

## An Overall Study of Formulaic Expressions

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### ABSTRACT

Defining formulaic expressions is rather controversial and problematic because it encompasses a variety of theories and approaches such as idioms, collocation, proverbs, sayings, etc. For this reason, this paper presents a brief survey of the contrasting perspectives. It starts with earlier views of formulas focusing on the identification and definition of such phenomena and ends with a working definition for this research as an attempt to analyse this distinctive phenomenon. The aims of the present study are: first, finding an operational definition to the formulaic expressions. Second, establishing a historical overview of formulaic expressions. Finding out the differences between formulaic expressions and other types of formulas. The study hypothesizes the following: first, the formulaic expressions are collocated words formed by speakers for easiness. Second, formulaic expressions have an ancient history. Third, many differences are indicated between formulaic expressions and other formulas.

**Key words:** Corpus, Formulaic Expressions, Applied Linguistics

## VIEWS OF FORMULAIC LANGUAGE EXPRESSIONS

Finding a definition to formulaic expressions is not as easy as it appears because it encompasses a variety of theories and approaches. For this reason, this chapter presents a brief survey of the contrasting perspectives. It starts with earlier views of formulas focusing on the identification and definition of such phenomena and ends with a working definition for this research as an attempt to analyse this distinctive phenomenon. The next chapter builds on this by looking at the nature of the formulas themselves.

Formulaic language expressions were mentioned as quite early as the eighteenth-century in linguistics literature. Before the middle of the twentieth century, formula had been presented as a well-defined field in the philosophy of language by Jespersen (1924) who claimed that every language has characteristics formulas. He described formulas as whole sentences or groups of words represented as units, which cannot be analyzed or decomposed in the way free combinations can. They may be regular or irregular.

His analysis of formulaic language was of interest in that it provided various examples making convincing argument that part of its definition is that it cannot be changed. For example, a phrase like *How do you do?* is completely different from a phrase like *I gave a boy a piece of cake*. In the former, everything is fixed, not even the stress nor the pauses between the words can be changed (e.g. *How do you do?* Vs *How do you do?*).

Jespersen also showed that the meaning of formulas is quite different from their component words. For example, *I beg your pardon* often means ‘please repeat what you said, I did not catch it exactly’, *how do you do?* is not a question demanding an answer but means ‘I’m honoured to meet you’.

The first people to apply the concept of formulas to language learning were Kenyeres & Kenyeres (1938, cited in Vihman, 1982) who claimed that their Hungarian subject, Eva six-year-old noticeably used some formulaic expressions during the early stages of learning French. At the end of the sixties, the psycholinguist Goldman-Eisler (1968) advocated that propositions could not be constructed without emotional expressions and the use of ready-made phrases (formulas).

## VARIOUS APPROACHES

The following provides a brief overview of some of the major approaches to formulaic language expressions:

- Prefabricated routines and patterns.
- There is a distinction between prefabricated routines and prefabricated patterns. The term ‘prefabricated routines’ was coined by Brown (1973) for first language acquisition. In routines, utterances are presumed to be memorised wholes, such as *what’s that?*, *how are you?* and do not allow for variations. In other words, the learner uses utterances without any knowledge at all of their internal structure, they simply learn them whole.

- The term ‘prefabricated patterns’ has been applied also to second language acquisition, particularly, by Hakuta (1974) who defines them as utterances in which segments of sentences operate in conjunction with a moveable component for example ‘where’s + slot for different insertion of a noun phrase or verb phrase’. Therefore, they are partly creative and partly memorised wholes.
- Prefabricated routines and patterns were not seen by all researchers as effective and integral to language learning process. In an important article, Krashen and Scarcella (1978) concluded that routines and patterns play only a minor role in language acquisition and are fundamentally different from the ‘creative construction process’, they distinguished the two by their relationship to language acquisition and their role in creative construction. The sorts of relationship they describe are as follows:
  - Prefabricated routines may develop into prefabricated patterns. That is learners.
  - depend on patterns and routines for communication
  - Prefabricated routines and prefabricated patterns may be realised by the processing.
  - of the language acquisition as creative constructions
  - Prefabricated routines and prefabricated patterns may be considered as ingredients
  - of the creative process.
  - However, these definitions are not wholly satisfactory as neither Brown nor Hakuta’s definitions are sufficiently selective. If the definitions make a distinction from the surface structure and moveable components, we could consider all language elements and strings to share the same criteria (e.g. I gonna/will play football). There are not enough examples, forms, and types to be classified into the context of particular utterances.

**GESTALT THEORIES**

Another important survey looking at formulaic language was contributed by Peters (1977) who made the distinction between “analytic” and “gestalt” styles of first language development. According to Peters, the analytic style, which is used for referential, labelling functions, is the one word at a time style and the language developed by ‘learning language book’. The gestalt style, on the other hand, is identified by Peters (ibid.) as utterances in which the segmental integrity is not very great although the combination of number of syllables, stress, intonation, and other segments could be combined to give an impression of sentencehood. This is used to give whole utterances in a socially appropriate situation and the language is developed by learners who prefer to learn by ‘feel’. She also suggests that there are individual differences among learners. Analytic style learners may have received clear caretaker speech, while the gestalt child may have received more rapid, conversational input. The diagram below shows the parallels in terminology among Peters, Nelson, and Dore (taken from Krashen&Scarcella’s article, 1978).

**Table 1.** Analytic and gestalt comparison

Analytic language	Gestalt language
One word at a time development conversational	whole utterances in context
Referential, labelling functions at first-rapid, conversational input.	contexts
“analytic” : Peters	“gestalt” : Peters
“referential” : Nelson	“expressive” : Nelson
“word development” : Dore	“Prosodic development” : Dore

**AUTOMATIC SPEECH**

Van-Lanker (1975) takes a different view of formulaic language which he calls “automatic speech”. He defines this a conventional greetings, overused and over learned expressions (such as be careful and first things first), pause fillers (such as you know and well), certain idioms, swearing, and other emotional language, which has been argued that it is located in both the right and left hemispheres of the brain (see Weinert 1995). Evidently, patients who have suffered left hemisphere brain damage, (i.e. they have lost the ability to speak) could use automatic speech (for further reading, see Krfashen, 1976; Krashen & Scarcella, 1979).

Van-Lanker has based his study on functionality in the discourse analysis from the psycholinguistic angle, introducing formulas as automatic speech by its relationship to certain idioms, (i.e. they are similarity based in conventionality) and other emotional language. This, however, shows the weakness of automatic speech since it lacks distinctiveness. Moreover, Van-Lanker does not give the limited usage of such expressions. For example, expressions like be careful and first things first can be used as imperatives and accordingly they could be considered as with other expressions, such as transitions, conjunctions, etc., as overused and over learned expressions. Again, automatic speech has been defined as conventional greetings with means that it is confined particularly to expressions of greetings (e.g. hello, how are you?, how do you do, good morning, etc.) with no regard to other expressions of farewell (e.g. good-bye, see you, etc.), expressions of gratitude (e.g. thank you, I’m grateful, etc.), and expressions of apologies (e.g. I’m sorry, I apologise, etc.).

**GAMBITS**

Gambits are another view of formulaic expressions. They are represented in the form of semi-fixed expressions; Keller (1981) had defined them as expressions which serve different functions, such as introducing a topic, structuring turn-taking or serving speakers in order to be ready to receive information. A typical example would be the main point is .... Generally speaking, gambits are sentences openings used as conversational strategy signals. They serve to introduce what the speaker is about to say, by the same token, gambits might be used to evaluate conversational contributions. These include such terms as: in my opinion ... often used when leading into an unpleasant topic or for interrupting

the conversation: Well, it was nice talking to you, but ... In addition, they serve an important function in conversational negotiation, as for example, when a participant wants permission to have a turn, by saying Do you know what I think ..., listen to me ... etc. Coulmas (1981) comments that in every strategic function in conversation there are gambits and they not only afford a skilful impression of a speaker, but also allow thinking time for the next utterance.

These expressions, according to Keller (ibid.), are verbal signals which have a number of levels of functions as follows:

- Gambits act as semantic introducing or framing. They are used within the conversation as topics which are for example introduced in terms of personal opinion, e.g. I think ..., In my opinion,...
- Gambits functions as social signalling. That is, they express the participant's social context in the conversation. They are performed in order to: take a turn in the conversation, e.g. Do you know what I think, Listen to me express a wish to end the conversation, e.g. It was nice talking to you.
- Gambits may signal a state of awareness. For example, when a person receives information from another participant, s/he may indicate awareness by saying yes, I'm listening, I'm with you, or just yes. The opposite state, however, can be indicated by expressions like I'm not really interested in that or why don't you just leave me alone.
- Gambits have the function of communication control. That is, they are represented in fillers such as you know, you see or sometimes in hesitations like humm,umm in order to give time to the speaker to think or recall a word or an adequate syntactic structure.

Finally, Keller (ibid.) has classified gambits as having to meet the following characteristics:

- They should have to be used to introduce a semantic frame, express social context, a person's state of consciousness, and serve a communication control function e.g. It was nice talking to you)
- They may be used in normal circumstances, in the initial position within a sentence or from a complete utterance, (e.g. The main point is ...).
- They should be commonly used by a wide range of speakers, (e.g. That's cool).

Using these criteria, Keller (ibid.) excludes other expressions like markers, idioms and leave-taking because their capacity for social, psychological, and communicative approaches are very limited and standardised.

It is implied from the above that almost all introducing words or utterances, either in conversationalists' speech or listeners' preparation for the next turn in logical argument, are likely to be gambits. Therefore, there are two further shortcoming concerting gambits. Firstly, we cannot consider all starting utterances as gambits, i.e. do question represent gambits? Secondly, Keller does not mention input. That is, how such expressions are comprehended and learned and dealt pedagogically. Accordingly, it is extremely difficult to think that gambits can be presented in teaching without the

strategies to teach them at least at advanced level of second/foreign language proficiency.

## CONVENTIONALISED LANGUAGE

Yorio (1980) (1989) has classified conventionalised language into two main types: idioms and routine formulas. The former (which is not relevant to this research) is defined as an expression whose meaning is not predictable from the meanings of its morphemes (e.g. red-herring). The latter (which is the concern of this research) is defined as a highly conventionalised pre-patterned expression whose occurrence is tied to standardised communication situations (e.g. How do you do?). He has further described routine formulas though the use of structural, syntactic, and semantic criteria.

From the structural point of view, formulas can be:

- words (e.g. ouch, hello, bye, hi, ok, etc.)
- phrases (e.g. for all intents and purposes, nice meeting you, etc.)
- sentences (e.g. mind your own business, how are you?, etc.) From the point of view of syntactic behaviour, they can be:
  - regular: this means not only well-formed, but also flexible. For example: to break someone's heart: can also be: she broke my heart; he could break your heart; they are breaking our hearts>
  - irregular: this means that they are ill-formed and they do not comply with syntactic rules of language. For example, as it were.

From the semantic point of view, they can be described as:

- Transparent: expressions that are not idiomatic, directly interpretable. For example, My congratulations, good morning, etc.
- Semi-transparent: formulaic expressions which are somewhat metaphorical. For example, meets the eye, to shake hands, etc.
- Opaque: expressions which are pure idiomatic, uninterpretable. This category can be subdivided into;
  - overly opaque: uninterruptable without previous knowledge: OK, By and large, etc.
  - covertly opaque: the apparent meaning is not the real meaning. For example, to knock on wood, to be on the wagon, etc.

Situationally ambiguous: expressions cannot be ambiguous by knowledge of the situation: good morning (which could be interpreted as a telephone conversation or an introduction as in the following: Good morning sir, this is Sergeant Brown).

Ambiguous with respect to the intention of the speaker: I'm sorry (could express real sorrow, sarcasm, or be simply an expected formula).

In his classification of formulas, Yorio confesses that although the distinctions are unique, they are not very precise because they may share two or more features. For example,

- situation formulas which are associated and used with certain situations (e.g. you had to be there [when someone retells a joke])
- stylistic formulas which are confined to a specific mode and only found in writing (e.g. To whom it may concern, Dear Sir/Madam, Yours sincerely, etc.)

- ceremonial formulas which are used in ritualised interactions. Religious formulas are the most typical example of this type, forms of address such as how to gain the attention of a waiter or what comes after Dear in various types of letter. According to Yorio the use of Mr., Miss, sir, Madam, Dr, Prof., etc. are also ceremonial formulas.
- gambits which are used to organise interactions, there are two major types:
  - conversational gambits such as opening gambits (e.g. excuse me, I think that, surprise!, guess what?, etc.) and closing gambits (e.g. I've got to go, I won't take any more of your time, etc.)
  - organizational gambits such as gambits in games (e.g. I pass, my turn, your turn, etc.) and text gambits (e.g. first of all, to summarise, all in all, not only ... but also, etc.)
- euphemisms which are used to deal with situations that require discretion such as he passed away instead of saying he died, we are comfortable meaning we are rich, etc.

Although Yorio's definition gives the underlying category of formulas as the pragmatic function (communication situation), it remains unclear. First, there is a contradiction in his differentiation between idioms and formulas; he claims that idioms differ from formulas in that they are unpredictable from the sum of the meanings of their morphemes; elsewhere in the same article he says that some formulas are unpredictable and uninterruptable from their morphemes. In which case one cannot differentiate between the two terms 'idioms' and 'formulas'. Second, in Yorio's definition, formulas are confined to occurrence of standardised communication situations; since one of the five classifications of formulas is situation formulas this becomes very confusing. Therefore, it could be suggested that situation formula types should be deleted from the other classifications (stylistics, ceremonial, gambits, and euphemisms) which could be treated as subtypes of the first, because they are situationally conditioned. Third, formulas consist of at least two morphemes; they cannot be single words (e.g., hi, hello, Ok, bye, etc.) which are regarded as discourse markers. Fourth and last, Yorio mixes formulas with other strings of language (conventionalised expressions) such as idioms (e.g. to take a leak, to knock on wood), clichés (e.g. your face looks familiar), and others (e.g. to whom it may concern, Dear Sir/Madam, etc.) and yet he claims that such strings are "only found in writing ... they also vary from field to field (business writing, academic writing, etc.)" (p. 437). In fact, he does not give the limitations of the use of formulas as a unique or a distinctive phenomenon.

### CONVERSATIONAL ROUTINES

The term 'conversational routines' was coined by Coulmas (1981) and has been defined as "highly conventionalized prepatterned expressions whose occurrence is tied to more or less standardized communication situations" (p. 2-3).

Aijmer (1996), moreover, defines them as "phrases which, as a result of occurrence have become specialized or 'entrenched' for a discourse function which predominates over or replaces the literal referential meaning" (p. 11).

Both studies (Coulmas, 1981 and Aijmer, 1996) are based on the communicative function. They both agree that such expressions are specialised and standardised, and due to this, situations demonstrate standardized features. That is, they are fixed.

The common pragmatic function of such phrases, according to Aijmer, is to let the hearer become involved in a particular context, (e.g. indiscreet, embarrassing, or unpolished, ...). Thus, a message bearing one of these phrases needs an experience so that the interlocutors can differentiate between literal and figurative meanings.

Another pragmatic factor, in Coulmas' view, is that conversational routines cannot be interpreted by semantic rules but they are interpreted functionally and pragmatically, (i.e. they represent speech acts, discourse markers, and incomplete phrase logical units).

Conversational routines are quite difficult to describe because of their formal and functional variability.

There are drawbacks to conversational routines, however, since speakers may differ in their understanding according to what patterns they have stored and used. Furthermore, it is quite hard to formulate pragmatic rules in order to simplify and explain how particular situations will correspond to such expressions.

### FIXED EXPRESSIONS

Fixed expressions have been used by Alexander (1978); Carter (1987); Moon (1994). They are described as phrasal lexemes, phraseological units, or multi-word lexical units that have to consist of two or more words. They include:

- Frozen collocations (e.g. rancid butter)
- Idioms (e.g. kick the bucket)
- Ill-formed collocations (e.g. stay put)
- Proverbs (e.g. enough is enough)
- Routine formulas (e.g. you know)
- Sayings (e.g. an eye for an eye)
- Similes (e.g. as good as gold)
- Metaphors (e.g. he is a lion).

### FIXED EXPRESSION HAVE MANY CRITERIA, SUCH AS

- Orthographic criterion. That is, fixed expressions are likely to contain two or more words (e.g. ice-breaking)
- Syntactic integrity. Fixed expressions form grammatical units in their own right: adjuncts, complements, nominal groups, sentence adverbials, (e.g. I'll be back).
- Phonological criterion. Fixed expressions that are situationally dependent relying on intonation, contour, prosodic features, etc., (e.g. the pronunciation in a situation of I'm sorry when used for condolence and I'm sorry for apology).

All the above-mentioned principles and criteria distinguish fixed expressions from other strings although they are not presented equally in all cases, (i.e. they are presented according to the degree of institutionalization).

As can be seen from the foregoing, fixed expressions have been classified by Moon according on grounds of

lexicogrammatical, pragmatics, or semantics as anomalous collocations, formulas, and metaphors. The following Table 2 will illustrate each grouping, (taken from Moon, *ibid*):

It has been noted from the literature that fixed expressions are considered to be super ordinate terms of idioms, formulas, metaphors, and collocations. That is, the concept is very general (s an assembly of different subjects) and are beyond the scope of this thesis.

## LEXICAL PHRASES

The term lexical phrases relates more closely to this research. It has been adopted by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) who describe it as chunks of language of varying length. They have defined these phrases as:

“multi-word lexical phenomena that exist somewhere between the traditional poles of lexicon and syntax, conventionalized form/function composites that occur more frequently and have more idiomatically determined meaning than language that is put together each time” (p. 1).

Therefore, this definition is covering particular lexicographic and syntactic phenomena which the term ‘lexical phrases’ share the quality in that their meaning is predictable from their composition. According to Nattinger and De-Carrico, lexical phrases are subdivided into two types. The first type includes short fixed phrases such as ‘a\_\_ ago’. The second type are longer phrases or clauses such as if I\_\_\_, then I\_\_\_. Both types should have slots for various fillers, (a year ago, a month ago; the longer you wait, the sleepier you get). Both types are associated with a certain function, such as expressing time, relationships, etc. However, they do not show specificity but do come under the control of fixedness.

Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) also distinguish lexical phrases from other strings (collocations and the ordinary syntactic strings) by claiming that syntactic strings are generated by syntactic competence, such as NP + AUX + VP which underlie grammatical structures. Collocations, however, are strings which have not been assigned a particular pragmatic function. Lexical phrases, on the other hand, are collocations (see above) but they are controlled by pragmatic functions and consist of:

- fixed lexical phrases, (i.e. they are frozen and cannot be changed, e.g. how do you do?, as it were).
- free lexical phrases (i.e. they are flexible in that they have slots to be filled with particular fillers such as a year ago, would you pass the salt?, Would you close the window?)

The distinctions between collocations and lexical phrases show a contradiction. This contradiction indicates that lexical phrases are collocations even though collocations are not assigned pragmatic functions.

The difference between this terminology and other linguistic strings, such as metaphors, proverbs, sayings, similes and even idioms is still not very clear.

As a result, the definitions have not given the full expression of the terms so as to be distinguishable from other similar phenomena in language.

## FORMULAS

The term ‘formula’ goes back to Jespersen (1924) who defined them as a whole group of words that cannot be analyzed or decomposed in the same way as free combination. Some groups are regular, others are not. Bolinger (1976) asserted that they are frequently used to express emotions or situations. Fillmore (1979) broadened the definition maintaining that “Formulaic expressions are groups of words (multi-word units) memorised (as a whole) rather than generated (from individual words) in the sense that they are fixed expressions whose interpretations and functions could not predicted by somebody who merely knew the grammar and the vocabulary of the language. They are not memorized in the way that a poem or a credo is memorized but rather are learnt in close association with situations in which their use is appropriate” (1979: 91-2). Hickey (1993) defines the notion as unanalysed chunks of language whose elements are not productive. That is, they are acquired as whole units.

Recently, the same label was utilised by Weinert (1995) who provides a new definition, i.e. “multi-word How do you do or multi-form strings rain-ed; can-‘t which are produced or recalled as a whole chunk, much like an individual lexical items, rather than generated from individual lexical items/forms with linguistic rules” (p. 182).

Although the term ‘formula’ has been used exactly under the same label by the above - mentioned researchers (Jespersen, 1924; Bolinger, 1976; Fillmore, 1979; Hickey, 1993; and more recently Weinert, 1995) as unanalysed utterances, their view of the phenomenon is slightly different. Jespersen, Hicky and Weinert in part agree on the phenomenon’s frozenness while Bolinger and Fillmore regard it as a situationally dependent form with the implication that the notion has got various slots.

The definitions and views of formula are still unclear because of lack of uniqueness. That is, the definitions can be correctly applied to other conventionalised language expressions such as idioms, collocations, etc. (e.g. to spill the beans, red-herring). In other words, they are not bound enough to be distinguished from other strings of language.

**Table 2.** Fixed expressions problems

Problem of lexicogrammar	Anomalous collocations	ill-formed collocations cranberry collocations defective collocations phraseological collocations
Problem of pragmatics	Formulas	simple formulas sayings proverbs (literal/metaphorical) similes
Problem of semantics	Metaphors	transparent metaphors semi-transparent metaphors opaque metaphors

### INTERPERSONAL IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

Fernando (1996) utilised the term 'interpersonal idiomatic expressions' [which resembled Yorio's (1980) concept in defining his term 'formulas' basically to distinguish them from idioms]. She defines them (in order to differentiate them from 'ideational idioms') as expressions that are covertly and overtly marked for interaction and imply a preceding context, almost all of which comes in a literal meaning. They also provide a principle for the language user to be a coherent conversationalist, (e.g. initiators: happy birthday, can I help you, how are you? etc. terminators: there you go, thank you, I'm fine, etc.

However, there have been critical observations about such labels, including:

- that the term comes under the title of idioms which means the researcher regards it similarly to other classifications/kinds of idioms.
- there is a contradiction in calling such phenomena idiomatic (which means that the meaning of idiomatic expressions cannot be interpreted differently from the meaning of their morphemes), at the same time, it has been claimed that some are literal and semi-literal
- There is no framework definition mentioned when presenting the term.

Therefore, in order to define such phenomena, distinctively, we need to realise that formulas in our terms are viewed as communicative (spoken) situational strategies which have multiple criteria and each criterion should represent a property. This is due to different types, degrees, and categories of such expressions. In other words, formulaic language expressions are too pervasive to be correlated with specific forms of the presence or absence of syntactic constraints, that is, conventionalised expressions.

It is now appropriate to propose our own definition of formulas in the light of all the information reviewed. Whilst understanding that no one definition could ever reconcile the differing requirements, for the purposes of this thesis, our working definition of formulaic language expressions is:

'A conventionalised expression which consists of at least two morphemes, stored as a unit, and used to convey a constant communicative message (pragmatic function) between language users other than its literal meaning. It might be inappropriate syntactically/semantically. Its message is situationally dependent, frequently and widely used among community members'.

This improves on earlier definitions for the purposes of this thesis because it confirms almost all the conditions and principles of the peculiarity of formulas. In other words, the justification for such distinctiveness refers to intuitive and dependent criteria of the definition. For instance, the pragmatic function criterion provides an important basis for identification and categorization of formulaic language but it cannot work if one or other conditions fails. Therefore, all the criteria complement each other.

These integral constituents of formulas will be discussed below. Initially, it should be noted that multi-word units are already a feature of conventionalised expressions. However, even minimal two morphemes have been

included in most previous definitions of formulas. So, the minimal two morphemes are considered as the minimum length for an utterance to be classified as a formula, (e.g. good-bye). Second, frequency and community-wide usage cited as characteristics of formulas. In other words, frequency and wide spread (everyday) uses of unanalyzed utterances protect them from reanalysis (Brown and Hanlon, 1970). So, the expressions that are frequently and widely used among community members are known as formulas which leads us to assume that only formulaic utterances occur repeatedly and are known by most native language users. Third, inappropriate use indicates that a formulaic utterance has been given only one interpretation attached to a situation. For example, consider the following syntactic inappropriateness of long time no see. Fourth and last, the characteristic situational dependence (e.g. How do you do? is used when meeting a new acquaintance) is one of the basic requirements for formulating formula definition as the pillar of formula existence in that the function of formulaic expressions is closely tied to a particular situation.

Thus, the definition combines ideas from the preceding discussion. The multi-word requirement then takes the work of Jespersen (1924), Fillmore (1979), Carter (1987), and Weinert (1995); the frequency concept is derived from Bolinger (1976) and Moon (1997); the community use comes from Keller (1981), Hickey (1993); the communicative message has been mentioned by Coulmas (1981), Aijmer (1996); pragmatic function comes from Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992); syntactic & semantic inappropriateness has been generated by Coulmas (1981), Hickey (1993); situational dependence is an obtain of Yorio (1980), Fernando (1996). This combination then yields a useful working definition to use in this thesis.

### CONCLUSIONS

The present study has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Formulaic expressions are something like collocat-ed words that are formed by speakers to serve different functions like: introducing a subject, identifying the speaker and structuring turn-taking. This finding achieves the first aim of the study and verifies the first hypothesis.
2. Formulaic expressions are used as early as we imagine and there is a controversy over its use and origin. This finding achieves the second aim of the study and verifies the second hypothesis.
3. Many differences are found between formulaic expression and other formulas. Some of these differences are attributed to the functions and others to the meaning. This finding achieves the third aim of the study and verifies the third hypothesis.

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