attitudinal Modality Stance	11	in terms of the benefit of the doubt, cleared of the charge, in support of the, in the event of default, not merely a matter, a matter of kindness, to the rightful heirs, a matter of entitlement, favor of the accused, benefit of Section b
	Epistemic Stance	05	It is correct that the principle of law has been established because of the circumstances and in light of recent rulings.
	Desire Personal	01	reliance is placed on

The following are the sentences showing the Sub-categories of Stance Expression:

Intention Prediction Personal

Instance prediction pertains to how a court judgment conveys an individual's anticipated intention in Stance Expressions. Below are examples of concordances sourced from the corpus of court judgments.

*Conducting usual investigation in the case, the challan was submitted **before the trial court**. Therefore, a formal charge was framed.*

*it is found that prosecution has miserably failed to prove **its case against the appellant beyond any shadow of doubt**.*

Ability Personal

Regarding Stance Expressions, personal ability refers to a person's ability in terms of legal context. The provided occurrences are given from the corpus of court judgments.

*Nadir Aqeel was indeed residing in Gul Muhammad Academy hostel. **Learned counsel for the** complainant vehemently argued that the place.*

*Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997. I have heard the arguments of learned **counsel for the parties** and have perused the material available.*

Attitudinal Modality Stance

Attitudinal Modality Stance in Stance Expression refers to a person's attitude in court judgments. The listed examples of concordance are given from the corpus of court judgments.

*Pakistan has held that: Needless to mention that while giving **the benefit of doubt** Pakistan has held that: Needless to mention that while giving*

*Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 and directed to pay Rs.50,000/- as fine, **in case of default** thereof, the convict was further directed.*

Epistemic Stance

Epistemic Stance indicates the court's certainty or uncertainty about a claim. The listed citations are given from the corpus of court judgments.

*Rafique (deceased), they rushed to the crime scene and saw **in the light of** torch that Muhammad Rafique (deceased) was*

*Akram resident of 422/JB as witness of the alleged occurrence. **It is correct that** he got recorded his statement*

Desire Personal

Desire Personal in Stance Expressions is about expressing a person's intentions or preferences in the court. Examples of concordance are taken from the corpus of court judgments.

*Fire was as short as suggested by the eye-witnesses. **Reliance is placed on the case of Mian Sohail Ahmed.***

Discourse Organizers

Discourse Organizers in legal language are about using language that clearly defines the essence of the argument to ensure that the reader can comprehend each point presented. There are mainly two subcategories of discourse organizers discussed, including topic elaboration/clarification and topic introduction/focus, as in Table 3

Table 3

Showing the Subcategories of Discourse Organizers Used in Court Judgments

Lexical Bundle Function	Subcategories	No. of occurrence	Lexical Bundles Examples
Discourse Organizers	Topic Elaboration/ Clarification	05	under section cr p, under section p p, under sections p p, on the other hand
	Topic Introduction/Focus	08	in the instant case, the case of the, in the case of, to the case of, the case of Muhammad, the case of the prosecution, in the present case, facts of the case

The following are the sentences showing the Sub-categories of Discourse Organizers:

Topic Focus/ Introduction

In Discourse Organizers, the focus/introduction highlights a specific legal issue in court judgments. Below are examples of concordances from the corpus of court judgments.

*as section 377, P.P.C. is attracting **in the case of** appellant having committed unnatural offence of Prosecution has failed to establish the culpability of the appellant **in the instant case** through reliable, trustworthy and confidence inspiring.*

*Witness of the case i-e. alleged abductee has negated **the case of prosecution** and did not implicate any accused;*

*Musa Tariq and Allah Ditta, for their illegal detention. Brief **facts of the case** are that Riaz Begum (present respondent)*

Topic Elaboration/ Clarification

In Discourse Organizers, topic elaboration/ clarification involves clearly explaining the details of court judgments. Here are examples of concordances taken from the corpus of court judgments.

completion of prosecution evidence the appellant was examined under Section 342, cr.P.C. Wherein he once again professed.

The case against the accused beyond the shadow of doubt. On the other hand, learned Deputy Prosecutor General along with.

Referential Expressions

Referential expressions in legal language refer to particular phrases that identify specific individuals. The study found and discussed four subcategories of referential expressions: identification focus, time reference, tangible framing attributes, and time/place/text reference, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Showing the Subcategories of Referential Expressions Used in Court Judgments

Lexical Bundle Function	Subcategories	No. of occurrence	Lexical Bundles Examples
Referential Expressions	Identification Focus	40	section cr p c, the learned trial court, section p p c, v the state scmr, the supreme court of Pakistan, b p p c, the august supreme court, august supreme court of, and others v the others v the state, section b p p, sections p p c, p p c and, statement under section cr, of section cr p, court of Pakistan in, hon ble supreme court, v the state and, cr p c and, in case fir no, the hon ble supreme, a cr p c, cr p c the, section a cr p, b cr p c, article of the constitution, case fir no dated, the test identification parade, section b cr p, the state and others, and another v the, and p p c, another v the state, of section b cr, criminal appeal no of, fir no under sections, the legal heirs of, of Pakistan in the, under section a cr, Pakistan in the case
	Time Reference	04	at the time of, during, the time of occurrence, at about pm
	Tangible Framing Attributes	07	the place of occurrence, at the place of, registered at the police station, from the place of, the body of the deceased, the dead body of, to the house of
	Time/Place/Text Reference	01	Based on

The following are the sentences showing the Sub-categories of Referential Expressions:

Identification/Focus

In Referential Expressions, identification/focus involves specifying key details. Some examples of concordances given from the corpus of court judgments include the following:

Section 340(2) Cr.PC., nor produced evidence in his defence. The learned trial court after hearing arguments of learned counsels

Reliance is placed on the judgements passed by the august Supreme Court of Pakistan in cases of "Muhammad Ashraf alias".

High Court has got the jurisdiction to quash FIR under Article 199 of the Constitution but that is to be exercised

Tangible Framing Attributes

In referential expressions, tangible framing attributes refer to abstract aspects. Moreover, the specification of the attributes was also found to include tangible framing attributes, such as those from the place of registration and recorded at the police station. The following lines state:

Sarwar; prepared site map; recovered different articles on the deceased from the place of occurrence; got recorded the confessional statement.

Whereby appellant involved in case F.I.R No.198 dated 20.4.2018, registered at police station Latamber, District Karak, has been convicted.

Time Reference

In Referential Expressions, time references illustrate the timeline of events in a court case, such as "at the time of" and "during the course of." Below are instances extracted from the corpus of court judgments.

Muhammad Islam who was the pickup driver was also present at the time of occurrence, who look the injured to

Appellant admittedly is not the eye-witness of the accident. During the course of arguments, I have specifically asked the

Text Deixis

In Referential Expressions, text deixis helps link different parts of court documents, such as text-deixis, e.g., *based on*. The line below states:

Razia Bibi (PW-09) submitted complaint (Exh.PA) before the police on the basis of which formal FIR (Exh PA/1) was

Discussion

The current study aims to explore lexical bundles and their discourse functions in court judgments. A mixed-method approach was adopted to achieve the research objectives. This research employed corpus methodology to analyze the corpus of High Court Judgments. Furthermore, the functional classifications of lexical bundles provided by Biber et al. (2004) were incorporated as the theoretical framework for this study.

This research analyzed the top 100 four-word lexical bundles and categorized them according to their functions. Using Biber et al. (2004), lexical bundles are functionally categorized into three primary functions: stance expressions, discourse organizers, and referential expressions. These three functional categories were further divided into subcategories based on specific situations. This study found that many of the lexical bundles (52%) came from referential expressions, (35%) from stance expressions, and (13%) from discourse organizers.

In the findings, Table 2 shows the functions of lexical bundles regarding stance expression and its five subcategories and examples used in court judgments. Out of 35% of stance expressions, the intention/prediction personal was used 10 times, the ability personal was used 8 times, the attitudinal stance appeared 11 times, the epistemic was used 5 times, and the desire personal was used 1 time as its subcategories. Some examples of lexical bundles found in stance expression and its subcategories are: “Before the trial court, its case against them, it is correct that.” Moreover, based on the findings of the discourse organizer category of lexical bundles, Table 3 shows its discourse function along with the subcategories. The findings identified two main subcategories of discourse organizers: topic elaboration/clarification and topic introduction/focus. Out of 13% of discourse organizers, the lexical bundles for topic elaboration were used 5 times and 8 times for topic introduction. Some examples of discourse organizers used in court judgments are: “under section CR P, on the other hand, facts of the case, in the present case.” Finally, Table 4 shows the lexical bundles of the referential expressions category, including their functions, subcategories, and examples. According to the findings, four main subcategories of referential expressions were identified. Over 52% of referential expressions, the 40 lexical bundles were used for the identification focus subcategory, 4 times for

time references, tangible framing attributes appeared 7 times, and time/place reference was used 1 time. Some examples of referential expressions and subcategories are: “Supreme Court of Pakistan, at the time of, based on.” This research study offers a comprehensive understanding of the lexical bundles, their discourse functions, and the subcategories used in the court judgments.

Various researchers have studied lexical bundles in legal language or discourse. Thuannadee and Phoocharoensil (2022) investigated four-word clusters in legal spoken English. They explored lexical bundles both structurally and functionally. Their results regarding functional lexical bundles analyzed four main categories based on their discourse functions. In contrast, the present study has focused on three main categories of lexical bundles according to their discourse functions. When comparing their results to the present study, they analyzed only two subcategories: epistemic stance and attitudinal stance for stance expression categories. However, the present study analyzes five subcategories. Furthermore, two subcategories of discourse organizers, such as topic elaboration/clarification and topic introduction/focus, are like those in the present study. Finally, they identified three subcategories of referential expressions, while the present study identified four subcategories. Moreover, Kazlauskaitė (2024) studied the functional categories of lexical bundles in U.S. law textbooks and legal acts. This study explored the three key functional categories of lexical bundles like those in the present study. When comparing its results with the present study, it analyzed only two subcategories of stance expressions, including epistemic and attitudinal/modality stances. On the other hand, the present study has analyzed five subcategories. Additionally, two subcategories of discourse organizers, including topic elaboration/clarification and topic introduction/focus, are like those in the present study. Regarding referential expressions, both studies identified the same three subcategories.

The current study on lexical bundles in court judgments identified different types based on the functional model proposed by Biber et al. (2004). The study concludes that using lexical bundles in court judgments presents argumentation and legal reasoning and establishes authority within the judgment. Moreover, these bundles ensure coherence, cohesion, and flow in the judgment, as they present the entirety of the case discussed in the trial. Understanding lexical bundles in legal language is key to effective communication in the legal profession, allowing professionals to express complex concepts and ideas with clarity.

Conclusion

The current study emphasizes the four-word lexical bundles used in court judgments. Additionally, it seeks to analyze and classify these lexical bundles according to their functional features. A mixed-methods approach was utilized to achieve the study's objectives. This research analyzed the top 100 four-word lexical bundles in court judgments and their discourse functions. Referencing Biber et al. (2004), lexical bundles are categorized functionally into three primary types: stance expressions, discourse organizers, and referential expressions. Furthermore, these three functional categories were divided into subcategories based on specific situations. The research found that most lexical bundles (52%) belong to the referential expressions category, 35% to stance expressions, and 13% to discourse organizers. Lexical bundles facilitate argumentation and legal reasoning and establish authority in court judgments. Moreover, using lexical bundles highlights their function in court judgments to maintain flow, cohesion, and coherence in legal texts. By employing these lexical bundles, the author of the court judgment presents complex ideas. These lexical bundles enhance textual coherence and consistency and reflect the conventionalized nature of legal writing. Additionally, lexical bundles in legal discourse, particularly in court judgments, can assist lawyers, judges, and other professionals in ensuring their decisions are based on a comprehensive understanding of the law, free from ambiguity.

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