



Genre and corpora in the English for academic writing class: The case of lexical bundles

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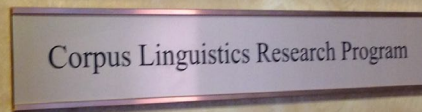
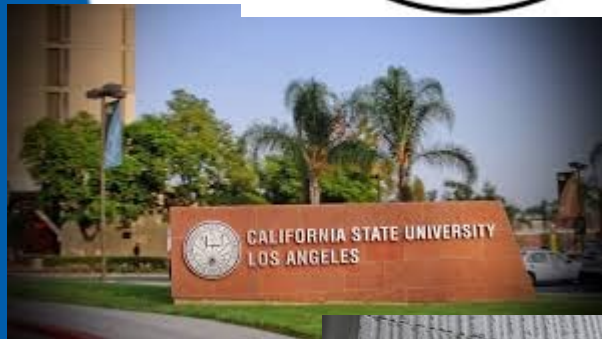
Outline

1. Introducing myself
2. Corpora in the classroom
3. Lexical bundles
4. From research to the classroom
5. New developments
6. Suggestions for future work

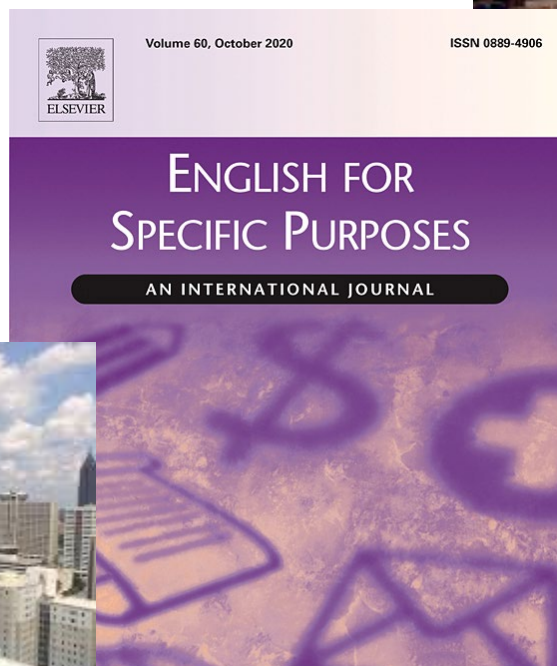
My professional origins



My recent past



My present



Corpora: From research to the classroom

My experience with data-driven learning in the teaching of writing

- Personal experience as an L2 writer
- Iowa State University, 2002-2008
 - Academic skills assessment for International students
 - Academic skills classes: listening, speaking, reading, writing
 - Courses for International graduate and undergraduate students
- Advanced academic writing course for international graduate students

The design of a new DDL EAW course

Former course

- traditional setting
- various genres (memos, summaries, book and article reviews, oral presentations, research reports)
- text-based

Designing a new EAW course

Needs analysis

- Student interview
- Faculty interview
- Document analysis

Students' reaction

- students perceive course as helpful
- good reception
- good course evaluations
- not enough time to cover all genres in detail
- lack of discipline-specific materials

New course design

Foundation

- Authentic texts
- Genre specificity
- Disciplinarity

Corpus-based/genre-based class

- Taught in a computer lab
- Maximum 20 students
- Corpus of research papers (ISURAC) in computer environment
- Concordancing software
- Materials based on empirical studies on schema theory (Swales, 1981)
- Student worksheet Readings from published studies
- Explore the corpus exercises (completed in computers in lab or at home; some exercises needed the use of the concordancer)
- Final reports for each section

With or without corpora: Focus on genre (Cortes, 2011)

- Study comparing two sections of the same course
 - A: genre-based/corpus based
 - B: genre-based (no corpora/no computers)
- Holistic analysis of research papers submitted at the end of the semester
- Evaluation of Introduction sections by a group of 5 raters to compare writing across sections
- Analysis of results of questionnaires answered by students at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the semester
- Interview with students in student conferences

Evaluation of Writing samples

- 5 Raters assessed 10 Introductions (5 from each section)
- Rating session
- 4-point Rubric adapted from Stoller et al. (2005)
- Interrater reliability
- No significant difference: Corpus-based average 2.48, non-corpus-based average 2.4 (statistically confirmed)
- Both groups had improved considerably but the methodology did not cause much differences in written production

Corpora in the classroom: Teaching lexical bundles

Lexical bundles in academic prose

- Lexical bundles are sequences of three or more words that commonly go together in natural discourse.
- They are identified by a specially designed computer program.
- A word combination must recur frequently in order to be considered a lexical bundle (conventional thresholds: 10/20 times in a million words and in 5 or more texts).

Lexical bundles in academic prose

- Lexical bundles can be considered building blocks that are frequently used by speakers and writers within a register.
- Examples of 4-word lexical bundles frequently occurring in academic prose: *as a result of, on the other hand, in the context of, as well as the*
- Even though all lexical bundles are n-grams (three-grams, four-grams, and so on), not all n-grams can be lexical bundles

Teaching bundles in content classes

Attempts at teaching bundles

- Cortes (2006)
- Teaching bundles in a writing intensive history class
- Bundles from class reading materials
- Helping students notice bundle functions
- Practice recognizing and using bundles
- Inconclusive results

Lexical Bundles and Rhetorical Moves

- Building blocks in discourse
- Biber, Connor, and Upton (2007) explained that move types can be seen as the “main building blocks” of a genre (p. 53).
- Lexical bundles can be used as “text building blocks” (Biber, Conrad, & Leech, 2002, p. 443).
- Hyland (2008) maintains that bundles have been increasingly seen as important building blocks of discourse

Finding the connection: Bundles and Moves (Cortes, 2013)

- RA Introductions
- Bundle identification
- Structural and Functional Analysis
- Matching bundle and moves/steps

Bundles and moves

- In a genre-based/corpus-based writing class, teaching moves/steps and the lexical bundles that frequently occur in those moves/steps is ideal
- Some lexical bundles trigger the move/step and those can be directly transferred to the genre-based classroom

RA Introductions – Move 1

MOVE 1 Establishing a Territory

	Step 1: claiming relevance of field	a great deal of as one of the in a variety of is one of the most one of the major	one of the most important one of the most play an important role in the the importance of the
	Step 2: making topic generalizations	a function of the an understanding of the as a measure of as well as in as well as the for a variety of has been shown to has been shown to be have been shown to in the use of	in terms of the it has been shown that it is well known that the development of the the presence of the the use of a there has been a to the development of to the extent that
	Step 3: reviewing items of previous literature	are likely to be as a result of the at the end of in a number of by the presence of the in the development of in the use of the it has been suggested that it was found that the	referred to as the studies have shown that the impact of the the size of the the structure of the with the use of Swales (2004) Cortes (2013)

Pedagogical applications

These LBs that have been found to be extremely frequent in Move 2 – *Preparing for present research*, Step 1: indicating a gap/ adding to what is known, or Step 2: presenting positive justification.

In order to _____ it is necessary to _____

It should be noted that _____

The effect of the _____ or

_____ the effect of the _____

Little is known about (the) _____

_____ there is no _____

It is difficult to _____

There is a need to _____

There are a number of _____ or

_____ there are a number of _____

Lexical bundles, prosodies, and preferences

- When working with genres that have not been extensively explored in terms of moves and steps, analyzing semantic prosodies and preferences can be an option

Semantic prosody

- It is often used in the analysis of left and right collocates of a search item. It is considered to be mostly negative with only a small number of affectively positive meaning (Xiao & McEnery, 2006).
- Focus on elements to the left and right of the lexical bundles under study, classifying the prosodies into **positive**, **negative**, and **neutral** evaluations.
- Left and right prosodies are analyzed separately.

Prosody: Examples

Negative prosody

- *Little attention has been paid to **the performance of the...***

Positive prosody

*The success of the resistance trait depends primarily on the balance between its selective advantage **in the presence of...***

Neutral prosody

- *Empirical research of form-focused instruction has been conducted **in the context of the***

Prosody: Examples

- We show that our approach results in an increased specificity of predicted transcription-factor-binding-sites (TFBs) **as a result of** a significant reduction of noise. (positive – positive)
- Further evidence came from patients who had suffered damaged to Broca's area in the brain **as a result of** a stroke, an accident, or surgery (negative – negative)
- Mertens et al. (2002) used a simulation model to show that the sequence of crops **as well as the** number of different crops can have an important influence on weed populations. (neutral – neutral/positive)
- This instrument measures the solar system irradiance **as well as the** spectral solar irradiance. (neutral – neutral)

Semantic Preferences

- Semantic preference refers to a common semantic field in the collocational environment of an item.
- Analysts suggest labels for domains once a recurrent theme in the context is identified

Preferences: Examples

- Booster: Highlighting results/providing further argumentations – documents/discourse

*The conclusion for better management strategies will be highlighted **at the end of the paper**.*

*Such enhancements will be discussed further **at the end of the paper**.*

*Finally, the proposed techniques are presented analytically through a case study application **at the end of the paper**.*

Preference: Examples (*has been shown to*)

- Experiment/variable description – boosters:
significant/influential

*The use of program schemata **has been shown to** be effective for the optimization of logic programs.*

*Relaxation training also **has been shown to** improve memory functioning in the elderly.*

*Leptin administration **has been shown to** reduce the fat mass in rodents.*

From identifying bundles to teaching bundles

- Nowadays there are many computer programs that can identify lexical bundles
- Once the bundles are identified, it may not be so easy to find the bundles in their original texts

Meet LBMap (Lexical Bundle Map)

- A computer program that maps lexical bundles in text

LBMap

- Upload a list of lexical bundles to LBMap
- Upload a corpus
- The program works with the list and goes into the corpus uploaded
- For now, it converts the corpus files into Google Docs and highlights the bundles

RA introduction (original)

In English for Specific Purposes (ESP), there is a growing body of research on L2 doctoral writing for course papers (Casanave, 1995, Prior, 1991 and Seloni, 2012), theses/dissertations (Belcher and Hirvela, 2005 and Paltridge and Starfield, 2007), and publications in particular (Li & Flowerdew, 2007). However, there has been a lack of attention to dissertation grant proposals, a genre that has appeared recently, particularly in the U.S. and other countries such as Taiwan, which follows the U.S. model of doctoral education, incorporating both coursework and research. This study thus investigates how L2 doctoral students learn to write dissertation grant proposals, examining the experiences of two students from two different disciplines: biophysics and musicology. Through the application of Casanave's "writing games" metaphor, this article aims to address the question of how novice L2 grant writers enculturate into their discourse communities.

In sum, much of the literature focuses on faculty grant writing. How graduate students experience grant writing, particularly a dissertation grant proposal, has received less attention. It appears necessary to consider the difficulties L2 students encounter while preparing for dissertation grant proposals. This study examined the learning experiences of two doctoral student grant writers and sought to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How do L2 students understand the grant genre systems?
- 2) How does their understanding influence their actual participation in the games?

RA Introduction (Processed)

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LBMap

- We are currently working on the interface to make it more user-friendly
- The program will soon be available as a free application with LBiaP here:
<https://github.com/lbiap/main>
(Cortes & Lake, in press)

Future work

- Continue working on the development of computer software for linguistic analysis and for materials design for language teaching classes
- Study lexical bundles in specialized registers (but not specifically academic) finding connections between these expressions and the communicative purposes they help convey

Thank you
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