

# Grammar patterns as an exploratory tool for studying formulaicity in English-to-Polish translation: a corpus-based study

**Abstract.** In this presentation, we explore the use – and argue for the usefulness – of the concept of grammar patterns (Francis et al 1996, 1998; Hunston & Francis 1999) in descriptive research on the English-to-Polish translation of formulaic language. Specifically, we use the *Paralela* English-Polish parallel corpus (Pezik 2016) to explore – largely in terms of frequency distributions – the use of the Polish equivalents of selected English multi-word items, which are textual manifestations of grammar patterns. As a proof-of-concept, we will focus on a pre-selected grammar pattern ('it v-link ADJ to-inf'), where a given word (e.g. the adjective *possible*) may convey different senses depending on the pattern in which it occurs (Groom 2005). We aim to check whether and to what extent somewhat similar lexico-grammatical patterns emerge from the Polish language data (i.e. from the Polish translations under scrutiny). Using this method, we are also able to investigate whether the Polish equivalents of that English grammar pattern (i.e. its textual manifestations) are realized with the same level of regularity in translation. Early findings revealed that the English pattern 'it v-link ADJ to-inf', when filled by adjectives conveying the sense of 'difficulty', corresponds to a set of Polish syntagmatic patterns, such as 'ADJ v-link, *aby*', 'ADV v-link' or 'ADV' (the last two ones followed by verbs in the infinitive form), which contribute to the formulaicity of Polish texts. The study's findings indicate that grammar patterns are a useful starting point for the exploration of formulaicity in translation, and they also help us explain some more general differences in terms of semantics, pragmatics and usage in source texts and their translations.

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