An Academic Collocation List

This paper presents a frequency list of the most common and pedagogically relevant collocations in written academic English discourse, derived from the written Academic component of the Pearson International Corpus of Academic English (PICAE). The list can be used, for example, in lexicography, test item writing, and EAP material development.

PICAE is a corpus of over 37 million words, comprising a written component (32.5 million words) as well as a spoken one (4.6 million words). The corpus covers American, Australian, British, Canadian and New Zealand English. PICAE was designed with reference to the question, what English does a non-native speaker need in order to be successful in academic settings where English is the main language. Spoken data include lectures, seminars and broadcasts. Written data comprise textbooks and journal articles reflecting a broad range of academic subjects, as well as university, student and alumni journals, and study and career information. The corpus is available for research.

For this project only the written academic component of PICAE was used, which comprises over 25 million words covering 28 major subjects from four academic disciplines: humanities, social science, natural and formal science, professions and applied science.

This paper will explain the motivation for the academic collocation project. It will shortly introduce the Pearson International Corpus of Academic English. The paper will then look at the methodology applied and problems encountered. Lastly it will discuss potential usages of the Academic Collocation List.

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