

Bridging Boundaries across Genre Traditions: A Systemic Functional Account of Generic Patterns in Biodata*

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Abstract

This study explores the benefits of a synergy between ESP research on genre and theoretical dimensions of systemic functional linguistics (SFL). It models genre on SFL dimensions and employs this model to analyse 200 biodata written by Applied Linguistics scholars, 100 each from research articles and seminar posters. Data were analysed from contextual, logico-semantic and lexicogrammatical perspectives. The findings reveal five generic stages in biodata. The frequency distribution of these stages and the phases that realise them shows variation between research article bios and seminar bios. The most frequent logico-semantic (or rhetorical) relations identified among stages and phases are the expansion type, namely; addition and elaboration. Further, collocational frameworks are used in organising some generic phases into waves of meaning and in construing different identities. Finally, evaluative resources, in the form of lexical bundles, modification and circumstantial elements in the clause, are employed by writers to boost their professional achievements and promote themselves. These findings contribute to theoretical discussions on genre and the scholarship on the interface between identity construction and academic writing, and also motivate further research.

Keywords: Academic writing, biodata, collocational frameworks, genre, lexical bundles, rhetorical relations

1. Introduction

For the past three decades, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), in general, and English for Academic Purposes (EAP), in particular, have been one of the most prolific fields of language studies in terms of research output. Studies in these twin fields have mainly been driven by Swales' (1981, 1990) work on genre analysis. The findings of ESP/EAP studies have generally provided insights for the development of useful pedagogical materials for academic literacy (e.g. Firkins *et al.* 2007; Flowerdew 2000; Lin & Evans 2012; Thompson & Tribble 2001) and other institutional support language programmes (see Evans 2012, 2013; Warren 2014).

Over the past two decades or so, there has been a growing interaction between EAP and systemic functional linguistics (SFL) in the area of genre research. For instance, research in systemic functional educational linguistics (e.g. Achugar & Carpenter 2014; Martin & Rose 2008) overlaps with the objectives of EAP, as outlined by Hyland & Hamp-Lyons (2002). In addition, as Hyon (1996) observes, the linguistic and rhetorical features normally deployed in ESP/EAP research are similar to those analysed by SFL scholars, or even sometimes derive from the linguistic resources recorded in SFL descriptions of English (cf. Fryer 2012; Hyland & Tse 2012; Parkinson & Musgrave 2014). Swales (2009) acknowledges the general convergence among various approaches to genre analysis since Hyon's (1996) three-tier classification of genre studies into ESP genre analysis (e.g. Bhatia 1993; Swales 1981, 1990), SFL genre pedagogy (e.g. (Martin *et al.* 1987; Martin 1992) and the New Rhetoric tradition (e.g. Miller 1984, 1994); and indicates the need for a common working definition of the term 'genre' itself. For such a definition to

be comprehensive, however, it needs to take into account the complexity and the various dimensions of genre that have been revealed by genre research within the past thirty-five years.

Although an all-inclusive characterisation of genre is beyond the scope of the present study, it is a step in the direction towards Swales' (2009) proposal. The study demonstrates that theoretical discussions on text in SFL provide a valuable resource towards achieving a comprehensive definition of genre. The specific objective of the study is two-fold. First, it draws on theoretical constructs in SFL and previous research on genre and text (e.g. Cloran *et al.* 2007; Halliday & Hasan 1985; Martin & Rose 2008; Matthiessen 2013a, b, 2015a) to sketch a framework which reflects the use of the term 'genre' in much of contemporary linguistic research, particularly within SFL itself (e.g. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B) and in the Swalesian tradition (e.g. Bhatia 1993, 2004; Swales 1990, 2004). Second, this model is illustrated with an analysis of the generic patterns of biodata, a genre that is of concern to EAP scholars (e.g. Hyland 2011a; Hyland & Tse 2012). The general objective here is to exploit a synergy between SFL theory and ESP/EAP research so far as characterising genre is concerned.

It is only recently that the biodata genre has been investigated by applied linguists (e.g. Afful 2012a; Babaii 2010; Hyland 2011a; Hyland & Tse 2012). Babaii (2010) demonstrates that Asian scholars downplayed their local professional experience and projected their affiliations with Western institutions in their bios in order to showcase their international visibility. Both Afful (2012a) and Hyland & Tse (2012) explore identity construction in bios by examining the topoi that construe them, and, respectively, the lexicogrammatical resources of lexical density and process types. The study of the semiotic organisation of biodata is valuable in revealing how socio-cultural practices and professional requirements in the academy shape the identities scholars construct for themselves and how language functions to construe these identities.

In this light, the present study further explores rhetorical patterns that are pertinent to this genre, using bios by Applied Linguistics scholars as a case study. While Hyland & Tse (2012) and Afful (2012a) focus on the content of biodata, the present study extends their findings by examining how this content unfolds as activity sequences in bios and the semantic links that construe these activities into text. Thus, this study extends the analysis in **delicacy** (i.e. finer detail). It also broadens the empirical scope provided by these previous studies by examining bios accompanying both research articles and seminar posters and reveals fresh insights into the lexicogrammatical patterns that characterise the biodata genre.

In the next section, I contextualise the study by situating biodata within the semiotic space of academic writing. This is followed by the conceptual modelling of genre within SFL and then the description of data and analytical procedures employed in the study. The findings of the study and their implications are discussed in subsequent sections.

2. Contextualising biodata in academic writing

Biodata are variously referred to as *bionote*, *about the speaker/writer/author*, *biographical sketch*, *biostatement*, among others, depending on the context in which the text is created and authors' preferences. Following the typology by Genette (1987[1991]) in his study of textual practices, I characterise the textual status of biodata as a **paratext** (or, generically, a **para-genre**). Paratexts are defined as verbal or non-verbal semiotic productions that surround and prolong a text in order to present it or "to *make it present*" and to assure "its 'reception' and its consumption" (Genette 1987[1991]: 261, emphasis in original). Some other examples of paratexts include titles, subtitles, name of author, publishing information, acknowledgements and prefaces. Genette (1987[1991]) defines and categorises paratexts according to five criteria: the positioning or spatial relation of the paratext to the (main) text, its temporal appearance in relation to the text, its mode of existence or realisation (e.g. spoken or written), the pragmatic conditions (or 'tenor relations') surrounding its production, and the function(s) "which give purpose to its message" (p. 263). Although all these criteria and typology are relevant in discussing textual practices in academic writing, I only highlight a few of them to contextualise our discussion of biodata, due to space constraint.

Regarding positioning, paratexts may consist of peripheral textual material situated around the text, and thus occupy the same volume of space as the text. There are some paratexts that are, however, external to the text, such as reviewers' comments and correspondences between authors and editors. Genette (1987[1991]) refers to these two spatial categories as peritexts and epitexts respectively. Temporally, **anterior** paratexts such as manuscript submission cover letters, which precede the public appearance of the text itself are distinguished from **original** paratexts, which come with the texts. Although biodata accompanying research articles and edited volumes obviously belong to the peritext and original categories, bios are sometimes epitexts and anterior, as in the context of seminars, symposia and conferences, where they normally appear before the event, together with other information such as the abstract, and serve to advertise the speech event. Biodata is also pragmatically (or interpersonally) quite ambiguous as to whether it is authorial, with the author/speaker as the addresser, or editorial, with the editor/event organiser as addresser. Although it is normally produced by the author, it has an editorial voice and is written on behalf of the editor. Its purpose is to promote a research product and present a positive image of the writer, thereby assuring the reader of the author's credibility in the scientific community. This could explain why it is written in the third person point of view, and when it is delivered orally, it is done so by a person other than the writer.

Research on paratexts is valuable as it tells us about the culture of the institutions and disciplines that produce them (cf. Hyland & Tse 2012). Such research makes explicit the implicit, unstated norms, values and knowledge structures that regulate the practices of a discourse community. As Lejeune (1975) notes, paratexts constitute the fringe that controls the whole transaction. Our knowledge of paratexts, therefore, does not only make us conscious of the unstated epistemological ramifications of our institutional practices but guides experts and novices in their interaction in pedagogical contexts (Hyland 2011a; Hyland & Tse 2012). In addition to acknowledgements and abstracts, which have gained the attention of many EAP scholars (e.g. Afful & Mwinlaaru 2012; Giannoni 1998; Hyland 2004), other 'para-genres' of academic prose, such as titles (e.g. Afful & Mwinlaaru 2010; Gesuato 2009); reference lists (e.g. Afful 2012b; Afful & Janks 2013); submission letters (e.g. Jalilifar 2009; Swales 1996); reviewers' comments (e.g. Paltridge 2015) and doctoral prize applications (e.g. Hyland 2011a) have been examined. The present study extends recent investigation of the generic features of biodata (e.g. Afful 2012a; Hyland & Tse 2012). As mentioned earlier, it situates the analysis within systemic functional linguistics. In the next section, SFL dimensions are used to model the concept of genre in order to provide a theoretical background for the study.

3. Modelling genre on systemic functional dimensions

There is actually more than a single model in SFL for genre analysis. This theoretical variability derives from the fact that each model was developed to serve the practical needs of a particular research project and/or application. For want of space, I only highlight three of these models for the purpose of this study (see Cloran *et al.* (2007) for a review of some of these models).

One notable SFL-oriented genre model is Hasan's Generic Structure Potential (GSP) (see Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B). GSP is a schematic structure analysis of texts which emerged from a research project on literacy development in nursery schools and a study of service encounters. Following Hasan (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B), Martin and his colleagues have developed a framework for genre analysis in the context of their research on educational linguistics (cf. Rose & Martin 2012). As Matthiessen (fc.) notes, Martin's genre model is by far the most popular and widely applied one in SFL. Martin and his team describe genre as "the global social purpose of a text" co-ordinating the 'register' variables of field, tenor and mode into recurrent text types (Rose & Martin 2012: 22). In this model, 'genre', together with 'register', is seen as a contextual category which is realised by language. One feature common to both Hasan's GSP and Martin's genre model is the emphasis on the identification of schematic (or contextual) structures of texts and the lexicogrammatical realisations of these structures, an approach which is very similar to the Swalesian genre analysis approach (e.g. Swales 1990).

On the other hand, Matthiessen (e.g. Matthiessen 2015b; Matthiessen & Teruya 2014) has advanced a semantics oriented rhetorical analysis of texts based on the Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST) originally introduced in the 1980's (e.g. Mann *et al.* 1992; Mann & Thompson 1988). This framework comprises a set of universal meaning relations that hold between different rhetorical segments or units of a text. These meaning relations, referred to as rhetorical relations, are identified based on their functions and are applicable to a wide range of texts and across registers. These three models together largely provide a complementary perspective on text and/or genre analysis, although they are overlapping in certain aspects. While Hasan's (e.g. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B) GSP and Martin's (e.g. Martin *et al.* 1987; Martin 1992; Martin & Rose 2008) genre model provide contextual or schematic as well as lexicogrammatical perspectives on texts, the RST framework (e.g. Matthiessen 2015b; Mann & Thompson 1988; Taboada & Mann 2006a) gives a model for analysing the semantics of texts. In practice, however, the schematic analysis of certain texts such as recounts and explanations by genre pedagogy scholars are also semantically motivated (cf. Martin & Rose 2008: 121, 128).

In the present study, I draw freely on these perspectives to construe a model of genre, and employ this model in examining biodata. I hope that the integrative perspective adopted in this study will contribute to a dialogue between different approaches to text (or genre) analysis within SFL and also between SFL and the ESP tradition.

Specifically, the study conceptualises genre within the interaction of two dimensions in the SFL architecture of language, namely, the cline of instantiation and the hierarchy of stratification (cf. Halliday 2008; Halliday & Matthiessen 1999; Matthiessen 2007). SFL theorises language as a semiotic system which offers choices or potential resources for making meaning. The cline of instantiation shows the relationship between **language as a system** and **language as text**. In simple terms, the dimension of instantiation theorises that every text (i.e. written, spoken, or multimodal) instantiates (or, to simplify greatly, exemplifies) a general system of language that is behind the text. On the other hand, every language is seen as a reservoir of resources (a meaning potential) for creating text. One characteristic of language as a meaning potential is that it is a system of probabilities which constantly shifts and adjusts itself to serve current semiotic needs of its users.

Instantiation shows that language as a system and language as text form a continuum, with the system at the top end of the pole and text at the lower end, the instance pole (see Figure 1). As Figure 1 indicates, between the two extremes of system and text lies intervening regions which are called **register** and **genre**. In this model, genre lies between register and text.¹

Instantiation, therefore, is a **semogenic** (i.e. meaning creation) process whereby linguistic resources are selected from the system (i.e. the meaning potential) via register and genre to create text. The positioning of register and genre in the semiotic process this way characterises them as functional varieties of language, and this follows the sense in which they are respectively used by Halliday and his colleagues (e.g. Halliday *et al.* 1964; Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part A) and Hasan (e.g. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B). It, as well, echoes the use of the term genre in research following the tradition of Swales (1990).

It should be noted that, in the SFL genre pedagogy model (e.g. Martin *et al.* 1987; Martin 1992; Martin & Rose 2008; Rose & Martin 2012), both terms are defined differently. Genre is seen as context of culture and the term 'register' is regarded as a synonym of context of situation, comprising tenor, mode and field. Thus, for genre pedagogy scholars, in any instance of language use, the particular combination of 'register' (i.e. tenor, mode and field) and 'genre' (e.g. recount, explanation, etc.) set up the contextual

¹ Halliday (e.g. Halliday 1991) uses the term 'text type' rather than 'genre', owing to the fact that, among other reasons, genre is used in literature with a different sense (see also Matthiessen *fc.*). Matthiessen (2013a, b, in press) seems to maintain consistency with this tradition. Halliday *et al.* (1964) uses the term 'register' for both the language of a discursive/cultural institution and for the variety corresponding to a situation type located within the institution. Thus, although they do not say this directly, what we are calling 'genre' is, as it were, a 'delicate register' (i.e. a finer differentiation of registers).

configuration for the function of ‘language’ (comprising semantics, lexicogrammar and phonology) and “attendant modalities of communication” (Martin & Rose 2008: 19).

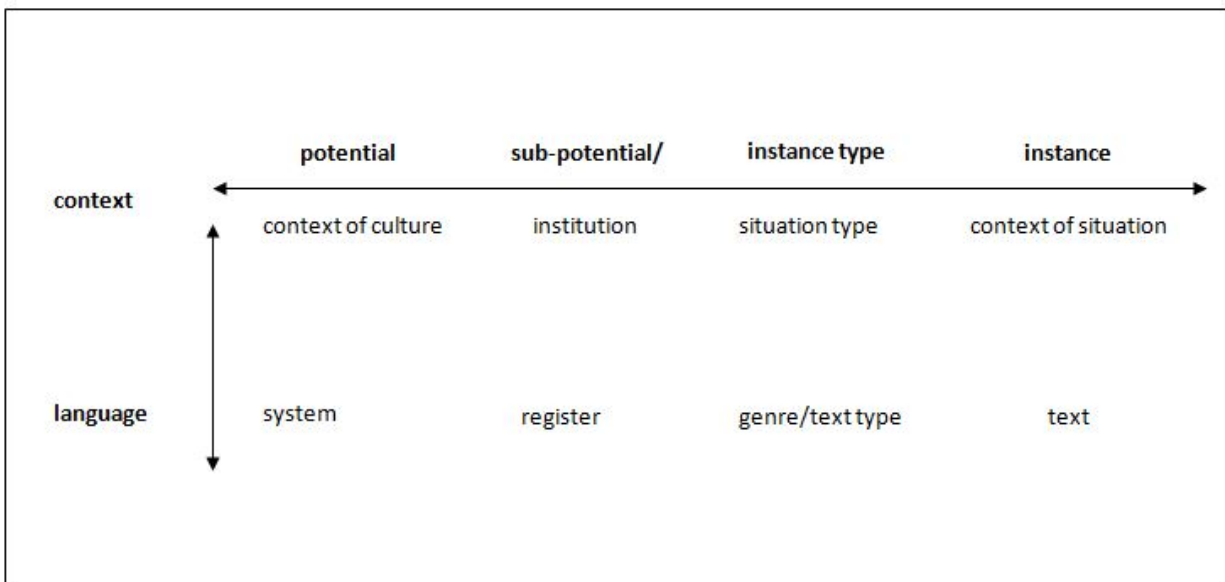


Figure 1. Locating genre at the instance type region on the cline of instantiation (adapted from Matthiessen 2013a: 445)

SFL theorists have maintained that, in the evolution of systems, language, in its present form, is preceded by the emergence of communal life (i.e. social systems), and that it evolved as a semiotic system to serve the needs of society. Thus, language is naturally related to our ecosocial environment as a social system with an added property of meaning (i.e. language = social + meaning).² As Figure 1 shows, the dimension of instantiation therefore maps onto the ecosocial variable of context. This means that the linguistic system of a speech community is shaped by the culture of the community; and, by analogy, the form of language used in any instance is shaped by the particular situation of use. These two phases of context, as culture and as situation, are what has respectively been referred to by Malinowski (1923, 1935) as **context of culture** and **context of situation** (see also Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part A; Matthiessen 2007; 2013a).

Context of situation is an instance of context of culture. The context of culture of a speech community is the embodiment of all the discursive or cultural institutions available in the community and every institution is, in turn, made up of various situation types, reflecting the social activities in which the institution is engaged. In principle, context is thus a four-phased variable; comprising culture, institution, situation type and situation (see Figure 1). Register and genre are functional varieties of language that correspond to the institution and situation type phases of context respectively.

Defined from the top perspective of the cline of instantiation, genre is an **instance type** of language that offers rhetorical choices to members of an institution to fulfil the goal of a regularised social activity. Looked at from below, from the text perspective, genre is a **text type** (i.e. texts that occur in similar situations) which is identified by its typical construal of particular situations or situation types. However, it should be added that since genre instantiates the whole system of language via register, it is,

² According to SFL theorists, the emergence of systems in the cause of evolution follows this order: physical systems > biological systems > social systems > semiotic systems. Each system takes on the features of all systems that have preceded it. Among semiotic systems, language is characterised as a higher-order semiotic system (cf. Halliday 2005, 2008; Matthiessen 2007).

simultaneously, a construct (or realisation) of a whole context of culture, cultural institution and context of situation. In this process of instantiation, situation type therefore becomes a phase of context which is abstracted from a recurrent situation and only serves as an immediate context of genres. Genre analysts with a broad interest in social perspectives often go beyond this immediate context, albeit in varying degrees, to interrogate institutional and cultural ideologies that shape genres (cf. Bhatia 2002, 2008; Hyon 1996; Xu *et al.* 2010).

Genre theorists agree that the central defining features of a genre are its purpose and context. Martin *et al.* (1987: 59) and Martin & Rose (2008: 5), in the SFL tradition, define it as “a staged goal oriented social process” while Miller (1984: 159) characterised it as “typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent events.” Bhatia (2002: 6), representing the ESP tradition, observes that:

analysing genre means investigating instances of conventionalised or institutionalised textual artefacts in the context of specific institutional and disciplinary practices, procedures and cultures in order to understand how members of specific discourse communities construct, interpret and use these genre to achieve their community goals.

Although both genre and register functionally exist in a cultural or discursive institution, they are at different points on the instantiation continuum (see Figure 1). Genre functionally realises a more particular, regularised social activity (or situation type) of an institution.

Register, on the other hand, realises broad socio-semiotic processes (i.e. **field of activity** at the institution phase of context) in addition to the social roles and relationships, the institutional ideologies that shape these relationships (tenor) and the different modes, which together sum up the semiotic space of the institution as a whole (see Matthiessen (2013a, b, 2015a) for discussion on socio-semiotic processes and register). Register, therefore, is the ‘language’ of an institution. Defined from below, it is the abstraction of genres of the institution. Alternatively, it may be defined from the perspective of the potential pole as a “local resetting of the global probabilities of the system” to serve the functions of an institution (Halliday 1997:10). In this sense, genre instantiates register in the same way that text instantiates genre and register instantiates the system.

The second dimension of language on which genre is modelled in this study is the hierarchy of stratification. This dimension organises context and the resources of language – comprising semantics, lexicogrammar, phonology/graphology, and phonetics/graphetics – into a series of strata related hierarchically by means of **realisation** (see Figure 2). Given that language is a semiotic system, meaning is the highest stratum in the language plane of the hierarchy of stratification and it realises context and is in turn realised by strata below it (i.e. lexicogrammar, phonology/graphology and phonetics/graphetics).

When the dimension of stratification is mapped onto the dimension of instantiation, genre is realised in the semantics stratum in the first instance; it first and foremost instantiates the potential meaning of the system, with register as a mediating sub-potential. In other words, in the instantiation process, genre is first realised as meaning that construes a situation type. This meaning is then realised as wording by means of lexicogrammar (i.e. lexis & grammar) and expressed as sounding or, if written, in the form of graphemes (see Figure 2).

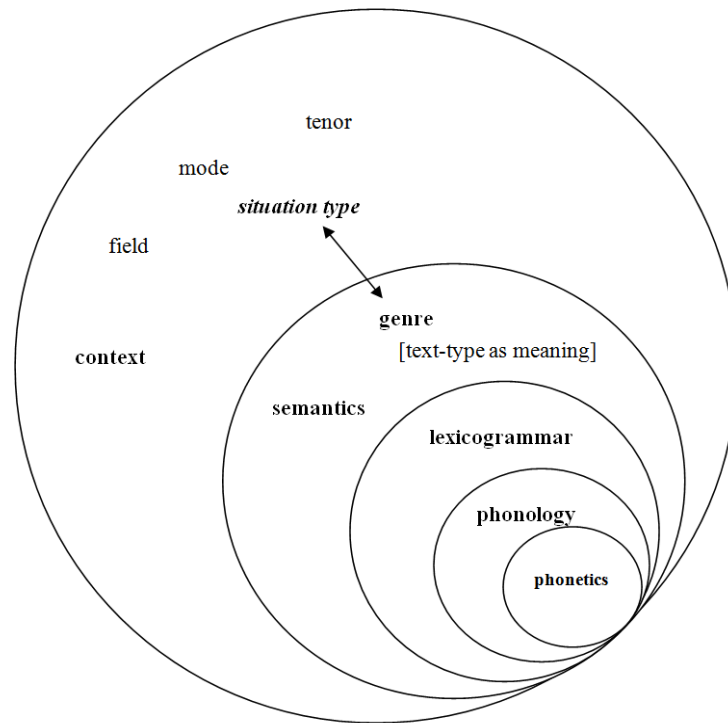


Figure 2. Genre in the hierarchy of stratification (Adapted from Matthiessen *fc.*)

Conceptualising genre as first and foremost a semantic variety of language means that a genre can be analysed from the perspective of what Halliday (e.g. Halliday 1996; Halliday & Matthiessen 2014) describes as a **trinocular vision**. That is, it can be analysed (i) from above – in the context stratum, (ii) from a roundabout perspective – in the semantics stratum, and (iii) from below – in the lexicogrammatical stratum, for example (see Matthiessen (2007) for a similar characterisation of text). Context (or, for the purpose of this study, situation type) is conceptualised as having three parameters: field (i.e. field of activity and field as content), tenor (i.e. power, solidarity, and formality), and mode (i.e. medium, channel, and manner). These parameters correspond with the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions of language respectively. Although all three parameters are realised in all strata by generic features, any one of them may be salient in analyzing the patterns of any particular genre. Critical genre analysts will particularly be interested in examining the hidden tenor or ideologies and power dynamics coded in genres (cf. Bhatia 2002, 2004, 2008).

The present study focuses on the field (specifically, field of activity) and mode parameters in analyzing the macro-organisation of biodata, using Hasan’s (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B) generic structure potential (GSP) model. Tenor is deployed in interpreting the choices bio writers make within mode and in construing field. The GSP model accounts for the generic unfolding of texts in stages and phases of activity. Genre is staged because it unfolds in meaningful chunks of information. Swales (1990) uses the terms ‘moves’ and ‘steps’ to refer to stages and phases respectively, and he defines a move (or stage) as “a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse” (Swales 2004: 229). As both Swales (1990) and Hasan (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B) note, there is no one-to-one correspondence between moves (or stages) and any structural category such as a phrase, a clause/sentence, or paragraph. This implies that moves (or stages) are flexible in terms of their corresponding formal features (Lewin & Fine 1996; Santos 1996) and should be seen as functional units, and not formal ones (Swales 2004). A generic stage often unfolds in phases, defined as related content that is bound together to realise a single communicative goal.

In SFL terms, the generic stages and phases that make up a particular genre are tendencies (or probabilities) that represent the range of potential meaning that can be realised in any instance of the genre, rather than a rigid template that every text must fit in. Frow (2006: 3) observes that “genres are not fixed and pre-given forms” and emphasises the “open-endedness of generic frames”. Thus, while a genre normally has a few obligatory (or, rather, core) stages, others are often optional. A generic stage also often has a phase that is central to it, and tends to be its nucleus. Hasan (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B) also notes that a stage or phase could be recursive, echoing Swales’ (1990) discussion of the cyclical nature of moves and/or steps.

In this study, biodata is explored as a genre of the academic discourse community, focusing specifically on Applied Linguistics as a case study. It is assumed that a systematic analysis of biodata will reveal a set of potential rhetorical and lexicogrammatical patterns that writers use to realise this genre. The biodata genre is described (i) from above in the context stratum by examining the staged activities that are used by writers to claim an identity for themselves; (ii) from a roundabout perspective in the semantic stratum by considering the logico-semantic or rhetorical relations that exist among stages and phases; and (iii) from below in the lexicogrammar by examining phraseological patterns that are pertinent to biodata, including appraisal resources that are deployed by writers to present a credible academic persona. Martin & White’s (2005) work on appraisal is pertinent to the discussion on the use of evaluative language in the data (see Section 5.4 below).

4. Data and method

In this section, I describe the methods and research procedures employed in the study. I first describe the source and characteristics of the dataset (Section 4.1) and then proceed to discuss the analytical procedures used in analysing the data (Section 4.2).

4.1 The corpus of biodata

The dataset for the study consists of a corpus of 200 biodata by Applied Linguistics scholars, 100 each accompanying research articles (RAs) and seminar posters (SPs).³ The RA bios were selected from recent issues (published between 2010 and 2014) of five Applied Linguistics journals (20 from each journal) that are listed in the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI) and Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) (Thomson Reuters), namely, *English for Specific Purposes*, *Language and Literature*, *Text & Talk*, *Discourse & Society*, and *Discourse Studies*, first using the convenience sampling technique and then establishing an equal quota for each journal. Journals in A&HCI and SSCI were purposively considered owing to their international prestige and the fact that they are most likely to provide the best exemplar of bios written by applied linguists. The SPs bios were collected from seminars held in universities in Hong Kong and Singapore mainly between July, 2008 and May, 2014. Although only bios from these countries were used because of their accessibility, most of the writers are, nonetheless, experienced applied linguists affiliated to universities in 24 different countries in four continents: America, Asia, Australia and Europe. Thus, unlike in Babaii’s (2010) study, the bios in the present study are not limited to scholars from a single continent. This variability is important in making these bios comparable with the RA bios.

The purpose of this variable dataset is to arguably widen the empirical scope provided by previous studies on the rhetorical structure of biodata. Although studies have examined bios accompanying conference submissions (e.g. Babaii 2010) and research articles (e.g. Afful 2012a; Hyland & Tse 2012), none of them explores them together in one study in order to highlight the subtle differences between them as has been done in this study.

³ The term ‘Applied Linguistics’ is broadly defined here to include all those sub-disciplines of linguistics that apply linguistic theory and descriptions to text analysis and/or in solving practical problems in society.

Table 1 presents a frequency distribution of the bios in the dataset across the academic status of writers (operationalised as ‘Senior Scholars’ and ‘Junior Scholars’). For the purpose of this study, senior scholars are defined as writers with the academic position of Senior Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Senior Research Fellow or above. Junior scholars are defined as writers with the position of Instructor, Post-doctoral Fellow, and Teaching Fellow or below, as well as postgraduate students and research assistants. As Table 1 shows, unsurprisingly, the majority of bios in the dataset belong to the category of Senior Scholars (66%). However, there are thrice as many bios by Junior Scholars in RA bios (34%) than in SP bios (11%). This situation probably reflects the unequal distribution and access to different media of expression between Senior Scholars and Junior Scholars in the academic community.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of bios across status

Status of writers	SP bios	RA bios	Overall dataset	
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	%
Senior Scholars	77	55	132	66.0
Junior Scholars	11	34	45	22.5
Not clear/Unspecified	12	11	23	11.5
Total	100	100	200	100

Although the present study will not systematically compare bios across these broad categories of writer status, the frequency distribution provided here will be useful in interpreting some of the variations between RA bios and SP bios (see Section 5.1 below).

One challenge in exploring published texts is the difficulty to ascertain the degree of authors’ autonomy in the composition of the text. As mentioned earlier, the bio in particular can be conceived of as an editorial para-genre, written by the author on behalf of the editor. However, as Hyland (2011b) notes, “while issues of agency and conformity ... remain controversial, there is some agreement that identity is created from texts we engage in and the linguistic choices we make” (p. 286).

Journals in the dataset for the present study generally do not give specific requirements for the content of bios beyond number of words, which ranges between 50 (*ESP*) and 100 (*D&S* and *DS*). The RA bios in the dataset together have an average number of 71.3 words. Bios in *ESP* have the lowest average number of words (51.8) while the average number of words for the rest of the journals are quite close to one another, averagely ranging from 73.0 (*DS*) to 83.7 (*L&L*) words. Nonetheless, the shortest text recorded in the RA subset of the data has 16 words and the longest has 196 words. The SP bios are relatively longer than RA bios, with text length ranging from 26 to 290 words and a total average text length of 118.3 words (i.e. 47 words more than the average number of words in RA bios).

It could be assumed that these textual differences help to account for some of the variations that are highlighted in Section 5.1 below. *T&T* added author’s correspondence address to the bios, and this was omitted in the analysis since it is obviously a journal specific in-house style. It is probably also worth mentioning that the number of authors per article (i.e. whether it is single or co-authored) was not controlled for in the data selection process.

4.2 Analytical procedures

Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used in analysing and interpreting the texts. First, the data were manually coded for rhetorical and lexicogrammatical patterns, using conventional content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon 2005). That is, the categories in the coding scheme were allowed to gradually emerge from the data, and the emerging rhetorical patterns were classified into generic stages and phases. This process was followed by summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon 2005), where, for instance, the emerging generic patterns were quantified and classified into core and optional stages as well as phases, and the potential structural pattern of the stages determined. It should be mentioned that each of the two categories of biodata that constitute the dataset was analysed separately and compared with each other. The differences among them are noted and discussed in the following sections. Personal

names in texts selected for illustrations are replaced with three X's (i.e. XXX) in order to partially anonymise the bios.

The identification and grouping of units into generic stages and phases was done based on their relatedness in terms of communicative function or content and their distribution and emerging structural patterns in the texts (see Table 3). For example, listing 'research interest', 'publications' and 'conferences attended' were identified as steps in one generic stage, Creating Research Profile since (i) they are all related to one academic activity, research and (ii) they typically follow one another in the biodata. This procedure will be clarified further by illustrations in Section 5.1.

It should be noted that although some of the labels of the rhetorical patterns in the present study are similar to those of Hyland & Tse (2012), the coding scheme was developed independently of their study, based on a pilot analysis of 72 bios (Mwinlaaru 2014). The difference between Hyland & Tse (2012) and the present study with regards to the contextual (or rhetorical) structure analysis is that of the perspective from which the observer is looking at the field parameter of context. The view by Hyland & Tse (2012) is on field as subject matter and the view in this paper is on field as the unfolding of activity. The two studies together form a complementary view of context (see Halliday (2008) and Kilpert (2003) for discussion on complementarity). The approach I adopt here is, however, typical of both Swalesian genre analysis and SFL GSP analysis. While Hyland & Tse's (2012) approach allows for a semi-automated analysis of a large sample size, the more qualitative approach used here has the advantage of going beyond their findings, by revealing core and optional stages in the bio genre and how these stages cohere to form a text.

5. Generic patterns of biodata

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study. The first part of the analysis describes the semiotic activities bio writers engage in and, therefore, explores the field of activity component of context. The next section focuses on mode by examining the potential sequencing of these activities in the flow of text. This is followed by a discussion of the rhetorical (or logico-semantic) relations among stages and phases in Section 5.3. Finally, Section 5.4 examines the lexicogrammatical patterns that are pertinent to the biodata. As mentioned earlier, although tenor is not considered separately in the discussion of context, it is deployed in several parts in interpreting some of the rhetorical choices writers make. In the 'look from below' in Section 5.4, however, lexicogrammatical resources enacting interpersonal meaning of appraisal are discussed (see Martin & White (2005) and Ngo & Unsworth (2015) for a discussion on appraisal).

5.1 Generic structure potential of biodata

Table 2 presents the generic stages and phases and their frequency distribution in the dataset. The analysis revealed that biodata have five generic stages, comprising two near-obligatory (or core) stages, Establishing Professional Identity and Creating Research Profile, and four optional stages, namely, Providing Personal Information, Giving Educational Background, and Establishing Credentials. Following the discussion on the flexibility of generic elements in Section 3 (see also Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B; Swales 1990), this generic structure of biodata should be taken as a potential, a probabilistic set of choices consisting of core or salient stages, such as Establishing Professional Identity, and optional stages that are non-defining for the genre and/or its corresponding situation type. As Hasan (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1985: Part B) notes, however, optional stages are relatively predictable in a particular genre when they are analysed systematically. For example, Table 2 shows that Providing Personal Information (Stage 1) and Giving Educational Background (Stage 2) are more likely to occur in bios written for

seminar presentations than in RA bios. Hyland & Tse (2012) also show disciplinary variation in their occurrence.⁴

Providing Personal Information is the least occurring stage in the dataset, only appearing in 8 (4%) of the 200 biodata. This frequency distribution corroborates Hyland & Tse’s (2012) study. It is often realised by three kinds of information: the writer’s place of birth, date of birth or place of domicile. Examples of this stage are given below:

- (1) XXX lives in Singapore ... (SP 008)
- (2) XXX, born in 1954 in Heidelberg/Germany ... (SP 036)
- (3) XXX (born 1926) is ... XXX lives part of the time in Austin, Texas, where his wife is completing her dissertation in linguistic anthropology. (SP 038)

It can be observed from the examples that this stage is normally realised by a group, phrase or clause within a sentence. The difference in its distribution across SP bios (7%) and RA bios (1%) could be interpreted as owing to variation in the nature of the research article and seminar poster. Regarding tenor, since seminars are face-to-face interactions they relatively favour presenting a more interpersonal construction of self to readers. Again, since seminar posters in the dataset comprise only the abstract of the presentation and the biodata, there is more textual space for organisers to indulge in the interest of writers and readers (Hyland & Tse 2012). As mentioned in Section 4.1, the RA bios are averagely about 70 words long while the SP bios, in average, are more than 100 words long. The lower frequency of Stage 1 corroborates Hyland & Tse’s (2012) findings that bio writers give little importance to personal information.

Table 2. Frequency distribution of stages and phases in biodata

Stage	Phase	Activity	RA bios <i>n</i>	SP bios <i>n</i>	Overall dataset <i>n</i>	%
1		providing personal information	1	7	8	4
2		giving educational background	25	35	60	30
3		establishing professional identity	99	100	199	99.5
	3.1	indicating rank/status	89	88	177	88.5
	3.2	indicating specialisation	51	50	101	50.5
	3.3	indicating affiliation	99	100	199	99.5
	3.4	specifying job description	16	26	42	21
4		creating research profile	96	96	192	96
	4.1	listing research activities/interest areas	84	86	170	85
	4.2	listing publications	58	69	127	63.5
	4.3	indicating conferences attended	1	3	4	2
5		establishing credentials	26	65	91	45.5
	5.1	showing internal and external recognition	25	66	91	45.5
	5.2	referring to awards and honours	2	15	17	8.5

The second generic stage, Giving Educational Background, occurs quite frequently in the dataset, recording 60 (30%) instances. It normally indicates the educational qualification of the writer and the institution that awarded the qualification, as shown by the following examples:

⁴ The notion of probabilities or ‘generic potential’ in SFL may be distinguished from the tendency in ESP either to ignore low-frequency stages/phases, applying a seemingly arbitrary cut-off point, or to classify them as ‘non-generic’.

- (4) She recently completed a Master of Arts in the area of healthcare communication ... (RA 010)
- (5) XXX holds an MA in language in Society from the University of East Anglia, UK, and a PhD from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. (RA 021)
- (6) He received his PhD from Freie Universitat Berlin, after studies in Vienna, Cologne, Buffalo and Moscow. (SP 009)

Unlike the Providing Personal Information stage (Stage 1), this second stage is normally realised by whole sentences or independent clauses. Similarly, however, it occurs less in RA bios (25%) than in SP bios (35%). This difference, however, is not accounted for by variation in the academic age or status of the bio writers as suggested by Hyland & Tse (2012), given that the majority of the writers of the SP bios are senior scholars (77%, see Table 1). Rather, it can be attributed to the space constraints imposed by editorial requirements for RA bios. When we take the distribution of this stage in only RA bios into consideration, however, the finding supports Hyland & Tse's (2012) study, since 64% of RA bios with this stage are produced by junior scholars. As Hyland & Tse (2012) note, junior scholars have relatively little professional experience to recount in bios and place importance on their prestigious educational background. On the other hand, many senior scholars would use the limited space at their disposal to flag their professional achievements in RA bios.

Stage 3, Establishing Professional Identity, appears to be the most salient stage found in the dataset, occurring in almost all (199; 99.5%) biodata. The bio text which does not contain this stage in the data set consists solely of Stage 4 (Creating Research Profile) in 163 words. Stage 3 is realised by four phases, as illustrated below:

- (7) XXX is an Associate Professor (Phase 3.1) in the Department of Languages and Literature at Benedictine University (Phase 3.3), where she teaches EAP to graduate students, first year writing, and linguistics (Phase 3.4). (RA 005)
- (8) XXX is Professor (Phase 3.1) of American Literature (Phase 3.2) at the University of Malaga (Phase 3.3) where she teaches courses on American Theatre, Playwrights, and Twentieth Century Literature. (Phase 3.4). (SP 030)
- (9) XXX has been working as a Spanish Instructor (Phase 3.1/3.2) in the University of Hong Kong since 2005 (Phase 3.3). She teaches general language courses (Year II and III) and content courses in fields of linguistics ... (Phase 3.4) (SP 071)

As Table 2 indicates, although all four phases generally occur with relative high frequency, Phase 3.3, Indicating Affiliation, is near-obligatory, occurring in 199 (99.5%) texts. It is thus the most prominent phase among all generic phases of the biodata. As noted by Hyland & Tse (2012), it is interesting that scholars attach a significant value to the institutions and professional communities to which they are affiliated. This situation could also explain why junior scholars recognise their immediate past institutional affiliations in their biodata, as already noted above. Although it appears that this phase also does not occur in all the bios in Hyland & Tse's (2012) study, it is still recorded as the most frequent category. However, since Hyland & Tse (2012) do not indicate the frequency of the 'Employment' category per texts across disciplines, the findings here cannot be accurately compared with bios in their Applied Linguistics sub-data set.

Phases 3.1 (Indicating Rank/Position) and 3.2 (Indicating Specialisation) are relatively prominent in the text, with Phase 3.1 occurring in 177 (88.5%) texts and phase 3.2 occurring in 101 (50.5%) bios. Although Phase 3.1 indicates the promotional rank of scholars, for postgraduate students, it indicates their student status and level of education (e.g. PhD student/candidate). Phase 3.4 (Specifying Job Description) is the least occurring phase, with only 42 (21%) instances. Nonetheless, it is more frequent in SP bios (26%) than in RA bios (16%). Since this phase normally indicates the teaching activities of academics, the implication is that academics place less importance on their specific teaching and related activities in their biodata than the other professional identities enacted in this generic stage. This could be due to the fact that teaching responsibilities are common to all academics, and writers may not find them interesting

enough in flagging their professional image. Generally, however, the Establishing Professional Identity stage is key to the biodata genre, and, similar to Hyland & Tse (2012) findings, two bio texts are composed of only this generic stage. The exclusion of such a core element (especially the affiliation phase) from a bio could be attributed to, to use Bhatia's words, the 'private intentions' of a scholar (e.g. Bhatia 2004: ch4 & ch5).

The next generic stage (Stage 4) to be discussed is Creating Research Profile (CRP). It occurs in almost all (192, 96%) the biodata, and generally shows no considerable contextual variation in frequency. Arguably, it can be described as a near-obligatory stage. A prototypic biodata would include this stage in addition to the Establishing Professional Identity stage (Stage 3). As noted above, the bio text which excludes Stage 3 is solely composed of this stage, which suggests its salience. Following Swales (1990), we can then describe bios as closer or less close to a prototype based on their inclusion or omission of any of these two stages. The CRP stage is realised by three phases, as illustrated below:

- (10) He does research on the language of psychiatric disorders including psychosis and autistic spectrum (phase 4.1). His book *Language in Psychiatry ...* was published in 2006 (London: Equinox) (phase 4.2). (RA 046)
- (11) His numerous publications in this field include: *Multicultural Transactions in the Analysis ...* (phase 4.3). He has both participated in and organised numerous international conferences including *Tradurre il Cinema* in Trieste ... (SP 068)

Again, not all three phases may be found in each of the texts in which Stage 4 is realised, and in some instances Phases 4.2 and 4.3 are conflated (e.g. *He has **published** and given **conference** talks on workplace discourse with regard to humor, small talk, and code switching*). The most prominent phase is Phase 4.1 (Listing Research Interest Areas) which occurs in 88.5% (170) instances of the 192 biodata that has this stage and in 85% of the overall dataset. It tends to be the nucleus for Stage 4, and where it does not appear, the tendency is for the next phase, Listing Publications, to be more explicit on publication topics (e.g. *she has published a book, a number of book chapters and journal articles on medium of instruction, language policy and planning ...*). Listing Publications (Phase 4.2) is also quite frequent, occurring in 127 (63.5%) instances. Two possible explanations can be given to the variation in its distribution across SP (69%) and RA (58%) bios.

First, since it appears more in the biodata of senior scholars than junior scholars, it could be argued that its occurrence is contingent on a prior research profile of the writer (cf. Hyland & Tse 2012). Thus, it occurs more frequently in the SP dataset because most of the SP bio writers (77%, see Table 1) are senior scholars. The second reason could be due to the space constraints imposed by bio length in RAs, as noted in Section 4.1 above. Phase 4.3 is not prominent, only occurring in four (2%) instances of the 200 texts. This lower frequency, compared to the Listing Publications phase, could be attributed to the fact that scholars view research publications as more prestigious than conference presentations.

The last generic stage, Establishing Credentials, occurs in almost half (91, 45.5%) the dataset. It is almost absent in biodata of junior scholars, tending to occur in biodata of senior scholars. Interestingly, however, it occurs far less in RA bios (26% instances) than in SP bios (65%) most probably due to differences in textual space (as indicated in Section 4.1), and the likelihood that, since seminars are face-to-face interactions, readers expect writers to provide more personal information than the RA genre allows, and writers are willing to do so. It is realised by two phases, exemplified below:

- (12) She has served leadership roles in TESOL International Organisation for three years and has been board member of KYTESOL since 2010. She has also been a visiting scholar to Cambridge University for 12 months and worked as an Associate Dean for 5 years at Beihang University (Phase 5.1). In 2010, she was granted the Board of Regents' Teaching Excellence Award, the first non-tenured faculty of her Department who received this highest university award (Phase 5.2). (SP 004)

- (13) She also has extensive consulting experience with corporations, private education providers and government agencies in Australia, NZ and China (Phase 5.1). (SP011)

Phase 5.1 (Indicating Internal and External Recognition) normally provides information on key positions held by the writer, such as chair of department, dean, editorial positions, and external consulting experience as well as visiting professorship. It is a site where senior scholars demonstrate their contributions to their affiliated institutions and the corporate and global community at large. The high prestige associated with these community services explains its apparent absence in the biodata of junior scholars. A recurrent tendency is for writers to internationalise their professional identity and recognition, reflecting the value scholars place on international recognition. It is the most prominent phase in the Establishing Credentials stage, and occurs in 91 (45.5%) instances of the dataset. Phase 5.2, Referring to Awards/Honours, is less prominent, occurring in 17 (8.5%) texts, almost all (15) of which are SP bios.

It should also be mentioned that although this stage often occurs towards the end of the biotext, when the credential indicated is a position within the writer’s primary affiliation, it would normally occur with Stage 3 (e.g. *XXX is Pro-vice Chancellor and Baines Professor of English at the University of Liverpool, UK*).

5.2 Sequencing of stages

This section discusses the structural patterns of the generic stages described above. Thus, it more explicitly elaborates the mode parameter of the context of biodata; that is, how the generic activities unfold and cluster together to form text. Seven main structural patterns are recorded in the dataset as presented in Table 3. The preferred structure is S3 ^ S4 (Establishing Professional Identity ^ Creating Research Profile), which records 88 (44%) instances. It is followed by S3 ^ S4 ^ S5, with 22 (11%) instances. Patterns that are random and/or occur in less than 5% in both RA and SP data sets are categorised as ‘Other’ (36, 18%).

One interesting difference in the distribution of structural patterns across contexts is that SP bios are more variable than RA bios. While RA bios largely (62%) consist of S3 ^ S4, only 26% of SP bios are composed of this pattern. The rest of the patterns for SP bios are highly variable, with ‘Other’ (24%) occurring almost as much as S3 ^ S4 (26%). The reason could be as pointed out earlier, that writers have more textual space for SP bios and thus may have more freedom of choosing, adding and omitting information.

Table 3. Percentage distribution of structural patterns of stages in biodata

Structural pattern	RA bios	SP bios	Overall dataset	
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	%
S2 ^ S3 ^ S4	7	4	11	5.5
S2 ^ S3 ^ S4 ^ S5	1	5	6	3
S3 ^ S2 ^ S4 ^ S5	1	5	6	3
S3 ^ S2 ^ S4	6	10	16	8
S3 ^ S4	62	26	88	44
S3 ^ S4 ^ S5	6	16	22	11
S3 ^ S5 ^ S4	5	10	15	7.5
Others	12	24	36	18
Total	100	100	200	100

Another phenomenon that emerges from the findings is the recursion of stages/phases, as exemplified in the extract below, whose structural pattern is S3 ^ S5 ^ S4 ^ S5:

- (14) XXX is Distinguished Professor of Discourse Studies at Lancaster University (Stage 3). Besides various prizes, she was awarded the Wittgenstein Prize of Elite Researchers in 1996 (Stage 5, Phase 5.2) and is also head of the Wittgenstein Research Centre of ... (Stage 5, Phase 5.1). Her research interest focuses on discourse analysis, gender studies, language and/in politics, prejudice and discrimination ... (Stage 4, Phase 4.1). She is a member of the editorial board of a range of linguistic journals and co-editor of the journals *Discourse & Society* (Stage 5, Phase 5.1) (RA 090)

Recursion in structural patterns may also be related to a tendency of two organising styles of biodata: the **analytical style** and the **narrative style**. The analytical bio such as the extract above (i.e. RA 090) is logically structured, with no or less recursion of stages and phases. The narrative bio, on the other hand, uses the professional growth of the writer as the organising principle and recursion of stages and phases appears to be a feature of this style:

- (15) XXX is Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at the University of Michigan (Stage 3), where he was also Director ... from 1985 to 2001 (Stage 5, Phase 5.1). Prior to Michigan, he was Reader in ESP ... (Stage 3), before that, Director of the English Language Servicing Unit at the University of Khartoum (Stage 5, Phase 5.1). - SP 099

The analytical style is the preferred style in the dataset, with the narrative style recorded among only nine SP bios although six RA bios also seems to embed narration within primarily analytical bios.

The next section shows how the structural patterns discussed here are realised by the logical component of the ideational strand of meaning.

5.3 Rhetorical/logico-semantic relations

A combination of Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST) and Halliday's logico-semantic relations (cf. Halliday 1985; Halliday & Matthiessen 2014) is used in examining the logical flow of meaning among clauses that realise the generic stages and phases. RST was first developed in the 1980's in the context of computational text generation (cf. Mann *et al.* 1992; Mann & Thompson 1988). It has been a valuable tool for the semantic analysis of texts in a wide range of contexts, including discourse analysis (e.g. Azar 1999; Trail & Hale 1995), computational linguistics (e.g. Bateman *et al.* 2001; Matthiessen *et al.* 1998), instructional contexts (e.g. Linden & Martin 1995) and academic discourse (e.g. Benwell 1999).

The analysis in this section is based on Matthiessen's (2015b) integration of the classical RST framework with the logico-semantic relations in Halliday's grammar. The two frameworks are largely similar and one reason for their integration is to show that RST relations are an extension of the rather broad logico-semantic relations into more delicate sub-types, or, on the other hand, the 31 RST relations or so can be classified into a few semantic sub-types (also see Taboada & Mann (2006a, b) for a detailed overview of RST and its applications). Logico-semantic relations consist of two main logical meanings among clauses, projection and expansion, which in turn divides into the sub-types of extension, elaboration and enhancement. Only the expansion types are recorded in the data set. Extension (+) describes an additive relationship in which a discourse unit develops a prior one by adding new information or by contrasting it. Enhancement (x) is a relationship established by a discourse unit by qualifying a preceding unit of text with specific details such as temporal, spatial, manner, or causal information. Elaboration (=) is the kind of relationship established by a discourse unit that explains, exemplifies or clarifies a prior discourse.

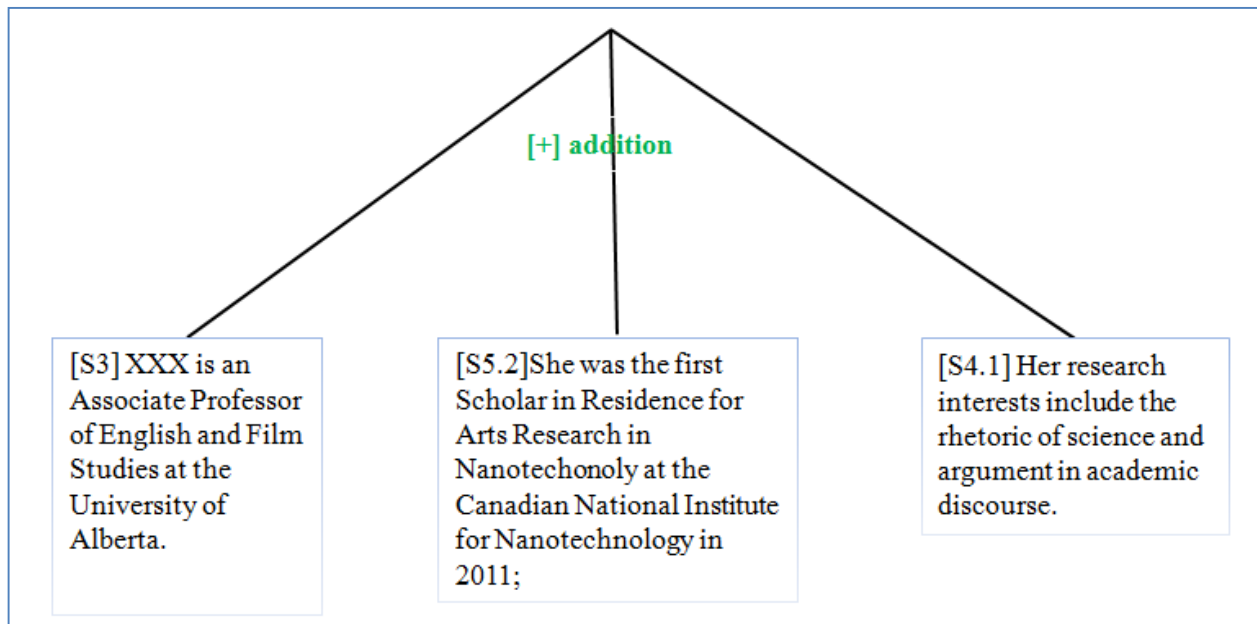
Table 4 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the specific RST relations that realise the bios in the dataset for the study. The logico-semantic type each RST relation belongs to is indicated in square brackets against the relation. The most frequent relation is addition [+], occurring in 177 (88.5%) bios followed by elaboration [=], recorded in almost 50% (98) of the dataset. Many bios are composed of

only addition [+] in their macro-organisation. Specifically, 70 (35%) bios are construed by the addition [+] relation only (RA bios = 37; SP bios = 33), and 101 (50.5%) bios include addition [+] together with other relations other than elaboration [=] (RA bios = 45; SP bios = 56). On the other hand, 77 (38.5%) bios are construed by at least a configuration of elaboration [=] plus addition [+] relations (RA bios = 43; SP bios = 34). There are no marked differences between the distribution of relations across RA and SP bios, except that SP bios include considerably more sequence [x] and circumstance [x] relations than RA bios, the former relation reflecting a tendency of a few SP bios to narrate or chronicle (see Section 5.2).

Table 4. Frequency and percentage distribution of rhetorical relations across disciplines⁵

	RA bio	SP bio	Total	
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>N</i>	%
elaboration [=]	54	44	98	49
addition [+]	88	89	177	88.5
sequence [x]	7	17	24	12
circumstance [x]	5	20	25	12.5
concession [x]	2	3	5	2.5

Figure 3 illustrates a typical RST configuration of bios (with addition only) in the dataset while Figure 4 exemplifies a typical combination of addition [+] and elaboration [=]. With regards to the combination of addition [+] and elaboration [=], the semantic relations are framed within a general macro-textual organisation of the bio data genre into macro-Theme and macro-New (See Figure 4), terms that analogously relate textual prominence in the global unfolding of a text to thematic and information prominence in the clause (cf. Martin & Rose 2007, 2008). The macro-Theme of the biodata genre is the ‘identity of the author’ located in an area of specialisation and an institution. The rest of the bio text (i.e. the macro-New) extends this macro-Theme by way of elaboration. That is, the flow of the social activities realised by the different stages and phases align the writer and his/her institutional and academic affiliation to a nexus of other identities organised into a prosody of semantic chunks. Each stage adds a new identity of the author to the logogenetic flow of the text.



⁵ The figures represent the number of bios that include each rhetorical relation. The unit of analysis is the clause. Total number of RA bios = 100; SP bios = 100.

Figure 3. RST configuration of bios with addition relation only (RA 001)

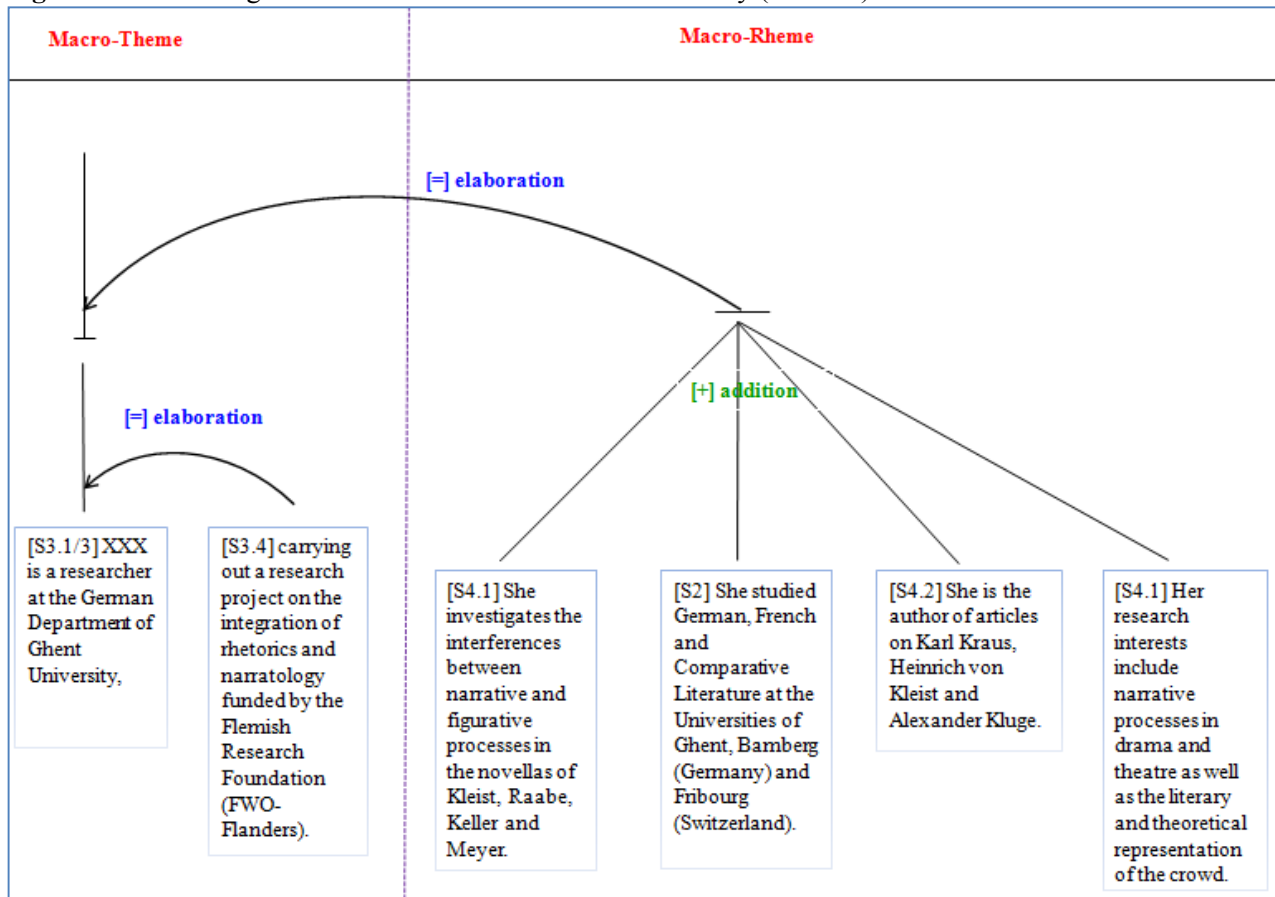


Figure 4. Typical combination of elaboration and addition RST configuration (RA 033)

The first three phases in Stage 3 are related logico-semantically by enhancement (x), normally nested into one another to form a complex of prepositional phrases (see Section 5.4 below for further discussion on this phrasal complex).⁶ In Figure 3, for instance, Phase 3.2, ... of English and Film Studies ..., enhances (x) the professional status of the writer, ... Associate Professor..., by locating it in a recognised field of scholarship. Phase 3.3, realised by ... at the University of Alberta, enhances (x) the status of the writer further by locating it in an institutional space, an academic community to which the writer is affiliated. Phase 3.4, as in Figure 4, is often presented in a separate clause or sentence and relates to the nucleus (Phase 3.1) by way of elaboration (=), clarifying the professional role of the writer by indicating specific teaching and research activities assigned them in their affiliated institution.

5.4 Lexicogrammatical patterns of biodata

The discussion of lexicogrammatical patterns will be limited to phraseological patterns that are pertinent to Stages 3 and 4 of the biodata, owing to the salience of these stages, as noted in Section 5.3. The first notable feature is collocational frameworks, and it will be examined in relation to Stage 3.

The term ‘collocational frameworks’ was first used by Renouf & Sinclair (1991) and, in this study, they are primarily logical lexicogrammatical resources that realise the relations that hold among phases of Stage 3 (see Section 5.3). Collocational frameworks are defined in the corpus linguistics literature as grammatical words that are co-selected to frame meaning shift units (Warren 2009). This

⁶ Unlike in Table 4, the unit of analysis here is the phase, realised by phrases.

definition of collocational frameworks is clearly marked in Stage 3 (Establishing Professional Identity) of the biodata, where articles and a limited set of prepositions are used to indicate shifts in generic flow of meaning from one phase to another. The collocational framework typically used in this stage is *a/an/ø ... in/of ... at/in (the)...* and it normally frames the phases in the pattern: *Name + VP + {a/an/ø} + rank/status {in/of} + specialisation + {at/in} (the) + affiliation* (see Table 5 for illustrations).

Table 5. Collocational frameworks typical of Stage 3

frame1	rank/status	frame2	specialisation	frame3	Affiliation
ø	Assoc. Professor	<i>of</i>	English Lang.	at the	University of Salerno ...
a	Professor	<i>of</i>	Appl. Ling	in	Northern Arizona University
a	senior lecturer	<i>in</i>	English ling.	at the	University of Granada, Spain
an	Assistant Lecturer	<i>in</i>	Spanish	at the	University of Hong Kong
an	assoc. professor			in the	Faculty of Education, the University of Hong Kong.

In systemic functional grammar terms, these linguistic patterns involving collocational frameworks are instances of grammatical metaphor, where material processes (see examples 16 - 19 below) are expressed as prepositional phrases that are embedded in a nominal group. Grammatical metaphor is defined as indirectness or incongruence between the meaning of an expression and the grammatical form in which it is realised; see Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: ch10). Typically, whereas the relationship between the rank of (*Associate/Assistant*) *Professor* and specialty is metaphorically construed as a possession (with the preposition *of* as a colligate), specialty is construed as a location of lower ranks (with the preposition *in* as a colligate). Generally, collocational frameworks are used in Stage 3 to organise phases into semantic peaks in the generic flow of discourse.

In a few bios, however, these phases are construed congruently or non-metaphorically in material processes:

- (16) XXX *works* in the school of English at the University of Leicester, UK. (RA 029)
- (17) He *continues to teach* regularly for the Chinese University of Hong Kong. (RA 040)
- (18) XXX *lectures* in TESOL and languages education at Monash University in Australia. (RA 085)
- (19) XXX *has taught* English in France, Hong Kong, Japan and UK, where he *worked* at the University of Birmingham for eleven years. (SP 042)

In (16) and (19), the institutional affiliation of the writer is construed as a circumstance (or adverbial of place) of an activity or material process (i.e. *works* and *has taught*). In (17), the affiliation is construed as a circumstance (specifically, Cause: Behalf) of the process “continues to teach”, while in (18), the writer’s teaching speciality is construed as Manner of an activity, “lectures”, and the affiliation again becomes a circumstance of Place.⁷ An alternative to (18) is to construe the speciality as Scope, as in (19). These non-metaphorical forms are observably fewer in the data set than their agnate forms exemplified in Table 5.

With regards to Stage 4, writers often employ evaluative resources to project their scholarly achievements. One lexicogrammatical resource deployed in this way is lexical bundles (also called n-

⁷ Specific clause functions are written with an initial upper case letter (e.g. Scope, Place, etc.). ‘Circumstance’ is one of the main functional elements in the transitivity structure of the clause (the other two being ‘participant’ and ‘process’) and it is typically realised by adverbial items; cf. Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: ch5).

grams, clusters, chunks, and lexical phrases). Greaves & Warren (2010) define them as “frequently occurring contiguous words that constitute a phrase or a pattern of use” (p. 213). Biber *et al.* (1999) identify four categories of lexical bundles which reflect the metafunctions of language: referential bundles (ideational), text organisers (textual), stance bundles and interactional bundles (interpersonal). Lexical bundles have been investigated in various kinds of educational discourse, including, academic spoken discourse (e.g. Simpson 2004) and academic writing (e.g. Scott & Tribble 2006). Carter & McCarthy (2006), for example, also highlight genre and register specific tendencies in the use of lexical bundles.

The present study shows the tendency for scholars to use a set of lexical bundles in boosting their professional image and promoting themselves. Like collocational frameworks, lexical bundles identified in the biodata construe ideational meaning. However, while collocational frameworks shift between the construal of logical meaning (by realising rhetorical relations) and experiential meaning (by construing speciality as ‘possession’ and ‘location’), the lexical bundles unambiguously construe experiential meaning (as a resource for constructing self-image) and also interpersonal meaning (through evaluation). Table 6 presents lexical bundles that occur frequently in the dataset.

Table 6. Lexical bundles used in bios

lexical bundles	examples
over + figure (20+) +years	XXX has over 30 years experience as a Registered Nurse
over + money	XXX has earned over \$2.5 million research grant
over + figure + publications	She has over 60 publications
over a hundred ...	He is author of over a hundred articles
a (large) number of ...	She has managed and worked on a large number of research and consultancy projects ...
more than + figure	XXX has earned more than \$8 million in research income
internationally prestigious/prestigious international	She serves on the editorial boards of a number of prestigious international research journals

These lexical bundles mainly colour quantitative information with qualitative or evaluative measurements. These qualitative measurements, normally indicated with words such as *over*, *large* and *widely*, are used to foreground a positive self-image. An extract from a text with a high density of these lexical bundles is given below:

- (20) *Overall*, he is the author or co-author of 20 books and *over a hundred* articles and book chapters. XXX has given *over 60* plenary or keynote conference speeches in *more than 30* countries *over a long* career. (SP 099)

The use of lexical bundles this way is part of a general strategy of appraisal that writers employ in valuing themselves as credible scholars (cf. Martin & White 2005). Table 7 further presents related appraisal strategies writers use to enact a positive self. These strategies comprise valuing the author, appreciating the publication and valuing the process engaged in by the author. The grammatical resources mainly employed in these strategies are modification in the noun group (e.g. *a renowned scholar*) and circumstantiation in the clause (e.g. *s/he has published extensively in/on ...*). While the modification is

often used in valuing the author and appreciating scholarly outputs, circumstantial elements (or adverbials, such as *widely*) are, obviously, used in valuing activity.

Table 7. Appraisal strategies used in bios

author appraisal	evaluating publication	process-oriented appraisal
a renowned storyteller	a widely used textbook	he has published extensively in ...
a leading researcher in ...	extensive work on ... / numerous publications in ...	he has contributed to ...
a renowned scholar	a textbook now used worldwide as ...	s/he has researched extensively on/in ...
well respected for her/his ...	his publications make a unique use of ...	done extensive work on/in ...
S/he is best known for ...	(author of) award winning books	s/he has published widely in/on ...
He has been the key figure in ...	collection continues to be widely cited	s/he has published in a wide range of journals
He is probably still known for ...	the best selling professional reference books	... authoring several articles

These phraseological choices both have an advertising function for the research output of the writer and boost his/her positive image. Arguably, many Applied Linguistics scholars employ value loaded phraseology to flag their achievements and show their credibility as experienced and recognised players in their discourse community.

6. Conclusion

In summary, this study explored the generic patterns of biodata using a concept of genre modelled on the theoretical framework of systemic functional linguistics as theorised by Halliday and other scholars (e.g. Martin 1992; Halliday & Matthiessen 2014; Matthiessen 2013a, b, in press). The findings of the generic structure potential analysis show that the biodata genre is realised by two core stages, Establishing Professional Identity and Creating Research Profile; and three optional stages, namely, Providing Personal Information, Giving Educational Background, and Establishing Credentials (i.e. (S1) · (S2) · S3/S4 · (S5)).⁸ In other words, in its minimal realisation, a biotext would consist of at least either S3 (Establishing Professional Identity) or S4 (Creating Research Profile). Another finding is that the preferred structural pattern is S3 ^ S4 (i.e. Establishing Professional Identity ^ Creating Research Profile). Some variations were recorded in the distribution of these stages and phases between SP bios and RA bios, and, *inter alia*, two main reasons may explain these variations. The first is that SP bios are relatively longer and give writers more freedom to construct a prolonged identity. The second reason relates to the difference in tenor between RAs and seminars. Since seminars are face-to-face interactions, they tend to relatively favour the giving of personal details to prospective audience more than the RA genre does.

It has also been shown that the dominant RST relations among the five generic stages are addition and elaboration, and that both enhancing and elaborating logical relations are used in organising the phases of the Establishing Professional Identity stage. Macro-structurally, the five generic stages are relatively deployed to align the author to a nexus of identities through elaboration.

⁸ Round brackets = optional; slash = ‘either/or’ or ‘both’; dot = not necessarily occurring in sequence; caret = sequentially ordered.

With regards to lexicogrammatical patterns, the study also reveals that grammatical words are co-selected in packaging phases into peaks of semantic prominence in the flow of meaning in the text. There is also the tendency to use a limited set of lexical bundles, including the grammatical resources of modification and circumstantiation to project self-image in biodata. These findings imply that the communicative purpose of biodata is not to give information in a neutral way, but to construct a positive professional image for the writer. It is a self-promotional discourse through which academics 'sell' their research output and boost their positive image among their peers. Theoretically, the use of collocational frameworks, especially, demonstrates how the lexicogrammatical stratum realises the meaning engendered by generic patterns.

These findings are valuable for a number of reasons. First, they contribute to the findings of previous studies on academic writing, in general, and biodata, in particular. Recent studies by Hyland & Tse (2012) and Afful (2012a) have explored identity construction in biodata, focusing on field as subject matter in the context stratum of the dimension of stratification and the lexicogrammatical resources of process types (Hyland & Tse 2012) and lexical density (Afful 2012a). The present study extends their findings by examining the field of activity component in the context stratum and the way in which phraseology construes textual meaning and promotes self image. It also extends the data source in previous studies by including bios for seminars, highlighting a few contextual variations. These findings could guide novice scholars in discursively constructing a professional self in their bios that will be valued by other members in the academic discourse community.

Second, the study contributes to theoretical and descriptive explorations of genre in Applied Linguistics research. The object of study for many contemporary studies on genre is academic discourse. Although these studies have made a valuable contribution to our understanding of text practices and to the development of useful pedagogical materials for language teaching in professional contexts, they often lack an explicit theory of language. The present study has demonstrated how a general functional theory of language can inform and direct further research in this field. By using SFL in addressing an ESP research issue, the study has shown that the applicability of SFL theory to contemporary genre research is beyond what has been achieved within the genre pedagogy project (e.g. Rose & Martin 2012).

The study particularly points out that ESP research, which has focused on schematic and lexicogrammatical analyses, could be more comprehensive by exploring the semantic construal of different genres and registers in order to enrich our knowledge of the functions of text in context. The RST analysis adopted in this study, for instance, represents only one way of semantically analysing genre. The trinocular perspective of genre modelled here could motivate further exploration of other semantic resources that construe different genres and of how semantics interacts with context and lexicogrammar in text.

One limitation of the study, however, is its focus on one discipline, Applied Linguistics. Future studies could explore variations in the generic features of biodata discussed here across disciplines in order to increase our understanding of the relationship between disciplinary culture and text practices.

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