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# Genre Analysis of Promotional Texts: Rhetorical Patterns and Metadiscursive Features of Teaching Philosophy Statements

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# Genre Analysis of Promotional Texts: Rhetorical Patterns and Metadiscursive Features of Teaching Philosophy Statements

by

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## List of Abbreviations

| Abbreviations | Definitions |
|---|---|
| EAP | English For Academic Purposes |
| ESP | English For Specific Purposes |
| MA | Master's degree |
| NR | New Rhetoric |
| Ph.D. | Doctor of Philosophy |
| RQ | Research Question |
| SFL | Systemic Functional Linguistics |
| TPS | Teaching Philosophy Statement |

## Abstract

A growing body of academic writing literature has been devoted to studying the rhetorical patterns and language use in diverse academic texts. One of the central goals of these studies is to demystify these texts to acquaint writers, particularly less experienced ones, with the genre conventions. However, Teaching Philosophy Statements (TPS) as a critical academic genre have received insubstantial attention in the literature. TPSs are major gatekeeping practices in academia that play a significant role in controlling access to academic positions and opportunities, where an insufficient grasp of their conventions might affect an individual's academic future.

This study is pedagogically motivated, aiming to provide a rich description of the rhetoric of the TPS genre. The investigation was conducted using a self-compiled corpus of TPSs containing 55 samples of naturally occurring TPSs written by academics affiliated with linguistics departments in 30 different US-based academic institutions (totaling 46,543 words). The investigation began with textual analysis aimed at understanding the typical rhetorical components of the genre. This was followed by exploring the metadiscursive features utilized to interact and engage with the audience and how these features were distributed across the different rhetorical components of the genre. The textual analysis was enriched by incorporating insights from gatekeepers, obtained through interviews with four experienced TPS readers to draw out their views on the genre's rhetorical patterns.

The study utilized Swales's (1990) notion of moves and steps along with Hyland and Tse's (2004) model of metadiscourse. The findings revealed that writers of the TPSs tended to

use a combination of three moves to rhetorically construct and present their teaching philosophies, namely: 1) beliefs stating, 2) teaching practices description, and 3) competence claim. The metadiscourse analysis revealed features such as self-mention, boosters, attitude markers, and transitions were found to be standard features of the genre as they appear in all of the texts analyzed. The findings also showed that the metadiscourse features' usage in each move reflects the varying rhetorical purposes for each move, such as the shared views of teaching and learning in Move 1, the need to present a narrative that is both adaptable and personally resonant in Move 2, and the self-assured competence in Move 3. The interviews with the experienced TPS readers revealed a great preference for concrete examples in the TPSs rather than abstract ideas about educational beliefs and goals. They also show that views of the genre range from being a relatively useless document, a supplementary document, or a pitfall indicator. This study aims to provide valuable insights for practitioners of English for Academic Purposes, as well as academics involved in writing, teaching, or reviewing teaching philosophy statements, in the hope that its findings will significantly enhance their professional practices.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation explores the rhetorical structure and metadiscoursal features of the genre of teaching philosophy statements. In this first chapter, I introduce the study by briefly describing teaching philosophy statements, followed by the research problem, purpose of the study, significance of the research, rationale for the discipline choice, and finally, the dissertation organization.

## 1.1 Teaching Philosophy Statements

Among the various gatekeeping practices in academia, the Teaching Philosophy Statement (hereafter referred to as TPS) plays a significant role in controlling access to academic positions and opportunities. It is an assessment tool that serves several critical functions in evaluating and improving educators' teaching practices and philosophies (Kaplan et al., 2008). In the higher education context, mainly in North America, TPS is usually part of a teaching portfolio or dossier alongside a curriculum vitae, research statement, and a cover letter that represents faculty or future faculty members (Coppola, 2002, Kearns & Sullivan, 2011). When individuals in academia seek teaching positions, apply for promotions or tenure, or compete for teaching awards, they are typically required to include a TPS in their application materials. Thus, TPSs are prevalent across universities and academic institutions as a central part of routine academic activities. Therefore, most university faculty members have had experience with TPSs either through writing, teaching, or evaluating these statements.

A TPS (also called teaching statement or statement of teaching philosophy), put simply, is a document that includes a narrative of the author's perception of teaching and learning as well as an articulation of their teaching approaches (Alexander et al., 2012; Goodyear & Allchin, 1998). A TPS is a space for educators to present their educational views on teaching and learning within the broader educational theories and practices—also an opportunity to demonstrate an alignment between their beliefs and instructional methods. Therefore, besides the role a TPS plays in the hiring process, it serves as a tool for self-reflection that "[functions] both personally and publicly" (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998, p. 103). In addition to writing a TPS as part of application materials, faculty also write it voluntarily either to document their own teaching beliefs and values that guide their teaching practices or to reflect on their teaching practice through seeking feedback from mentors or colleagues (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998, p. 104). This dual purpose of a TPS makes it a "living document" (Hall, 2021, p. 4) that requires constant updates throughout the educator's career in order to facilitate reflection and promote professional growth (Medina & Draugalis, 2013).

While TPS is well-known in academia, it does not seem well-defined in the academic literature. Schönwetter et al. (2002) argue that the concept of a TPS is underdefined in the literature where existing definitions are either not operational enough or lack a clear explanation of the different elements of the definitions. Therefore, after a comprehensive literature review, they provided a holistic and operational definition of the TPS, characterizing it as "a systematic and critical rationale that focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and learning in a particular discipline and/or institutional context" (p. 84). According to their elaboration of the different components of the definition, "systematic" indicates that it connects the author's ideas about teaching and learning in a coherent and logical manner. "Critical" refers

to the fact that it encapsulates a unique set of values and convictions that provide the teacher with the path and rationale for their teaching. The TPS also focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and learning, which means it pinpoints what the author identifies as critically related to the teaching and learning process. Finally, a TPS not only reflects personal values and beliefs but also the disciplinary norms and cultures, the institution's requirements, and the surrounding political climate. After providing this brief description of a TPS and its role in academia, Section 1.2 delves into the specific concerns that prompted this investigation.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

As writing is the primary job for academics (Hyland, 2014), being acquainted with diverse academic genres is essential for a successful academic life. Academic genres fall into two networks: open genres (e.g., research articles, dissertations, book reviews) and supporting genres (e.g., TPSs, letters of recommendation, submission letters) (Swales & Feak, 2000). Though the first set of these genres is essential for knowledge dissemination, the second is also necessary, as they "operate to support or assist an academic or research career" (p. 8).

Supporting genres receive far less attention in the literature, where research and teaching focus primarily on constructing open genres (e.g., Cotos, 2019; Parkinson, 2017). Most of these supporting genres are occluded, making it hard for writers to obtain authentic examples to follow. Writers usually find themselves "composing in a rhetorical void in which they must write in an unfamiliar genre for an audience that they do not know nor will likely ever meet" (Brown, 2004, p. 243). These genres are not usually part of graduate students' writing instruction courses. Even when they are included, their teaching often lacks empirical research as a foundation due to the scarcity of such research on the genre (Chang, 2013). This makes these genres problematic for novice or less experienced writers (Swales & Feak, 2000). Of these supporting genres, TPS

has received insubstantial attention in the literature, even though it is a high-stakes genre in which poor writing might affect an individual academic future.

Writing a TPS is a daunting task, even for experienced writers (Grundman, 2006; Montell, 2003). It is problematic because it rarely contains prompts or guidelines to help writers meet audience expectations. The importance of guiding writers in crafting their TPSs is well recognized. A basic Google search revealed many 'how-to' articles[1], mostly on university websites, providing advice on how to write a TPS. These sources usually include articles on constructing a TPS supported by TPS samples. According to Pratt (2005), the information provided in these sources is usually similar, as most universities tend to borrow guidelines from each other's websites. However, despite this similarity, these sources also present various limitations: (1) it is usually built on a subjective basis, drawn from the author's view of what makes a good TPS rather than evidence-based findings; (2) it lacks the detailed textual description; and (3) it is one-size-fits-all, neglecting potential variations that may be involved in writing TPSs across disciplines.

While we know that these non-research-based sources exist, scholars have turned their attention to this gap and provided a spectrum of approaches that could help TPS writers. Some have provided rubrics that could facilitate the process of writing or evaluating TPSs (e.g., Kaplan et al., 2008; Schönwetter et al., 2002). Other proposed new approaches that teachers of the TPS genre may apply to help novice writers craft their statements (e.g., Beatty et al., 2009; Merkel,

[1] Here are some examples of these articles (university of Texas https://teaching.utsa.edu/build-your-teaching-portfolio/create-your-teaching-philosophy/#:~:text=A%20teaching%20philosophy%20is%20a,%E2%80%9D%20how%20do%20you%20know%E2%80%9D) and (Cornell University https://gradschool.cornell.edu/career-and-professional-development/pathways-to-success/prepare-for-your-career/take-action/teaching-philosophy-statement/)

2020). More recently, researchers have incorporated a corpus-based approach to examine the different components or topics that comprise the TPSs in their corpora.

Despite the insights gleaned into constructing a TPS from these studies, there remains a noticeable gap in empirical studies that allow us to get a deeper understanding of the rhetoric of the TPS genre. This leaves academics in a quandary, without a clear framework of the genre or an empirical benchmark that guides their writing. Therefore, this scarcity of research on TPS underscores the pressing need for further in-depth investigation of the discursive practices of this genre to establish an evidence-based description of its rhetoric.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

Academic genres serve a gate-keeping function to positions and opportunities in higher education contexts (Loudermilk, 2007). Therefore, in academic writing, writers need to be aware of the rhetorical patterns in the text and the linguistic features associated with it that meet the reader's expectations. In recent years, a growing body of academic writing literature has been devoted to studying the rhetorical patterns and language use in diverse academic texts. One of the central goals of these studies is to demystify these texts to acquaint writers, particularly less experienced ones, with the genre conventions. Therefore, researchers have explored the rhetorical structure for various academic texts (e.g., Cortes, 2013; Hyon, 2008). These studies have enhanced our understanding of the distinct structure inherent to different academic genres.

Beyond the rhetorical structure, genre-based studies also have explored the interpersonal aspects of academic writing. These studies are motivated by the idea that academic written texts "not only concern people, places and activities in the world, but also acknowledge, construct and negotiate social relations" (Hyland, 2005b, p. ix). Therefore, considerable effort has been paid to examine how writers of these different texts make their writings interactive, engaging, and

persuasive through their use of the language (Hyland & Zou, 2021). The review of the literature reveals that there have been numerous studies and edited volumes devoted to examining the interactional aspects of the different academic texts (e.g., Ädel & Mauranen, 2010). A TPS is one type of promotional genres (Wang, 2023) – a parent genre in which individuals attempt to sell or advertise aspects of themselves to readers in exchange for future benefits – with the TPS aimed at showcasing writers' competencies, beliefs, and practices. Given the TPS promotional nature, writers not only present their beliefs and practices but also connect with the readers to build credibility in order to persuade their audience.

This study is pedagogically motivated, aiming to provide a rich description of the rhetoric of the TPS genre. The purpose of this study is threefold. First, define the rhetorical moves structuring TPSs. Second, exploring the metadiscoursal features utilized to interact and engage with the audience and how these metadiscoursal devices are distributed across the different moves that constitute the TPS genre. Third, exploring the gatekeepers' perspectives on the rhetoric of the genre. (See detailed description of the moves and metadiscourse definitions in Chapter 2).

### 1.4 Rationale for the Discipline Choice

Academic communities can be loosely defined as people whose members share the same goals and values. Bruce (2016) has identified three approaches through which scholars have looked at the academic community in order to serve different research purposes. These approaches include *speech community*, which usually aims to examine the linguistic features of face-to-face interaction among certain academic communities; *community of practice* is adopted to examine situated learning with a focus on community engagement and participation; and

finally, *discourse community* which is usually adopted in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) research to explore academic communities writing and linguistics practices.

In relation to these concepts, however, there are more confined and closely knitted disciplinary communities (Li & Deng, 2021). Disciplines are also viewed as "institutionalized, and legitimized entities of knowledge," which is evidenced by "physical presence" such as a department or program of study (Chandrasoma, 2010, p. 4). Among the various academic disciplines, the discipline of linguistics possesses a unique status due to its dual dimensions: pedagogical, represented in language teaching, and theoretical, manifested in language theories and application. The pedagogical aspect of the discipline makes it heavily teaching and practice-oriented. In such a pedagogically rooted discipline, a document such as TPS in which writers are reflecting on their own teaching would hold significant importance.

Therefore, for the present study, it was thought that it would be more intriguing to investigate the TPS within one single discipline to ensure in-depth and consistent analysis. The decision was made to focus only on TPSs written by academics within the linguistics domain. This includes all other sub-disciplines that usually fall under the linguistics umbrella, such as applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and language teaching.

The decision to focus on this discipline specifically was due to two factors. First, the study appears to complement the existing genre-based literature on discursive practices in linguistics. Previous genre-based studies have addressed almost all parts of academic supporting genre sets within the linguistic field, including review reports (e.g., Samraj, 2016), retention-promotion-tenure reports (e.g., Hyon, 2008), and editorial letters (e.g., Flowerdew & Dudley-Evans, 2002). The TPS genre is the missing part in this genre set. By investigating it, researchers and practitioners interested in (applied) linguistics texts will clearly understand the rhetorical

disciplinary practices across this genre constellation. Second, my strong familiarity with the disciplines played a role in selecting this discipline in particular. My background in linguistics provided me with an emic perspective that aided me in better analyzing and interpreting the findings. Also, as TPS is challenging to obtain due to its occluded nature, my preexisting social network within the discipline made data collection more feasible than collecting data from any other discipline.

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

Beyond the contribution this study will make to the growing literature on the academic promotional genre, this study is significant in the two following aspects: First, theoretically, the study adopts both Swales's (1990) notion of moves and steps and Hyland and Tse's(2004) model of metadiscourse. These two frameworks are widely accepted in the genre-based literature, and by combining them, this study expands the use of these frameworks and their applicability in the ongoing literature. Second, pedagogically, English for Specific Purposes practitioners usually rely on their intuition or unauthentic resources in the absence of research-informed resources (Chan, 2009; Leopold, 2023). Genre-based studies have aided those practitioners in changing their modus operandi from relying on their intuition or experience when teaching academic texts to adopt a more evidence-based framework. Thus, English for Academic/Specific Purposes teaching materials can benefit from the study's findings.

## 1.6 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters. The first chapter introduces the study. Chapter 2 includes a review of the related literature concerning the notion of genre, metadiscourse, promotional genre, and teaching philosophy statements. Chapter 3 presents the method followed when conducting the study, detailing the process of corpus compilation, participant recruitment,

and the approach to data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the study findings. Finally, Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the study's findings, and Chapter 6 addresses the implications, limitation and future research directions.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter contextualizes my study by presenting a review of the literature related to this study. It starts by introducing the theoretical approaches to genre theory and a brief overview of the existing literature on promotional genres. It is then followed by a section introducing the notion of metadiscourse and the fuzzy aspects surrounding the concept. The chapter ends with situating the present study within the broader line of research on teaching philosophy statements.

## 2.1 The Concept of Genre

To properly anchor and align the current study within the genre theory and the established literature, it is essential to commence with the broader theoretical foundations of the genre theory moving then to the theory's empirical investigation. Therefore, in Section 2.1, I introduce the three different traditions of genre analysis: New Rhetoric/Rhetorical Genre Studies, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and English for Specific Purposes. From these abstract principles, I transitioned to Section 2.2 to discuss the major themes in genre-based studies that fall under the English for Specific Purposes tradition, as it is the major approach used in the present study. Afterward, Section 2.3 delves more deeply into the tangible empirical investigation approaches, particularly those concerned with promotional genres.

### *2.1.1 Approaches to Genre Analysis*

*Genre*, a major construct in rhetoric and linguistics studies, has been theoretically and pedagogically insightful. Despite its wide use in disciplinary writing research, no consensus exists on the concept of genre or its public perception. Tardy (2005) noted, "If genre scholars

across disciplines share one point of agreement it is the complexity of genres"[2]. Different views on genre yielded other methods of analyzing and teaching it.

In the literature, genre-based research and teaching approaches customarily fall under one of three main categories: New Rhetoric (NR), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), or English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Hyon, 1996). These approaches, which the literature also calls traditions (Hyon, 1996), camps (John et al., 2006), or schools (Tardy & Swales, 2014), were developed in three different geographical locations: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Each approach focuses on other aspects of genre for various pedagogical purposes.

Based on their focus of analysis, Flowerdew (2002) has dichotomized these approaches into two broad categories: linguistic, which includes SFL and ESP, and non-linguistic, which includes NR. The linguistics-oriented approaches are more concerned with the linguistic realization of the genre, including the communicative purposes and the rhetorical structures. In contrast, the non-linguistic approach pays less attention to the text and focuses more on the situational context of the genre and its relation to textual regularity. Despite the differences between these genre analysis orientations, these approaches are in accord with the genre theory grounded assumptions.

Tardy (2011) summarized these grounded assumptions as follows: "Genres are primarily a rhetorical category; genres are socially situated; genres are intertextual, not isolated; genres are carried out in multiple – and often mixed – modes of communication; genres reflect and enforce existing structures of power" (p. 55). The genre is a rhetorical category: what constitutes a genre is not the linguistic forms but the rhetorical actions (or moves in Swalesian taxonomy, as

[2] In a symposium at the 2005 International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA) Conference in Madison, Wisconsin, different genre experts presented, including Christine Tardy, and their comments were published later by John et al. (2006) in the *Journal of Second Language Writing.*

explained later) performed to accomplish a communicative purpose. “Socially situated” refers to a genre belonging to a particular discourse community whose established members can readily recognize, produce, or interpret the genre. Genre is intertextual; genres situated within “genre sets” (Devitt, 1993), “genre colonies” (Bhatia, 2004a), “genre chains” (Swales, 2004), or “genre systems” (Bazerman, 1994) overlap and intersect with each other. Though genre in applied linguistics studies is typically tied with written discourse, it is also deliverable in one or more modes of communication (e.g., spoken or visual). Finally, genre reflects its users’ values, practices, and ideologies. To know more about these approaches and how they are similar or different, I briefly describe them below.

The first approach is called New Rhetoric Approach (NR). Miller (1984) initiated the NR genre studies, or what the literature calls North American genre theory. Her seminal article, *Genre as a social action*, has shaped the founding principles for the NR theory. In this approach, most of the work has been done in rhetoric, composition, and professional writing (Hyon, 2017), and genre is viewed “not on the substance or form of discourse but the action it is used to accomplish” (Miller, 1984, p. 151). This contextual approach focuses more on the genre’s situational context than its organizational structure or textual regularity. The main goal of this approach is to connect the text and the broader “social and cultural understanding of language in use” (Freedman & Medway, 1994, p. 1).

In NR genre analysis, researchers are interested in examining ways genre expert users develop and exploit genres for social purposes (Hyland, 2006a). Focusing on contextual factors such as genre users’ values, beliefs, or attitudes, NR genre-based studies often employ ethnographic rather than linguistic approaches, such as interviewing, observation, and document

collection from the discourse community. Therefore, studies following this approach are usually longitudinal, e.g., six years (Artemeva, 2005) or six months (Schryer, 1993).

The NR approach is less concerned with teaching implications than the others, even though it can introduce novice writers and university students to necessary knowledge of the social function of the genre and its context (Hyon, 1996). Scholars of the NR approach argue that writing is "part of the goals and occasions that bring it about" (Hyland, 2007a, p. 151), and the genre's social nature makes it fluid and subject to change. Therefore, proponents of this tradition are skeptical of the role of genre-based teaching and its ability to help students acquire a certain genre (Johns, 2002, p. 10).

The second approach is the Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach (SFL). SFL is also called the Australian Framework or the Sydney School (Hyon, 1996), as this approach was first developed at the University of Sydney. This approach is grounded in the SFL theory proposed by Halliday (1978), primarily based on the premise that language is a resource of meaning-making. Although Halliday's (1978) theory aimed not to analyze genre specifically, diverse scholars later used this theory to study genre's language patterns across various contexts and languages (e.g., Cope & Kalantzis, 2011)

This approach views genre as a "staged goal-oriented social process." (Martin, 2009, p. 13). In this definition, *staged* means that the meaning may be discerned in multiple stages that work together to construct the meaning*; goal-oriented* means this approach serves a specific purpose. *Social process* means that we engage in genre in collaboration with others. In this approach, genre is located at a higher level than *register*, a major construct in SFL theory. *Register* functions at the level of "context of situation," whereas genre is at the level of "context of culture." Therefore, genre analysts who follow this approach mainly seek to understand the

structural patterns of the text in relation to the social purposes in a particular context of culture (Fakhruddin & Hassan, 2015, p. 62).

SFL genre analysts focus on elemental genres (also called micro-genres), including *recount, procedure, narrative, description,* and *report*. These combine to make up macro-genres such as *research, essays*, or *lab reports*. Each of these macro-genres has a social function made through multiple stages. For instance, the function of *recount* is "to retell events for the purpose of informing or entertaining" (Gerot & Wignell, 1994, p. 194). Recount can also be established through different obligatory and optional stages (akin to the notion of *moves* in ESP, discussed later). For instance, the recount structure comprises obligatory orientation, record of events, and an optional stage of reorientation (Macken-Horarik, 2002, p. 20). Genre analysts following this approach wish to describe elemental genres in terms of their social function, generic structures, and lexicogrammatical features. This linguistically oriented approach has provided a rich description of academic discourse and disciplinary variation and has contributed to genre-based pedagogy, particularly primary and secondary school writing programs.

The third approach is the English for Specific Purposes Approach (ESP). Tarone et al. (1981) were the first to use the word genre in ESP context in their article on the passive voice in astrophysical research articles (RA) published in Vol. 1 of the *Journal of English for Specific Purposes*, which published the most publications on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in the last forty years (Hyland & Jiang, 2021). In 1981, John Swales also used the term in his seminal study of the structure of research in various disciplines. He developed it further in 1990 in his book *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings,* which established the direction, framework, and application for genre studies in ESP. Since then, the term genre has become, and remains, an essential construct in ESP and applied linguistics literature.

Genre is viewed in ESP as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre" (Swales, 1990, p. 58). In this definition, Swales refers to genre as an overarching abstract concept incorporating different communicative events, including *presentations, academic lectures,* or *professional reports.* Members of the discourse community use these events to achieve a shared communicative purpose. Therefore, two main concepts characterize this approach to genre studies: communicative purpose and discourse community.

The communicative purpose of the genre provides it with its conventional structure (Swales, 1990). Furthermore, communicative purposes are "recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and therefore constitute the rationale for the genre" (Swales, 1990, p. 58). In his early genre studies, Swales (1990) argued that the communicative purpose is the criterion to determine whether a specific text would belong to a particular genre. He later revised that concept, asserting that, despite the vitality of communicative purpose in genre studies, it must not be the only reason to assign genre membership (Askehave & Swales, 2001).

Swales (1990) defined *discourse community* as "sociohistorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals" (p. 9). These networks include established members of the discourse community who are familiar with the genre used within it and novice members who may not be fully familiar with the genre conventions and constraints embedded in that discourse community.

ESP genre analysis aims to describe the salient rhetorical and linguistic features of prototypical academic texts, primarily for pedagogical purposes. ESP genre-based studies are usually associated with the move-step analytical framework, in which text systematically

consists of smaller rhetorical units called moves; each move holds a function that contributes to the genre's overall communicative purposes. Moves may comprise sub-units called steps or strategies designed to achieve the purpose of the move. The communicative functions of the moves and steps that constitute the genre define its overall communicative goals. For instance, Swales (1990) found that a typical research article introduction comprises three moves—establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying that niche—that collectively fulfill the larger purposes of the genre in a Swalesian Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) framework. Each of these moves is realized by a set of lexicogrammatical features that could be distinguished from the other moves.

The ESP genre analysis approach shares some similarities and differences with the other two approaches to genre. As mentioned, both ESP and SFL are linguistically oriented approaches interested in describing the genre's structure and the lexicogrammatical feature. Both are mainly pedagogically driven but differ in their target audiences: ESP tended to focus mainly on higher education, and SFL on K-12 school-based application. The two approaches also differ in the type of genres that concern each and their view of context (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). SFL scholars focus on the elemental genre described earlier (e.g., recount or narrative), which is appropriate for their target audience, school students. In the ESP approach, however, these genres are "pre-genre," emphasizing disciplinary and professional genres targeting advanced ESP students. SFL has a broader view of the context, where genre is seen at the level of culture, while the context of genre in ESP is more defined at the level of the discourse community in which the genre is embedded.

As ESP shares a linguistic orientation with SFL, it also shares the contextual approach with NR. As John (2003) noted, ESP genre analysis "is becoming increasingly context-driven,

and the overlap between the New Rhetoric … and the ESP research and theory, becomes greater every year" (p. 206). This is evident in the frequent use of ethnographic approaches in recent ESP genre-based studies (e.g., Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). However, ESP and NR differ significantly in their pedagogical concerns. While ESP primarily aims to teach students about genres, the NR often de-emphasizes teaching genres. The current study used the ESP approach to genre, so in the following sections I provide a summary of the various themes in ESP gerne-based literature before focusing on the empirical investigation approaches to promotional gernes, as TPS is a part of it.

### *2.1.2 Major Themes in ESP Genre-Based Studies*

Swales' (1990) groundbreaking examination of the genre of RA introductions has stimulated a large number of genre-based studies examining various types of texts. Though he intended to provide a detailed description of academic texts' rhetorical and linguistic features mainly for pedagogical purposes, his approach has been extended to examine non-academic texts as well, which can be significantly attributed to Bhatia's (1993) work on professional texts. Such description of academic and professional genres has greatly enriched our understanding of the different discursive practices that may index the professional or disciplinary community's values, norms, and traditions. Thus, the contribution of ESP studies within the last thirty years can be grouped into three main categories: academic, professional, and personal/informal genre studies. Relevant studies and main observations of each category are presented below.

**2.1.2.1 Academic Genre Studies.** This category is mainly concerned with texts written in academic settings. It encompasses a larger number of studies than the other two categories. ESP genre studies have addressed various types of academic texts, including what Swales and Feak (2000) have described as "open" and "supporting academic" texts (p. 8). *Open genres* refer

to types of published texts usually used for knowledge dissemination, such as RAs or dissertations; *supporting genres* are texts that "operate to support or assist an academic or research career" which generally "remained 'hidden' or 'closed' … [and are] not in the public domain," such as submission letters or job applications (Swales & Feak, 2000, p. 8).

A significant proportion of studies in the first strand (i.e., open genre) has been devoted to studying the RA genre. RAs "are already valorized and ratified by the very fact of being published; they have typically undergone an arduous and laborious review process; and they are easily available, indeed increasingly available for corpus-and-concordance analysis" (Johns & Swales, 2002, p. 13). This justifies their continued presence as objects of inquiry in genre-based studies. Scholarship is therefore interested in different RA part genres, including *introduction* (e.g., Cortes, 2013; Hirano, 2009; Ozturk, 2007), *abstract* (e.g., Lorés, 2004; Martin, 2003), and *results and discussion* (e.g., Brett, 1994; Bruce, 2009; Peacock, 2002).

The Swalesian's Create-A-Research-Space framework (CARS), in which Swales (1990) proposed that RA introduction prototypical structure consists of three moves (establishing the research territory, establishing a niche, occupying the niche) (p. 331) has greatly influenced the literature. Numerous studies have examined RA introduction in a single discipline (e.g., Anthony, 1999; del Saz Rubio, 2011; Khamkhien, 2015; Ozturk, 2007), across disciplines (e.g., Cortes, 2013, Khany & Tazik, 2010; Lu et al., 2020; Samraj, 2002), and cultures (e.g., Ahmed, 2004; Árvay & Tankó, 2004; Hirano, 2009).

The other strand of ESP research within this category was mainly concerned with occluded supporting genres in academia. Swales' (1996) work has turned the literature's attention to these genres. Listing nine occluded academic genres (e.g., submission letters, research proposals, letters of recommendation), he stated that these texts are worth considering in

genre based-studies because writing them would "produce extra hazard for writers when their writings have to cross cultural and linguistic boundaries" (p. 47) and because they are more likely to be "influenced by local cultural traditions and conventions" (Swales, 2009, p. 9). Since then, substantial interest has been in uncovering occluded genres in academia, significantly increasing our understanding of academic writing (Samraj, 2016).

Two notable remarks characterize studies in this line of research. First, as occluded genres are usually hidden, studies on them were typically built on limited data. So, researchers mainly relied on data they could access, indicating this as a study limitation. For instance, in their analysis of editorial letters, Flowerdew and Dudley-Evan (2002) examined only the letters Dudley-Evan wrote as a co-editor of the *English for Specific Purposes* journal. Similarly, in her study of retention-promotion-tenure (RPT) reports, Hyon (2008) could collect only RPT reports written by her and another colleague in a seven-year period. She indicated that her data did not represent the RPT report genre across institutions and that RPT may also look discoursally different based on a faculty member's negative or positive evaluation. The occluded nature of supporting genres has thus been a significant limitation in previous genre-based studies on such texts.

The second remark is that, though supporting genres include texts written by both professors who are established members of the academic discourse community (e.g., submission letters) and students who are beginners in their academic lives (e.g., personal statements), most of the studies on supporting genres were conducted on student-produced genres (Chiu, 2015; Ding, 2007; Loudermilk, 2007; Samraj & Monk, 2008; Yin, 2016). These texts usually "serve gate-keeping functions to institutions of higher learning" (Loudermilk, 2007, p. 191), in which students must master the genre to gain membership in the academic community. Thus,

researchers wanted to demystify these texts through the lens of ESP, and they usually support their analyses with insiders' perspectives to give those students explanatory exemplar models that could support their academic endeavors.

For instance, Yin (2016) examined the genre of graduate degree research proposals for three students applying to an applied linguistics graduate program in one of Singapore's leading universities. Aiming to describe the rhetorical structure of the genre in relation to its communicative purpose, she employed the ESP genre analysis framework augmented by interviews with both writers and expert informants. The textual analysis revealed differences among subfields of applied linguistics. The textual and contextual analysis combined revealed that disciplinary expectations shape the realization of moves in this genre.

**2.1.2.2 Professional Genre Studies.** The line of research mentioned above has contributed to our understanding of the rhetorical choices disciplinary writers make when constructing academic texts and the rhetorical expectations in these open and occluded academic genres. Scholars have then shifted their attention to another critical genre network to which ESP genre theory can be applied and be theoretically and pedagogically informative: professional genres.

This strand of research is attributed mainly to Bhatia (1993), who applied the Swalesian framework to professional genres, mainly in business and legal domains. Thus, there is a growing interest in applying ESP genre analysis to professional texts, and genre-based research is increasingly being published in non-linguistic journals like The *Journal of Business Communication*, *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, J*ournal of Business and Technical Communication*, and *International Journal of Business Communication*. One observation of the studies in these categories reveals a tendency to focus on cross-cultural

aspects of professional genres such as corporate annual reports, sales promotion letters, and letters of inquiry. In these studies, researchers employed the ESP approach to compare professional genres written in English-speaking contexts with comparable texts from other cultures (e.g., Cho & Yoon, 2013; Dos Santos, 2002; Jalilifar & Beitsayyah, 2011; Ren & Lu, 2021; Van Mulken & van der Meer, 2005; Vergaro, 2004). For instance, from a pragmatic lens, Vergaro (2004) compared sales promotion letters written in English and Italian at both the macro (rhetorical moves) and micro (modalities, reference systems) levels to investigate pragmatic aspects of the genre, e.g., politeness, stance, and use of personal pronouns. The study reveals differences between those levels in the two cultures. For example, the mode and modality lexis are used in Italian to express negative politeness but in English to express positive politeness.

Apart from focusing mainly on cross-cultural aspects of professional genres, another observation in studies in this category is the use of investigation approaches that are uncommon in genre-based studies in the other two categories. First, some studies have adopted a multi-perspective approach to genre analysis (e.g., Deng et al., 2021; Hafner, 2013; Qian, 2020; Yeung, 2013; Zhou, 2012). These studies were inspired by Bhatia's (2008) Critical Genre Analysis Framework, in which he extended the ESP approach to genre analysis to account for multiple perspectives and dimensions, such as the genre's interdiscursive and intertextual aspects.

Second, some studies on professional texts have integrated both the linguistic and the context dimension in their genre analysis to better understand how and why people in specific professional communities write the way they do. Lillis (2008) calls such an approach "ethnography as a methodology" that "[involves] multiple data sources and sustained involvement in contexts of production," while in most genre-based studies, researchers employ

the minimal level of ethnography, "ethnography as a method," in which researchers interview genre users for their perspectives (p. 335). Examples include Flowerdew and Wan's studies on the genre of tax computational letters (2006) and company audit reports (2010), in which they collected texts from the target context, observed the genre users for a period of time to understand the genre production practices and interviewed the writers of the letters and reports.

**2.1.2.3 Personal or Informal Genre Studies.** ESP's genre-based studies have also focused on non-academic and non-professional genres. These genres may not belong to specific discourse communities (Samraj & Gawron, 2015). Studies in this category are limited compared to academic or professional genres. Examples of personal or informal genres examined from an ESP genre analysis lens include birthmother letters (Upton & Cohen, 2009), suicide notes (Abaalkhail, 2020; Samraj & Gawron, 2015), child sexual offender online interactions (Chiang et al., 2020), school shooter notes (e.g., Carreau, 2019), wine-tasting notes (e.g., López-Arroyo & Roberts, 2014), and online reviews (e.g., Chik & Taboada, 2020; Morrow & Yamanouchi, 2020; Panseeta & Todd, 2014; Skalicky, 2013).

These genres are not examined for pedagogical purposes; researchers scrutinize their rhetorical patterns for diverse objectives. For instance, they can be forensically motivated, such as Chiang et al. (2020). Their study on the child sexual offender interaction genre in online chatrooms aimed to provide a rhetorical structure description of the genre to allow undercover officers to authentically portray personas of child sexual offenders when participating in these chatrooms to gather intelligence. Also, Upton and Cohen (2009) analyzed successful and unsuccessful birthmother letters to show the applicability of their corpus-based approach to genre analysis.

## 2.2 Promotional Genre

In the previous section, we saw how genres could be identified within their domain (e.g., academic or professional), which provided us with various intriguing notions for studying genres, such as contexts or disciplines. Instances of a genre, however, can also be identified at a higher level and assigned to parent genre status. This parent genre, or what Bhatia (2004a) called "colony," incorporates "a constellation of individually recognized genres that display strong similarities across disciplinary and professional boundaries" (p. 65). Parent genres can include *introductory, reporting,* or *promotional* genres, in which their members share the same broad communicative purpose but could be different in other aspects, such as their "disciplinary and professional affiliations, contexts of use and exploitations, participant relationships, audience constraints and so on" (p. 66).

Among these parent genres, researchers have shown an increased interest in promotional genres. The promotional genre includes a wide range of texts. For Bhatia (2004b), publicity documents such as advertisements, promotional letters, and book blurbs were central members of the parent genre; travel brochures, grant proposals, and reference letters were secondary members. In these genres, writers use a variety of rhetorical resources and lexicogrammatical devices to describe and evaluate self, services, or products (Bhatia, 1997, p. 637). Promotional genres are usually persuasive in nature, in which writers attempt to sell themselves or their product to readers in exchange for future benefits.

Following Bhatia (1993, 2004), the rhetoric of promotional genres has attracted the attention of different scholars. Most have used the ESP approach to genre analysis and focused on promotional discourse as genres to examine the overall structural and lexicogrammatical features of various instances of promotional genre within specific institutional and disciplinary

practices. Below is a brief overview of some promotional genres explored in the literature and the motivation behind these studies, followed by a detailed view of how these texts were analyzed within the ESP approach to genre analysis.

### *2.2.1 Applications of the Move-and-Step Framework on Promotional Genres*

One of the prominent frameworks applied to demystify and understand promotional genres is the move-and-step framework. Within the academic context, researchers have applied the framework on promotional texts in different areas. For instance, grant-related texts such as *grant proposals* (e.g., Connor & Mauranen, 1999; Connor, 2000; Cotos, 2019; Feng, 2002), *grant proposal abstracts* (Matzler, 2021), and *statements of grant purpose* (e.g., Casal & Kessler, 2021; Kessler, 2020); conference-related genres such as *conference abstracts* (e.g., Samar et al., 2014; Yoon & Casal, 2020) and *conference proposals* (e.g., Halleck & Connor, 2006); graduate admission texts such as *personal statements* (e.g., Samraj & Monk, 2008; Ding, 2007) and *research proposals for graduate admission* (e.g., Yin, 2016); and interrelated academic genres such as *calls for papers* (Yang, 2015), *university websites* (Zhang, 2017) and *university brochures* (Osman, 2006). Others have focused on central promotional genres within the professional domain and examined genres such as *sales letters* (e.g., Bhatia, 1993; Vergaro, 2004; Yunxia, 2000) and *advertorials* (e.g., Deng et al., 2021; Zhou, 2012), while others emphasized promotional genres for fundraising such as *commercial crowdfunding discourses* (e.g., Liu et al., 2016) and *philanthropic fundraising letters* (Bhatia, 1998). Other descriptive genres within the promotional parent genre have also been examined, including self-promotional texts such as *job application letters* (e.g., Al-Ali, 2006; Henry & Roseberry, 2001), *product public descriptions* (e.g., Izquierdo & Blanco, 2020; Labrador & Ramón, 2020;) and *marketing white papers* (e.g., Campbell & Naidoo, 2017).

As these studies were conducted within the realm of the ESP approach to genre analysis, most were pedagogically motivated. Promotional genres are usually high stakes in nature, whereas bad writing of these texts may have undesirable consequences for individuals or institutions. For instance, a genre such as *conference abstracts* can be the "sole determiner of acceptance or rejection of a paper" (Samar et al., 2014, p. 760). Similarly, poor personal statements, for instance, would adversely affect students' admission opportunities (Samraj & Monk, 2008). Thus, many researchers now want to pinpoint rhetorical and lexicogrammatical features contributing to successful examples of diverse promotional genres. In deconstructing these features, researchers aim to make them evident to inexperienced writers, which can be useful in ESP classrooms.

Other researchers were motivated by international companies working in a highly competitive globalized world where their English-speaking counterparts are at an advantage when communicating globally because of their proficient use of English. Researchers examined the rhetoric of similar promotional texts written in both English and another language using the ESP approach to genre analysis in order to provide companies in non-English speaking countries with the prototypical rhetorical, phraseological, and lexical qualities of this specific text form produced in English for successful commercial exchange (Labrador & Ramón, 2015; Izquierdo & Blanco, 2020, Vergaro, 2004). The dynamic nature of the promotional genre prompted other scholars' interest in promotional genres. In this line of research, scholars such as Deng et al. (2021), Zhou (2012), and Osman (2006) wanted to see how promotional genres interacted with other genres or parent genres to understand why these texts were written just so.

Genre-based studies have revealed the rhetorical structure of diffenrt texts. However, researchers were not concerned only with the overall structures of these genres but also with

related aspects of different moves that could add another layer of analysis to their research. These aspects included examining the frequency of moves across the various data examples, in which researchers counted the occurrence of the moves identified in the promotional texts, either manually or through a corpus tool, mainly to see if those moves were either obligatory or optional across the data (e.g., Deng et al., 2021; Halleck & Connor, 2006). Besides frequency, some researchers have emphasized move length, which they operationalized (mainly when comparing two corpora) by counting the T-units[3] in each move to see how much proposition writers gave each move (e.g., Brown, 2004; Ding, 2007). Previous studies of promotional genres have also examined the allowable move sequence within the text to see the moves' prototypical order in the promotional genre in question (e.g., Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Vergaro, 2004). Beyond the macrostructure of these texts, researchers have focused on their linguistic features, such as stance and engagement markers (e.g., López-Ferrero & Bach, 2016; Yang, 2015), phrase frames (e.g., Casal & Kessler, 2021), and modalities (e.g., Vergaro, 2004).

Departing from focusing on the textual analysis of the genre, some previous studies of promotional genres have sought the perspectives of genre discourse community members to "reach some understanding of [the genre] broad discoursal aspirations" (Swales, 2019, p. 81). Such practice has always been recommended in genre-based studies (Bhatia, 2004a; Swales, 2019; Tardy, 2011). Some of these researchers interviewed writers of the promotional texts (e.g., Connor, 2000; Feng, 2002; Yin, 2016), while others, more interested in readers' or gatekeepers' perspectives, interviewed individuals with experience in reading or reviewing the texts in question (e.g., Ding, 2007; Kessler, 2020; Samraj & Monk, 2008).

[3] "T-units" refer to the "shortest grammatically allowable sentences into which writing can be split or minimally terminable unit" (Hunt, 1965, p. 20)

Two types of interviews were found in previous promotional genre studies: general and text-based interviews. General interviews are usually semi-structured: the researcher intends to elicit the interviewees' understanding, assumptions, or perceptions of the genre that influence how it is conventionalized (e.g., Ding, 2007; Yin, 2016). In text-based interviews, however, researchers usually conduct the interviews in two stages: (1) semi-structured interviews meant to elicit participants' general perceptions of the genre, and (2) text-based interviews aim to elicit the interviewees' comments on authentic examples of the text to gain a deeper understanding of the genre, such as writers' rationales behind textual choices or readers' most effective or ineffective rhetorical patterns (e.g., Chiu, 2016; Connor, 2000; Feng; 2002; Kessler, 2020, Kessler & Tuckley, 2023).

As most of the genre-based study on promotional genres were qualitative in scope, their findings were typically presented as either a close interpretation of textual excerpts from the data, descriptive statistics, or sometimes a combination of the two. Some researchers include only excerpts from the data and closely analyze them (e.g., Connor & Mauranen, 1999; Zhou, 2012). Others interested in the frequency of occurrence of moves/steps usually provide excerpts from the data in addition to descriptive statistics to show the frequency or ratio of occurrence of obligatory vs. optional moves or steps across the corpus (e.g., Yang, 2015). This also applies to micro-structure findings presentations. For instance, the findings of the analysis of stance and engagement markers in López-Ferrero (2016) were presented only in excerpts data with no numerical counts of markers, whereas in Yang (2015), the drawn from the stance and engagement markers were presented in both close analyses of textual excerpts and descriptive statistics of each marker's frequency. To focus the review in order to better situate the present

study, Section 2.2.2 provides a more detailed overview of studies conducted on promotional genres within the academic realm.

### *2.2.2 Previous Studies on Academic Promotional Genres*

Promotional genres have received more attention recently. Promotional texts are rhetorically complex, as they "need to capture the attention of the reader; they need to describe the idea; they need to adjust to the needs of the readers; and they need to establish the writer's competence" (Connor & Mauranen, 1999, p. 48). This makes writing a successful promotional text challenging even for experienced writers (Yoon & Casal, 2020). Therefore, a fruitful line of research has been conducted using genre analysis approaches to demystify these texts' rhetoric and linguistic features in order to provide ESP instructional materials with evidence-based genre descriptions.

These promotional genres promote products or individuals (Bhatia, 1993); both genres exist in the academic domain. In grant proposals or conference abstracts, writers promote a product by trying to "sell the research being discussed as valuable" (Yoon & Casal, 2020, p. 464), while writers of personal statements or application letters promote themselves as worthy of consideration (Ding, 2007; Henry & Roseberry, 2001). The two types of texts are instances of the "descriptions with an intent to sell" genre (Biber & Zhang, 2018, p. 102), but instances of each category share rhetorical patterns.

One line of research in ESP genre analysis of academic promotional texts that aims to promote products has been devoted to the genre of grant writing, "the most basic form of scientific writing" (Myers, 1991, p. 41). Scholarship has uncovered different genre instances of this network, including the grant proposal (e.g., Connor & Mauranen, 1999; Cotos, 2019), the grant proposal abstract (e.g., Matzler, 2021), and the grant award abstract (Tardy, 2011). Other

scholars have departed from grant genres to consider conference abstracts (e.g., Yoon & Casal, 2020), conference proposals (e.g., Halleck & Connor, 2006), and graduate-degree research proposals (e.g., Yin, 2016).

Different approaches have been taken to analyze these genres. Some focused solely on textual analysis by investigating the texts' rhetorical move structures (e.g., Connor & Mauranen, 1999; Connor & Upton, 2004); others have augmented the analysis by interviewing writers of these promotional genres to better understand their rhetorical choices (e.g., Connor, 2000; Feng, 2002; Yin, 2016). In a more multilayered analysis, Tardy (2011) employed a multidimensional critical analysis to examine the genre of grant award abstracts to see the "intertextual links, rhetorical purpose, rhetorical strategies, identity markers and sociopolitical context" (p. 168). Findings from these studies show that the rhetorical patterns are also somewhat similar due to the similarity among the communicative purposes of these texts. For instance, rhetorical moves such as *establishing a research territory* or *establishing a niche* are typical throughout these texts.

Another flourishing line of research on academic promotional genres has focused on genres that aim to promote individuals. These genres are vital for generic inquiry because they are more high-stakes than product-promotional genres in that they determine individuals' membership in academic discourse communities (Ding, 2007). That is, they directly affect one's academic fate. They are also more dynamic than the product-promotional genre (e.g., a grant proposal or a conference abstract), which usually presents a more rigid structure.

One individual-promoting academic genre that has received careful attention in the literature is the personal statements (PS) genre, a document usually submitted as part of graduate admission or grant application. ESP genre-based studies on the PS genre have approached it in one discipline per study— medical/dental (Ding, 2007), medical (Bekins et al., 2004), and

psychology (Brown, 2004), across disciplines (Samraj & Monk, 2008), or across institutional contexts (Chiu, 2015). One line of research on the PS genre focused on its textual analysis, in which only the moves and steps that constitute the genre in different disciplines were examined (Brown, 2004; Ding, 2007).

For instance, Ding (2007) examined rhetorical patterns in successful and unsuccessful PSs written by medical/dental school applicants. He found that both kinds of PS contained the same five moves: (1) *pursue the proposed study,* (2) *establish credentials related to medicine/dentistry,* (3) *discuss relevant life experiences,* (4) *state career goals, and* (5) *describe personality*. However, the move-step occurrence among successful and unsuccessful PSs varies significantly. For instance, successful applicants stressed 'intellectual interest' in medicine/dentistry, whereas unsuccessful ones emphasized personal experience as the motivation for their application. Though insightful, this study was limited in that the data examined were not fully authentic PSs but were posted on commercial websites and presented as edited and unedited PSs that Ding (2007) considered successful or unsuccessful.

Other studies went beyond textual analysis to include readers' perspectives to better understand the PS genre (e.g., Chiu, 2016; Kessler, 2020; Samraj & Monk, 2008). Including the genre specialist informants has been a "standard procedure" in genre analysis studies (Bhatia, 2014, p. 53), which is emphasized when investigating occlude genres. Except for Chiu (2015), studies on the PS genre are more concerned with the reader's or gatekeeper's perspective than the writer's. In combination with the textual analysis, text-based interviews with the gatekeepers added another layer to the analysis, giving a more in-depth perspective of the genre and its rhetoric and practices. For instance, the study by Samraj and Monk (2008) on PSs written by Ph.D. applicants and Kessler's (2020) study on PSs submitted for grant applications revealed that

those gatekeepers have their expectations and assumptions about the PS genre in general and about what they wanted applicants to highlight in their PSs.

Also, the interviews with the specialist informants revealed different expectations across disciplines. Samraj and Monk (2008) found that the electrical engineering informant reacted unfavorably when a student talked about the target program; the informant preferred to read more about the applicant's research interest and future goals, while the linguistics informant found such inclusion of more information about the applicant's target department to be valuable, as it showed that the applicant knew how their goals cohered with the department's goals. Such discipline-specific expectations are usually hidden from the applicants, which may endanger their admission opportunities if they do not meet those expectations.

## 2.3 The Concept of Metadiscourse

Academic writing has traditionally been thought of as an impersonal form of communication in which authors are expected to convey objective scientific facts. However, this is no longer accurate. Academic writing is now viewed as a persuasive and social endeavor that involves interaction between writers and readers (Hyland, 2005a). Hence, academic texts are not "author evacuated," as it has sometimes been perceived, but instead, they are spaces for evaluation and interaction (Hyland, 2010, p. 116). This interaction entails that writers and readers play a role in shaping and understanding the message. In academic writing, readers have the capacity to accept or reject the writers' claims, making them active participants in the text who not only consume but also contribute to the meaning of the text (Thompson, 2001). Thus, in order to create a persuasive text that is more likely to receive the desired response from the readers, the readers need "to be drawn in, engaged, motivated to follow along, participate, and perhaps be influenced or persuaded by a discourse" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 11). This shows that

writing is a social act in which managing the relationship between writers and readers is crucial for successful writing.

In light of this understanding of writing as an interactive nature, scholars have delved deeply into the theoretical underpinning of the phenomena and its practical applications. Various labels have been applied to this area of study, including *evaluation* (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), *appraisal* (Martin, 2000), *stance* (Biber and Finegan, 1989) and *metadiscourse* (Hyland & Tse, 2004). Among these theoretical approaches used to explore the interactional aspects of academic texts, the notion of metadiscourse stood out as the prevailing framework in genre-based studies. According to Hyland and Jiang (2022), metadiscourse provides a framework to understand communication as a social act and aids in revealing how writers acknowledge their readers in their texts.

This concept of metadiscourse has been essential in ESP and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) research and practices. It has been acknowledged that utilizing metadiscoursal features to produce successful reader-friendly texts is incredibly challenging for student writers (Hyland, 2012). This stems from the fact that writers' choices are limited by contextually approved constraints such as culture, institution, discipline, or genre. In other words, as Hyland put it, "writers' evaluative choices… are not made from all the alternatives the language makes available, but from a more restricted subset of options which reveal how they understand their communities through the assumptions these encode" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 176). Thus, when positioning themselves or acknowledging the readers, academic writers choose the rhetorical options leading to effective persuasion. These rhetorical options can be understood in accordance with genres in that they must be connected to their discipline or community values, norms, and expectations.

Metadiscourse is central to genre-based studies since the genre or the text type "informs the choices writers make and how metadiscourse items build a coherent pattern" (Hyland, 2024, p. 61). It has been a steady interest for scholars to explore the metadiscoursal practices across different academic genres. These genres include, but are not limited to, research articles (e.g., Hu & Cao, 2015; Suntara & Chokthawikit, 2018), dissertations and theses (e.g., Wu & Paltridge, 2021), academic speeches (e.g., Hyland & Zou, 2021), and submission review reports (e.g., Paltridge, 2020). These studies have revealed how writers of different academic genres intrude into the text, commit to their claims, and align themselves with their readers in various ways. In the following section, I provide the epistemic definition of the metadiscourse and briefly explore its philosophical and methodological considerations.

### *2.3.1 Issues in Metadiscourse Analysis*

The term metadiscourse, in its essence, refers to the linguistic items used to guide the readers, so the text and the writer's stance are understood. The research on metadiscourse witnessed a significant advancement in the early 2000s after the seminal work of Hyland and Tse (2004), Hyland (2005) and Ädel (2006). After these influential publications, metadiscourse became a major area of interest in EAP, discourse analysis, and second language acquisition scholarship. Its central conceptualization revolves around the fact that "language not only refers to the world, concerned with exchanging information of various kinds, but also to itself, through material which helps readers to [organize], interpret and evaluate what is being said" (Hyland & Jiang, 2018, p. 19). The concept of metadiscourse might be confused with other terms known in linguistics literature, such as metapragmatic or metalanguage; however, according to Hyland (2017), these terms are related to metadiscourse, but they refer to other phenomena. The first is

concerned with judging the appropriateness of communicative behavior, while the latter is concerned with people's knowledge of language and its representation.

Metadiscourse is a fuzzy term usually interpreted differently by different scholars (Ädel, 2006; Hyland, 2005b). These different views of the metadiscourse have created uncertainty around the concept and the categorization of metadiscourse. One of the fuzziest aspects of the notion is that its conceptualization varies among researchers. Hyland (2017) sees that the views on metadiscourse fall on a continuum ranging from a narrow text-oriented definition to a broad interpersonal one. At the one end of the continuum, some confine their definition of metadiscourse only to the textual features that help organize the text itself (Mauranen, 1993); on the other end, others have adopted a broader view and see metadiscourse as "a coherent set of interactional options" (p. 20) that project the writers into the discourse and signal their understanding of the subject matter and the intended audience.

There were also other issues discussed by eailer scholas that make the concept so fuzzy (Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2005b). One of the issues discussed concerning the separation between metadiscourse and the propositional content in the text. Earlier definitions of metadiscourse imply that the propositional content is primary to the discourse while metadiscourse plays a secondary role. For instance, Crismore et al. (1984) define metadiscourse as "directives given to readers so they will understand what is said and meant in the primary discourse" (p.280). Similarly, Vande Kopple (1985) see metadiscourse function at a different level in the discourse and does not add to the propositional materials. Thus, this view considers the text's metadiscoursal element as non-propositional, being on a different level than the propositional content.

On the other hand, Hyland (2005b) argued against this idea of separating propositional content and metadiscourse. He contended that "texts are communicative acts, not lists of propositions" (23). The meaning of the text does not depend on what the text is about but relies on the integration between the propositional and the metadiscoursal elements that comprise the text. Therefore, he believes that such rigid separation between the two puts metadiscourse as only commentary to the informational content of the text rather than an integral part of the discourse.

Another fuzzy aspect discussed in the literature within the realm of metadiscourse pertains to methodological aspects. Identifying metadiscourse within texts or corpus can prove challenging, given the diverse forms and functions it can assume. The first point is that metadiscourse can be linguistically realized in various ways, from a single word to a whole clause of a sentence. According to Ädel (2006, p. 22), "[m]etadiscourse is a functional category that can be realized in a great variety of ways; it can be represented morphosyntactically by a range of different forms and structures." This raises another issue with categorizing longer phrases that might include smaller metadiscoursal elements. For instance, a statement like *our conclusion* can be classified as a frame marker that signals the upcoming information or as two units if we consider the pronoun *our* as a self-mention marker (Hyland, 2017, p. 18). This means that relying on pre-defined lists of metadiscourse to capture the occurrence of metadiscourse markers, or what is called by Ädel and Mauranen (2010) as the *thin* approach, is insufficient to capture all metadiscoursal elements in the text.

The other point is that metadiscourse is multifunctional and context dependent. One lexical item can function as metadiscourse in certain contexts but not others. For instance, in an example provided by Walková (2020), the term *however* can act as a transition marker in this

statement *(This research area is important; however, it has been underexplored so far)* but as a modifier serving a propositional function in this statement *(This criterion, however measured, is not related to performance)* (p.2). Moreover, even if it functions as a metadiscourse, its context determines what metadiscoursal function it may serve. For instance, the term *quite* can be a hedge in *quite good* and a booster in *quite extraordinary* (Hyland, 2017, p. 18). This shows part of the methodological hurdle contributing to the concept's fuzziness.

Considering this, Hyland (2005) asserts that "no taxonomy or description will ever be able to do more than partially represent a "fuzzy reality" (p. 58). Therefore, to limit the fuzziness around metadiscourse, Hyland and Tse (2004) and Hyland (2005) contributed greatly to the metadiscourse concept by providing a holistic definition, listing its fundamental principles, and developing an analytical model. In their view of metadiscourse, metadiscourse is defined as: "the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 37). Hyland and Tse (2004) also suggested three fundamental principles that underpin the metadiscourse concept. These principles are: 1) metadiscourse is distinct from propositional aspects of discourse, 2) metadiscourse refers to aspects of the text that embody write-reader interactions, and 3) metadiscourse refers only to relations internal to the discourse. These principles are detailed in the following paragraphs.

The first principle is concerned with the distinction between propositional and non-propositional discourse. Hyland and Tse (2004) argue that the distinction between the two is necessary as a starting point to explore metadiscourse; however, they warn against pushing that distinction too far. Metadiscourse plays a critical role in the discourse that goes beyond supporting the propositional content. As Hyland (2005b) puts it "metadiscourse does not simply

support the propositional content: it is the means by which propositional content is made coherent, intelligible and persuasive to a particular audience" (p. 39). Thus, making it essential for successful communication.

The second principle is concerned with the fact that interaction is necessary for successful communication. In this, Hyland and Tse (2004) argue against the view of metadiscourse having two distinct functions, either textual or interpersonal, found in earlier studies. In their view, all metadiscourse is interpersonal. Thus, the writer's reference to the text, the audience, or the message within the discourse "indicate his or her sensitivity to the context of the discourse and make prediction about what the audience is likely to know and how they are likely to respond" (p. 164). Thus, this principle states that all metadiscourse is interpersonal in nature.

The third principle is concerned with distinguishing between external and internal references. Some linguistic items, say connectors, such as *therefore*, can serve either an internal function, which organizes the argument or connects ideas within the text, or they can serve an external function, which refers to an event in the world outside of the text (Hyland & Tse, 2004; Martin, 1992). This distinction between what matters in the world and what is in the discourse is crucial as it helps determine the propositional and metadiscoursal elements of the text.

### *2.3.2 Metadiscourse Model*

Based on these three fundamental principles of metadiscourse, Hyland and Tse (2004) developed a model for metadiscourse in academic writing. The model included two distinct dimensions: interactive and interactional metadiscourse, where each one consists of a number of subcategories. On the one hand, the interactive metadiscourse which refers to the linguistic items that organize the text in a way that helps the readers navigate the text and find it coherent.

Metadiscourse within this category guides the readers, sets the textual structure, makes internal or external references, or links the different parts of the discourse. The interactional dimension, on the other hand, is concerned with the writers' intrusion into the text to acknowledge the readers and pull them into the argument in order to lead them to the desired interpretation. Below are the subcategories of this model supported by examples and a brief definition of each.

Interactive Metadiscourse:

Transitions: (e.g., *in addition, therefore, moreover)* are conjunctions and adverbial phrases used for addition, contrasting, or sequencing in the text. Transitions function as metadiscourse needs to refer to the text to help the reader link between the ideas rather than the outside world.

Frame Markers: (e.g., *in sum, in conclusion*) are expressions that are used to signal text boundaries and structure. Frame markers "function to sequence, label, predict, and shift arguments, making the discourse clear to readers or listeners" (Hyland, 2005, p. 51).

Endophoric Markers: (e.g., *as noted above, see Fig*) are linguistics devices that refer to other parts of the text. These expressions help support the argument and facilitate comprehension by referring to proceeding or upcoming parts of the text (Hyland, 2005).

Evidential: (e.g., *according to XX, X claims*) refer to information from sources outside the text.

Code Gloss: (e.g., *for example, I mean*) are expressions that explain, rephrase, or elaborate the proceeding statements. It enables the reader to uncover the writer's intended meaning.

Interactional Metadiscourse:

Hedges: (e.g*., perhaps, maybe*) are expressions that allow the writer to recognize alternative viewpoints and withhold complete commitment to a claim. By using hedging expressions, writers recognize the subjectively of the claim and present it as an opinion rather than a certain fact.

Boosters: (e.g., *obviously, very*) work as opposed to hedges and allow writers to present their arguments with assurance and close other viewpoints.

Attitude Markers: (e.g., *good, important*) are markers that "express speakers' affective attitudes to propositions, conveying surprise, agreement, appreciation" (Qiu & Jiang, 2021, p. 4).

Self-Mention: (e.g., *I, we*) are linguistic devices that carry explicit author reference.

Engagement Markers: (e.g., *reader pronouns, questions*) are concerned with the use of rhetorical devices that bring readers into the discourse. It is the "alignment dimension where writers acknowledge and connect to others, recognizing the presence of their readers, pulling them along with their argument, focusing their attention, acknowledging their uncertainties, including them as discourse participants, and guiding them to interpretations" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 176).

Metadiscourse markers of the two dimensions (i.e., interactive and interactional) allow writers to guide, engage, and position their audience in relation to the discourse. At the heart of the concept lies the art of effectively managing communication, ensuring that the messages are not only delivered but also truly understood and appreciated. As a major academic and promotional genre, a TPS demands such attributes. By its nature, TPS requires in-depth reflexivity that encapsulates the writer's ethos, teaching approaches, and accomplishments. This

makes the TPS narrative nuanced, deeply personal, yet universally relevant. Thus, metadiscourse's potential role in shaping and organizing TPSs is vital and worth further in-depth investigation.

To date, only one study (to my knowledge) has explored the metadiscousal features in TPS. Supasiraprapa and De Costa (2017) have examined the identity construction by TPS writers. They investigated two TPSs written by students enrolled in a master's TESOL program. By applying Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse and interviews with the writers, they found that both writers used all metadiscourse features except engagement markers to construct two types of identities: 1) a competent graduate student and 2) a knowledgeable and reflective English for second or foreign language teacher. The writers used transition, attitude markers, code gloss, boosters, evidential markers, and endophoric markers to construct the first type of identity. They employed transition, boosters, attitude markers, code gloss, and self-mention to construct the second type of identity (i.e., a knowledgeable and reflective English for second or foreign language teacher). While the study is commendable for its investigation of the metadiscoursal features in TPSs, a case study of two statements do not fully explain how metadiscourse markers are employed in the TPS genre. Therefore, the use of metadiscourse markers in TPSs is still poorly understood, highlighting the necessity for additional studies to fill the knowledge gap and offer deeper insights.

## 2.4 Previous Studies on Teaching Philosophy Statements

The review of the literature revealed that TPS is undertheorized and underinvestigated. The concept is undertheorized in the sense that little attention has been paid to discussing its essence and history (Alexander et al., 2012). TPSs also have not been adequately investigated through the lens of empirically based studies. This could be attributed to the fact that TPS functions and

is situated in a particular moment (Alexander et al., 2012), or it could be due to its occluded nature that limits researchers from accessing such texts. According to Laundon et al. (2020), the TPS literature has focused predominantly on three lines of research: developing and constructing a TPS, its role within graduate education, and its role in professional development to improve teaching and learning. Because of the focus of the present study, the review in this section is limited only to studies that discuss the development or organization of the TPS, which better serves to situate the present study.

Some scholars recognized the importance of the TPS in academia and the complexity writers might face in the process of composing their statements. Therefore, some attempts were made to address the problem by providing different insights and approaches that could aid educators in crafting, teaching, or evaluating TPSs. One of the earliest works about TPS is the article published by Chism (1998). In her commentary article, Chism suggested five major components of TPS: *conceptualization of learning, conceptualization of teaching, goals for students, implementation of the philosophy,* and *a professional growth plan*. This article was followed by various empirical studies that examine TPS from different perspectives.

One area that researchers have focused on is providing rubrics that could be used as a guide for TPS writers and as a reference for the readers when assessing such statements. For instance, Schönwetter et al. (2002) provided a conceptual model that could be used in the process of generating or evaluating TPSs. Their model was created after reviewing the literature and then was refined in consultation with graduate students, faculty and administrators in a series of workshops. Their model suggested six primary components of TPS: *definition of teaching and learning, view of the learner, goals of the student-teacher relationship, discussion of teaching methods,* and *discussion of evaluation*. The author asserted that such a model is not aimed to

limit the writers' freedom of creativity but to make the evaluation criteria of these statements explicit and transparent.

Similarly, Kaplan et al. (2008) also claim that using a rubric or a model would help the writing process of TPS become more manageable. Therefore, they constructed a rubric based on their experience and consultations with search committee chairs in different US universities. The rubric includes five main characteristics of TPS: *goals for student learning, enactment of goals, assessment of goals, learning environment and language,* and *organization of the TPS*. As can be seen, there are nuanced differences between the two rubrics discussed above, mainly in terms of their evaluation priorities. While the rubric proposed by Schönwetter et al. (2002) delves deeper into the teacher's understating of teaching and learning, Kaplan et al.'s (2008) rubric focused more on the pragmatic dimension of teaching philosophy and the realization and the execution of the philosophy.

Others have departed from providing rubrics for TPS and called for new approaches that facilitators or tutors can apply to help writers compose their TPSs. Merkel (2020) has challenged the existing practices of writing TPS that usually lack assistance or feedback from an experienced mentor. In his study, Markel investigated the role of dialogic interaction in aiding a graduate student in crafting her TPS. In the study, both the researcher, who is the tutor as well, and the participant in the study, who is the tutee, interacted in a five-week time span discussing the participant's TPS. The researcher then found the dialogic interaction to be valuable in the process of drafting and revising a TPS. It aided in verbalizing and crystalizing the student's thoughts, which resulted in the clarity of her writing.

In a similar vein, Beatty et al. (2009) recognized the role of "value clarification" in the process of crafting a TPS (p. 111). They proposed an exercise that can be used in group

workshops that facilitators can apply to aid novice writers in surfacing "the philosophical roots of personal teaching philosophies" (p. 115). In their proposed exercise, they focused on three main stages TPS writers can follow to create their own statements: 1) reflecting on teaching philosophy terms and concepts, 2) connecting to the root educational philosophies, and 3) crafting a written philosophy statement.

More recently, some researchers have conducted studies based on of authentic samples of TPSs (e.g., Payant & Hirano, 2018; Wang, 2023). For instance, Payant and Hirano (2018) examined the TPS genre in the context of language education. In their research, the authors utilized a corpus-based approach to explore the common topics that occur in the statements written by English language teachers. Their analysis, which include inductive and deductive analysis of the data, revealed 18 different topics. Four of these 18 topics revealed were most common: *teaching approaches, teacher roles, teaching beliefs,* and *learning beliefs.*

The preceding review of the literature provides examples of the different attempts scholars have made to assist in TPS development. These studies have increased our understanding of the various themes or topics that are commonly appearing in TPSs. Table 1 summarizes these components. However, a significant gap remains in the literature, that is the absence of a detailed genre analysis that delves deeply into the rhetorical components of the genre to provide a robust framework that can be used as a reference for TPS writers, evaluators, or facilitators. The only genre-based study in the literature was conducted by Wang (2023). In this study, Wang utilized the Swalesian move-step approach to examine the rhetorical structure of the genre of TPS and supported his analysis with interviews with a professor and a TPS novice writer about their experience with TPS and about the utility of the framework they created in pedagogical contexts.

The TPSs in Wang's (2023) study were written by U.S. university faculty members from different disciplines applying to a teaching award organized by the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning in a public university in the US. The applicants for the award were full-time faculty members with at least three years of experience teaching undergraduate students at the university. The applicants were from five disciplines: business, engineering, liberal arts, social sciences, and science. The 100 statements used in this study were publicly published, so the author was able to retrieve them directly from the center's website.

The rhetorical analysis of TPSs in Wang's (2023) study reveals that five moves characterize the TPSs: *construct a professional profile, signal the structure of the text and/or propositional themes, demonstrate teacher competence in the classroom, demonstrate teacher competence outside the classroom,* and *express gratitude*. Multiple steps realized each of these moves. For instance, move 1 (i.e., *construct a professional profile)* was composed of four steps *describe teacher developmental journeys or backgrounds, interpret or reflect on the journeys and backgrounds, generalize professional beliefs, goals, principles, or concepts,* and *express a commitment.* Each of the moves and steps was then coded for its commonality status either as very common (if it appeared in 80% to 100% of the data), common (60% to 79%), or less common (below 60% of the texts). Among the 21 steps found in the study, four very common steps occurred mainly in two moves. The steps are: *Generalize professional beliefs, goals, principles, or concepts* in move 1 (i.e., *construct a professional profile)* and *situate teacher beliefs, feelings, and/or attitudes, describe teacher actions,* and *justify teacher reasoning or interpret teacher work* in move 3 (i.e., *demonstrate teacher competence in the classroom).*

While Wang's (2023) study offers insightful findings that contribute to our understanding of the rhetoric of the genre of TPS, it is worth noting that there are certain methodological

considerations that warrant further exploration. Wang's study is overtly narrow on one side, being confined in a very specific context (i.e., teaching award), yet broad on the other due to the inclusion of a variety of disciplines. The TPSs collected for this study were written by faculty at a single university for one purpose, i.e., applying for an award. Such a focused approach may limit our view of the genre and its rhetoric. It would not account for a wide range of TPSs written beyond the context of the award. Also, although Wang has asserted that there were no guidelines or template provided by the center on how to write a TPS for the award, the institutional culture might influence the content or the style of the TPSs. This may lead to a homogeneous style that may not capture a broad spectrum of TPSs in multiple contexts. In addition to that, the TPSs were written by faculty members from five different disciplines. This difference in the language used in various academic texts in different disciplines is well documented in previous rhetorical and linguistic studies. Therefore, the rhetorical patterns adopted by educators can be profoundly influenced by the subject matter, the institutional context, and the learning objectives of each discipline.

In light of the discussion of the previous studies conducted on the genre of TPS, we can see that there are some efforts to empirically examine the different moves or topics comprised the genre. Also one study examined the metadiscourse markers in the genre. Despite the limitations found in these studies which I discussed earlier, no study has examined both the rhetorical structure and the metadiscourse markers that realize the genre's different moves to better understand the rhetoric of the genre. Thus, the current study aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the genre in order to gain a better understanding of it and its conventions.

**Table 1.** Components of TPSs Found in Previous Studies

| Authors | How did the author come up with the different components? | Components |
|---|---|---|
| Chism (1998) | Based on the researcher's experience | - Conceptualization of learning<br>- Conceptualization of teaching<br>- Goals for students<br>- Implementation of the philosophy<br>- Personal growth plan |
| Schönwetter et al. (2002) | Based on the authors' review of the literature and in consultation with some stakeholders | - Definition of teaching<br>- Definition of learning<br>- View of the learner<br>- Goals and expectations of the student-teacher relationship<br>- Discussion of teaching methods<br>- Discussion of evaluation |
| Kaplan et al. (2008) | Based on the researchers' experience and their consultation with search committee chairs | - Goals for student learning<br>- Enactment of goals<br>- Assessment of goals<br>- Creating an inclusive learning environment |
| Payant and Hirano (2018) | From a corpus of 27 TPSs | - Teaching approaches<br>- Teacher roles<br>- Teaching beliefs<br>- Learning beliefs |
| Wang (2023) | From a corpus of 100 TPSs | - Construct a professional profile<br>- Signal the structure of the text and/or propositional themes,<br>- Demonstrate teacher competence in the classroom<br>- Express gratitude |

## 2.5 The Current Study

Among all the studies previously discussed pertaining the promotional genres and TPSs, an apparent gap has emerged. That is a holistic examination that intertwines the moves-step framework, the metadiscourse features, and feedback from experienced readers. This gap

emphasizes the need for a comprehensive study, ensuring an in-depth understanding of the rhetoric of the TPS genre in a given discipline.

The primary objectives for this study are threefold. First, to define the rhetorical moves structuring the TPS genre. Second, to explore the metadiscoursal features utilized in the TPSs, and how these metadiscoursal devices are mapped onto the different moves that constitute the TPS genre. Third, to explore the gatekeepers' perspectives and expectations about the genre and its rhetorical patterns. This in-depth qualitative analysis is guided by the three research questions:

1. What rhetorical moves and steps do writers adopt in constructing teaching philosophy statements?
2. What are the metadiscoursal features writers employ when constructing their teaching philosophy statements? How do these metadiscourse markers map onto the different rhetorical moves identified in research question one?
3. What perceptions or assumptions do experienced readers of teaching philosophy statements have about the genre's rhetorical patterns?

# Chapter 3: Method

This study investigates the rhetoric of TPSs written by academics (Ph.D. students or professors) affiliated with linguistics and language-related departments at US-based universities. Specifically, this qualitative study investigates the rhetorical structures, the metadiscourse marker usage, and their deployment across the rhetorical components in the TPS. The analysis is supported by interviews with expert faculty members to elicit their perspectives about the genre and its rhetoric.

In this chapter, I provide details about data collection and analysis procedures. I start this chapter by outlining the data collection process. For the purpose of this study, primary and secondary data were gathered. Samples of TPSs make up the primary data, and interviews with the experienced TPS readers make up the secondary data. At the end of the chapter, I provide detailed discussions of how I analyze the data to answer each research question.

## 3.1 Data Collection

### *3.1.1 Primary Data: Teaching Philosophy Statements Corpus*

Collecting authentic and naturally occurring data is a core practice in ESP genre analysis (Swales, 1990). Naturally occurring data is the "data that would have occurred regardless of the role of the researcher … and does not require the researcher to structure the environment in hopes of generating data sources" (Lester et al., 2017, p. 89). In previous promotional genre studies, researchers commonly collected their own data rather than relying on existing corpora. Different ways to collect promotional texts were adopted according to the data type that

concerned the researchers. For open and publicly accessible data, researchers simply collected them from the institution websites in which the genre was embedded. For instance, samples of call-for-papers or conference abstracts were collected from the data the conference or journal websites made available (e.g., Halleck & Connor, 2006; Yang, 2015; Yoon & Casal, 2020). Promotional genres for commercial services were also collected from the websites where those genres were usually displayed (e.g., Izquierdo & Blanco, 2020; Labrador & Ramón, 2015;).

However, to collect occluded promotional texts, researchers collect them directly from either their writers or their recipients. For instance, the personal statements in Samraj and Monk (2008), the grant proposals in Connor and Mauranen (1999) and Cotos (2019), and the application letters in Henry and Roseberry (2001) were made available to the researchers from the institutions that received those texts. Occluded promotional genres were also collected by contacting their writers themselves and collecting their successful examples of promotional texts (e.g., Chiu, 2015; Kessler, 2020; Yin, 2016).

Accordingly, in the present study, I self-compiled a specialized corpus of naturally occurring TPSs. This means the statements collected to create the corpus were TPS samples previously written by the participants. They were not composed specifically for the purpose of this study, nor were they sourced from internet. A specialized corpus is "a corpus of texts of a particular type [that] aims to be representative of a given type of text [and] used to investigate a particular type of language" (Hunston, 2002, p. 14). No consensus exists on how large a corpus should be (Hunston, 2002; Flowerdew, 2004), but instead, the size depends mainly on the research and its purposes (Hunston, 2002).

Compiling a corpus of occluded documents is always difficult, mainly because they are obscured or hidden from the public. Some texts are occluded because they may contain sensitive

or confidential information, such as editorial letters (Flowerdew & Evans, 2002) or tax computation letters (Flowerdew & Wan, 2006). TPS as an occluded genre is different since sensitivity or confidentiality might not be the issue, but some authors still prefer to limit public access to their statements. TPS writers, particularly those in the job search process, may feel hesitant to share their statements, mainly because they see them as a tool for gaining a competitive edge. Thus, it would be counterintuitive for them to share theirs with any individual. One of the Ph.D. students I emailed to collect TPSs replied to my email with this:

> "*I want to participate in this study, but I am currently on the job market and feel a little odd about sharing job application materials when I am currently using them in applications."*

Thus, given the difficulty associated with collecting such data, it was challenging to determine how many of these samples would suffice to conduct the study and would yield insightful results. Therefore, for the present study, I decided to look at similar genre-based studies on comparable texts in the literature to determine an appropriate corpus size. Upon reviewing the literature, I found that a corpus size of 50 samples or above is acceptable. For example, Hyland (2004a) collected 40 dissertation acknowledgments from each discipline, Flowerdew and Dudley-Evans (2002) built their genre analysis on a corpus of 53 editorial letters, and Kessler (2020) collected a data sample of 50 personal statements and 50 statements of grant proposal. These studies have collected similar amounts of data that adequately provided an in-depth analysis of the genre and yielded insightful results. Therefore, I aimed to collect a similar number for my study. The study protocol was ethically reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before data collection commenced (refer to appendix A for the IRB approval letter).

The participants of this study were 55 academics affiliated with 30 different US-based universities. By participants, I mean those who shared their TPSs with me. By academics, I mean individuals working or studying in within the academia and have or expected to have a teaching role at a university level. As explained in Chapter 1, those participants were all from the linguistics domain, including its subdisciplines, such as applied linguistics, second language studies, and language teaching. It should be noted here that the participants' native language was not used as a sampling criterion when collecting the data. The justification for including participants with different first languages was twofold: (1) they are assumed to be proficient enough to have mastered native-like English writing skills, given their advanced educational or career status, and (2) the goal of the study is to uncover the overarching rhetorical practices of TPSs in the US higher education context, rather than the practices of English native speakers only. The final corpus for the current study consists of 55 TPSs, with an average word length of 846 words (SD = 358.5) and a total of 46,543 tokens (i.e., words). The longest statements within the dataset contained 1,948 words, while the shortest had 320 words.

The participants (i.e., those who shared their TPSs with me) were individuals within my pre-existing social network or other academics affiliated with US-based universities with whom I had no prior acquaintance. For those academics that I am not acquainted with, I retrieved their emails from their public profiles on the websites of the universities they are affiliated with. I then sent my solicitation emails to all potential participants (see appendix B for the template of solicitation email). In the emails, I asked the participants to complete two tasks. First, to complete a short demographic survey that asks about their age, gender, native language, years of experience, and the academic institution where they are currently working or studying. This

information was collected for data purposes, but they are not analytical factors in the present study. This means that the demographic information helped contextualize the dataset but did not inform the textual analysis in the current study. The second task was to share a copy of their most recent TPSs. The participants were not asked for their names or contact information to protect their privacy and confidentiality. They were also requested to disguise or redact any identifiable information in their statements (see Appendix C and D for the survey questions and the consent form). Of the 600+ emails I sent out, I received 60 responses (roughly 10% response rate). Five of the responses received were excluded because the participants shared documents other than a TPS or because they were from different disciplines other than linguistics.

In the process of collecting the TPSs, I used a targeted yet open-ended search strategy to identify linguistics academics across various US-based universities. I started the search process by considering the linguistics departments I already knew or with a simple Google search using the term "linguistics department." In the department webpage page, I systematically reviewed the academics affiliated with the that departments (e.g., professors, instructors, graduate students) to select potential participants. I then contacted those participants using the email address on their department web page. It is important to note that the university search process was not strictly systematic to ensure that the samples represented different types of universities (such as private vs. public, research- or teaching-based, high- or low-ranked). This deliberate choice allowed me to collect data from 30+ universities that vary in their geographical location, ranking, and teaching focus.

The compilation process resulted in gathering samples from a varied group of participants who vary in their ages, genders, professional experience, and geographical locations. The participants are affiliated with 30 different US-based universities. Table 2 summarizes the

demographic profile of the participants in this study. Among the 55 participants in this study, there were 21 professors, 30 Ph.D. students, three instructors, and one postdoc. In terms of gender, there were 28 females, 24 males, and three participants preferred not to say. For native language status, 35 participants were native speakers of English, while 20 were non-native speakers. In terms of age range, most participants were in their 30s, with 11 participants in their 20s and four above 40. Regarding years of experience, 20 participants reported having a decade or more of teaching experience, while the remainder had less than ten years. The average experience level among all participants was 6.5 years. Therefore, the diversity of the participants in the present study represents a broad spectrum of individuals. This comes in line with Flowerdew's (2004) recommendation that a specialized corpus needs to "contain numerous texts from a variety of authors so that no one authorial style would dominate" (p. 26).

**Table 2.** The Demographic Distribution of the TPS Writers

| **Category** | **Subcategory** | **N** |
|---|---|---|
| Academic ranking | PhD students | 30 |
| | Professors | 21 |
| | Instructors | 3 |
| | Postdoc | 1 |
| Gender | Female | 28 |
| | Male | 24 |
| | Prefer not to say | 3 |
| Native English status | Native | 35 |
| | Not native | 20 |
| Age range | 25 - 29 | 11 |
| | 30 - 34 | 20 |
| | 35 - 39 | 20 |
| | 40 - 44 | 2 |
| | 45 - 49 | 2 |
| Years of experience | Ten or more | 20 |
| | Less than ten | 35 |

### *3.1.2 Secondary Data: Interviews with TPS Experienced Readers*

In order to support the textual analysis, Swales (2019) asserts that researchers should include an insider 'emic' perspective (p. 81). In the present study, I interviewed four professors who have experience in reading, evaluating, or teaching TPSs. Those gatekeepers have been referred to in previous genre-based studies as *academics* (Chiu, 2015), *raters* (Kessler, 2020), and *specialist informants* (Samraj & Monk, 2008) depending on the aims of the studies, but for the reader's convenience, they are referred to as 'TPS readers' throughout this study. Qualitative studies have no specific rules about the number of participants to be interviewed (Patton, 2002); however, as Creswell (2008) noted, qualitative researchers can create focus by using a small, carefully selected group of interviewees. The number of interviews is usually decided based on the research goal and purpose. Previous studies that examined the rhetoric of promotional genres have recruited different numbers of interviewees ranging from one experienced reader (e.g., Wang, 2023) to six participants (e.g., Kessler, 2020). Therefore, I decided that interviews with four participants who have experience with TPSs would be adequate for the purpose of the study.

I applied a *purposeful sampling* strategy to recruit the TPS readers (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2014). Purposeful sampling is a method in qualitative research by which researchers select "information-rich cases … from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Paton, 1999, p. 169). In this type of sampling, the researcher selects participants who will give information relevant to the research questions and goals (Maxwell, 2012). Therefore, purposeful sampling was the best choice for this study to ensure that all TPS readers had some experience with TPS since not every professor would have had the opportunity to be exposed to TPSs. Table 3 provides a description of the interviewee recruited for this study.

**Table 3.** Interviewees Demographic Profile

| Name | Gender | Academic ranking | Years of experience in teaching |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dr. Brown | Female | Professor | 20 |
| Dr. Clark | Female | Associate professor | 15 |
| Dr. Hassan | Female | Linguistics adjunct | 23 |
| Dr. Smith | Male | Assistant professor | 6 |

As seen in Table 3, the TPS readers recruited for this study are all professors of linguistics affiliated with three different US-based universities, referred to in this paper under the pseudonyms of Dr. Brown, Dr. Clark, Dr. Hassan, and Dr. Smith. Three TPS readers, i.e., Dr. Brown, Dr. Clark, and Dr. Hassan, have had some experience conducting discourse analysis research. Dr. Smith's research area centered around genre analysis and second language writing. The TPS readers also bring diverse and extensive years of experience in teaching. The average years of teaching experience among the TPS readers is 16 years. Two TPS readers are now serving in leading positions in their institutions. Dr. Brown is the doctoral program director in her department, and Dr. Clark is the director of the master's program.[4] With regard to the readers' experience in teaching or reading TPSs, Dr. Brown and Dr. Smith regularly teach the genre to master's and Ph.D. students in their department, while Dr. Clark also has some experience in teaching the genre to undergraduate students. Dr. Hassan has the least experience in teaching or reading TPSs, but she reported that she has edited and reviewed TPSs for some of her students in the past. The TPS readers' areas of research (i.e., discourse analysis and writing), along with their substantial years of teaching experience and expertise in teaching TPSs, align

[4] They are affiliated with two different universities.

closely with the study focus. This would ensure that their insights will provide valuable contributions to the research.

Following Kessler (2020), the TPS readers' interviews consisted of a think-aloud protocol and a semi-structured interview. The think-aloud protocol is a type of qualitative research method that is usually used to explore the cognitive process of the participants while they perform a task. In this protocol, the participants are asked to verbalize their thoughts in real time as they complete an activity (Ward & Traweek, 1993). As one part of this study aims to reveal the most influential rhetorical moves for the readers, such protocol resembles the actual process of reading TPS to vet applicants, where research committee members usually react to the TPS content immediately. Such an approach, therefore, will serve the purpose of this analysis most effectively. Besides the think-aloud protocol, I also employ semi-structured interviews. This type of interview is frequently used in qualitative research, including genre-based studies (Hyon, 2017), and it allows the researcher to seek further thoughts, clarifications, or examples during the interview (Turner, 2010).

The interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams software. Each interview lasted for about 45 minutes. I started each interview with the think-aloud protocol and then moved to the semi-structured part. At the beginning of the think-aloud protocol, I shared two samples of the TPS I collected. The same two statements were used with all TPS readers to ensure consistency. The choice of these two statements, in particular, was not arbitrary. These two were selected due to the representativeness of the move-steps found in the textual analysis of the two statements. (you can see the two statements used in the think-aloud protocol in Appendix G)[5]. Following Kessler (2020) and Barton et al. (2004), these samples were not shared in

5 The writers of these two statements were additionally contacted to obtain their consent for the full publication of their statements in the appendix of this dissertation.

advance with the readers since the goal of using this protocol is for them to express what will come to their minds immediately. The interviewees were then instructed using the following prompt adopted from Barton et al. (2004): "*Say out loud everything that is going through your head as you read the statements. We're not asking you to describe what you're doing or to explain the material to us. Just read and react to it as you normally would*" (para. 12).

Once the protocol ended, we started the semi-structured interview in which the participants were asked about their perspectives on the rhetoric of the genre. This part consisted of open-ended questions, allowing for probing and follow-ups. In the interviews, I asked the participants some pre-planned questions, and I also followed up on what they had said in the think-aloud protocol or during this portion of the interview. The questions in the semi-structured interviews centered around three key themes: 1) the purpose and significance of the genre, 2) the content of the genre, and 3) teaching the genre. (See Appendix E for the guiding questions in the interviews).

### 3.2 Data Analysis

In order to answer the three research questions in this study, different data analysis methods were used to analyze the different types of data collected. First, I used Swales's (1990) move-steps framework to analyze the rhetorical structure of the TPS samples in the corpus. Second, I utilized Hyland and Tse's (2004) model of interactional metadiscourse to explore the metadiscourse markers' usage and deployment in the different moves. For the interview data, on the other hand, I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis model to analyze the TPS readers' interviews.

### *3.2.1 Research Question 1 (the Statements' Rhetorical Moves and Steps)*

The first research question examines the conventional structure of TPSs. To investigate this, I adopted the Swalesian move-step genre analysis framework. Though this approach is well established in the literature, few studies clearly explain the process of identifying the moves and steps their studies reveal. This is partly because "there are no strict 'rules' for doing a move analysis" (Biber et al. 2007, p.33). For this reason, I will elaborate in detail on the procedure I followed to identify moves and steps.

Before embarking on the analysis procedure, the TPSs collected were pre-processed to remove any irrelevant information, such as the authors' signatures, contact information, or unrelated attached documents, such as students' evaluation records. After that, each statement was assigned a code for identification and analysis (e.g., participant #1, participant #2, etc.). Once the data was in optimal condition, it was moved to MAXQDA 2022, a software application used for qualitative data analysis. The decision to use MAXQDA for this study was due to its robust features that would streamline the analysis process and minimize the risk of potential errors that may occur when utilizing other traditional methods. Specifically, the software allows me to annotate, highlight, color code, and write comments and memos on each category, making it a perfect tool for moves identifications and categorization.

**3.2.1.1 Move Analysis Procedure.** Move identification usually takes one of three approaches: top-down, bottom-up, or a combination of both approaches. In the top-down approach, moves identification is based solely on the function or content of each chunk of text (Upton & Cohen, 2009). In the bottom-up approach, researchers identify moves based on linguistic signals. Others sometimes combine both techniques and adopt a systematic, rigorous analysis to bridge the "function-form gap" by integrating both top-down and bottom-up

approaches (Moreno & Swales, 2018, p. 41). In this method, the identification of moves depends on “function indicators and boundary indicators” (Connor & Mauranen, 1999, p. 51). This means supplementing the subjective identification of moves based mainly on the function with the identification of linguistic clues in the text to determine where each move starts and ends (e.g., Connor & Mauranen, 1999; Yoon & Casal, 2020).

In conducting the move analysis for the present study, I opted for a top-down approach. The top-down approach was selected because it allows for a more content-driven, context-sensitive analysis that aligns closely with the research objectives of understanding the rhetorical function and communicative purposes of the TPS’s different components. The bottom-up approach, which relies on the linguistics signals, may not capture all the nuanced pragmatic or contextual aspects of the text as efficiently and would potentially limit the scope of the analysis. Combining both approaches was also not employed because such an approach, according to Pho (2008), would lead to circularity in move identification. He called for separating the two approaches by first identifying the moves using the top-down approach, and then the researcher can investigate the linguistic realization of each move after. Figure 1. illustrates the process I followed in the move identification. Each of the steps will be explained later in the following paragraphs.

The analysis followed the three stages Casal and Kessler (2024) suggested: developing, applying, and assessing. The first stage aims to create a move-step scheme that accounts for all moves and steps in the text. After realizing the overall communicative purposes of the genre, I read about 40% of the samples to get a sense of the recurring moves and steps. I then started to divide them into segments based on the semantic function they potentially serve. Each segment was tentatively labeled with its “functional-semantic purpose” (Upton & Cohen, 2009, p. 594).

Some segments may seem to have more than one purpose; those were labeled with the most salient semantic functions (Yin, 2016). While doing this, I considered the different themes or moves in TPS or promotional genres literature as a starting point for labeling the various segments.

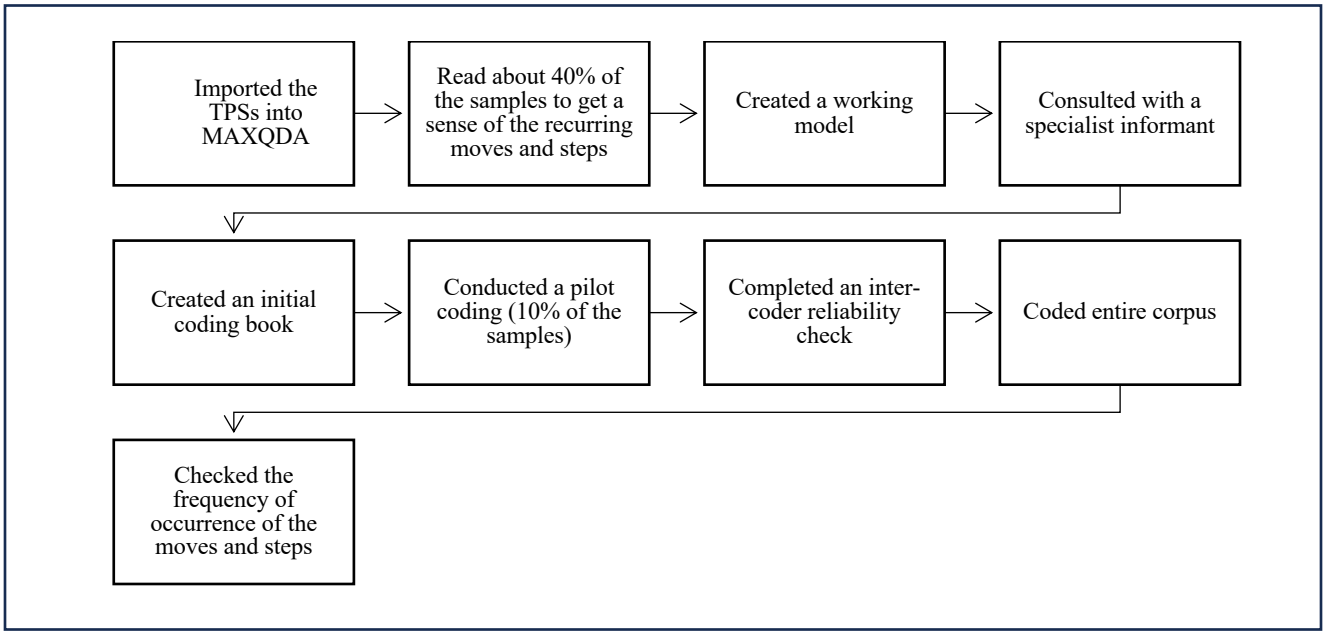


**Figure 1.** Move Identification Process.

Due to the complex nature of the move identification process, the process was far from straightforward and required extensive revisions. Multiple rounds of analysis were conducted to identify the segments and to refine the labels. This iterative process was crucial to address any overlap among categories or any vagueness in the labels. Once the first list of labels was created, those with similar functions or purposes were grouped together to establish a tentative working set of moves and steps categories. The working model includes a description of each move and step and representative examples from the corpus.

Following the initial development of this working model that outlines the different moves and steps in the texts, I sought feedback for an expert to ensure the accuracy of the model development process. I consulted a specialist informant, a professor of applied linguistics with experience conducting move and steps analysis on different academic genres. This is different from the inter-coder agreement test, which I will explain later. The purpose of this consultation was to ascertain that the description of the move and steps in the model adequately illustrate them. Also, ensure that the examples represent the corresponding moves and steps well. The consultation was beneficial in fine-tuning the model by merging or separating some steps or elaborating on the moves and steps descriptions.

After meticulously revising the model and incorporating the specialist informant's feedback, I finalized the move and step scheme. I then began the second stage analysis that Casal and Kessler (2024) suggested. In this stage, I applied the model I created in stage one. I started first by pilot coding to test the move and step schema (Biber et al., 2007; Hyon, 2017; Upton & Cohen, 2009). Ten percent of the data sample (i.e., six statements from the corpus) was used in the pilot coding. From the pilot coding, the moves/steps were refined to create a coding protocol, in which, as Upton and Cohen (2009) recommended, every move and step received a clear definition with representative examples from the data to refer to during the coding process.

**3.2.1.2 Inter-Coder Agreement Test.** Having created the model and applied it to a number of samples, I then turned to the third stage, which is concerned with assessing and refining the model. Move analysis involves the researchers' determination of the function of different text segments, which would produce a certain degree of subjectivity. This makes it imperative to incorporate additional steps to ensure the reliability of the coding schema.

Checking the coding reliability is a standard procedure in genre-based studies on promotional genres. Four measures were found to be used by move-step analysts: *inter-rater reliability, intra-rater reliability, member checking,* and *continued discussion among researchers*. The most frequently used approach is the inter-coder reliability test, which aims to eliminate any bias the researcher may bring to coding (Creswell, 2012). In my analysis, I have opted to use the inter-coder agreement test as the primary reliability check. The other reliability check measurements were not applicable for practical or timely reasons. For instance, a measurement like *intra-rater* reliability check in which the researcher codes the same amount of data two or three months after its first coding and then calculates the percentage agreement between the first and second coding (e.g., Connor & Mauranen, 1999; Matzler, 2021; Ding, 2007) was not feasible because the present study project was expected to be completed within a certain time frame.

Returning to the reliability check procedure, I hired an external coder who is a Ph.D. student in applied linguistics and has some familiarity with the move-and-step analysis. The purpose of that was to ensure that the coding schema could be used consistently and reliably across multiple coders wherever possible. In our first meeting, I ensured he was familiar with the concept and the analytical approach. I then showed him the coding schema with the descriptions of the moves and steps and examples for each. Afterward, I demonstrated the move identification process I followed to ensure we were both using the top-down approach. By the end of the meeting, he had a firm understanding of the concept, the coding protocol, and the analysis process. I then shared with him the same 10% of the corpus I coded during the pilot coding step, which he later coded independently. After he had finished the coding, we found disagreement at the step level, and we then discussed and reached an agreement.

The inter-coder agreement test is usually conducted in two ways: descriptively, by calculating the percentage of agreement[6] (Yang, 2015), or statistically, by using Cohen's Kappa (Yoon & Casal, 2010; Campbell & Naidoo, 2017). Previous studies did not usually state the rationale behind the choice between these calculation measures. Yet researchers seem to lack consensus on an appropriate calculation measure for such genre-based studies. While Moreno and Swales (2018) argue that the percentage result is not adequate and researchers should seek a reliability test that offers Cohen's Kappa value, Rau and Shih (2021) argue against that, claiming that Cohen's Kappa test is invalid in move analysis because its assumptions are not met (see Rau & Shih for more discussion), and percentage of agreement is the correct and accurate way to calculate inter-rater agreement.

Considering that, the inter-coder agreement in the present study was calculated using the percentage of agreement method. I calculated the inter-coder agreement through a "simple percentage agreement" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 140). This means that the ratio of all coding agreements over the total number of coding decisions is calculated with this formula: X/(X+Y)100 = % of agreement. X refers to the number of agreements, and Y to the number of disagreements. An agreement of 87.1% was achieved. Previous genre-based studies show that an inter-coder agreement of 85% and above is acceptable, supported by Landis and Koch's (1997) inter-rater reliability benchmark scale.

After achieving a high agreement, I used the coding book developed to code the entire corpus. Once the whole corpus was coded, the frequency of moves and steps in each TPS was calculated manually to see which moves or steps were obligatory and which were optional.

[6] The agreement is calculated through the formula X/(X+Y)100 = % of agreement, in which X represents the number of agreements and Y refers to the number of disagreements.

Determining what counts as an obligatory or optional move or step seems arbitrary in the literature. Though some authors did not indicate any cut-off point between core and optional moves in their studies, others have arbitrarily set a limit in line with the purpose of their analysis. For instance, the move was considered obligatory if it occurred in 100% (Kanoksilapatham, 2005), in 90% (Tseng, 2011), in 80% (Parkinson, 2017), or in 75% (Wannaruk & Amnuai, 2016) of the data. For the present study, a 95% and above cut-off point was required for the move to be considered obligatory. The decision was taken after closely investigating the frequency of the moves and steps in my corpus. The rationale behind selecting this number is elaborated in Section 4.1.

### *3.2.2 Research Question 2 (Identifying the Metadiscourse Markers)*

In the literature, there are two different ways to identify the metadiscourse markers: the automated corpus software approach and the manual identification approach. In the first approach, researchers used corpus software to automatically identify the markers within their corpora (e.g., Li & Wharton, 2012; Junqueiria & Cortes, 2014). They used ready-made lists of metadiscourse markers, mainly drawn from the comprehensive list developed by Hyland (2005b). Researchers then used the concordance lines to search the items in their contexts and exclude or add items based on their functions and meanings. This approach has proven beneficial when conducting comparative studies as it helps uncover the general patterns between multiple corpora, be it different languages, cultures, or genres (Connor, 2004; Xie, 2020). In addition, this automated approach enables researchers to examine large, extensive corpora, which may help increase the generalizability and validity of the findings (Xie, 2020). However, one of the major critiques of this approach is that in these ready-made lists there is a discrepancy in the representation between the different metadiscourse categories. For instance, Flowerdew (2015)

argues that Hyland's (2005b) list of metadiscourse markers has far more boosters than code gloss markers, making code gloss unrepresented in the list.

On the other hand, the manual identification approach involves thoroughly reading the texts and locating all the metadiscourse instantiations in the texts. This approach is data-oriented, where researchers find these markers inductively. A major drawback of this approach is that it cannot be applied to large corpora and is time-consuming. While both approaches presented above have their advantages, the manual approach has been chosen for this study. The decision was informed by the fact that metadiscourse markers are tied to their socio-rhetorical contexts. Thus, the predefined lists of markers mostly retrieved from research articles may not necessarily be applicable when investigating such a promotional genre with different communicative purposes. The manual search was time-consuming as it demands careful attention significant effort. However, it was very rewarding not only in capturing markers that do not exist in previous ready-made lists but also in understanding the context more clearly and how these markers are actually functioning as metadiscourse within the text.

**3.2.2.1 Metadiscourse Analysis Procedure.** At this point, all the TPSs were imported into MAXQDA and were coded into moves and steps. Another set of metadiscourse codes was created in addition to those developed earlier for the moves and steps. Each new code represents one of the subcategories of Hyland and Tse's (2004) model of metadiscourse (e.g., *transitions, code gloss, hedges, boosters*, etc.). More details on each of these categories are in Section 2.3.2. I then read the texts and categorized the linguistic items that serve as metadiscourse with their appropriate codes.

As stated in Section 2.3, metadiscourse markers are fuzzy, and the analytical procedure is not a clear-cut process. Therefore, it is crucial to highlight the various factors that were taken

into account while coding. First, linguistic items that function propositionally instead of metadiscoursally were excluded. In simpler terms, this means that the analysis did not include the markers that refer to the events happening in the outside world (external function), but instead, the linguistic units that structure the argument, engage with the reader or indicate the writer's stance (internal function). This required contextual understanding and careful reading in order to determine the function of the term. For instance, the terms *first* in example 1a and 1b serve two different functions. In example 1a, *first* is showing what the author is firstly doing in introducing the new complication. This means that it is sequencing events or actions that happen outside of the text in the real world, serving a propositional function, and thus was not included. However, the term *first* in example 1b functions as a metadiscourse as it helps order the arguments internally (i.e., in the text). Thus, *first* in example 1b was coded as a metadiscourse.

(1) a. I try to introduce each new complication to the theory by **first** presenting data that a previous version of the theory is unable to handle (Participant #21)

b. I anchor my pedagogy in three interrelated principles. **First**, learning happens in the space between our expectations and students' needs - therefore, it emerges from negotiation. (Participant #4)

Second, some terms were not immediately obvious as to what metadiscoursal category they may belong to. For instance, one of the terms that presented challenges during coding was the modal verb *should*. The terms present difficulty because its meaning which lies between certainty and possibility. This make it hard to tell if it is a hedging or boosting expression. In these situations, I consulted previous studies on metadiscourse to see how they categorized similar terms. However, referring to earlier metadiscourse studies was sometimes not helpful, as seen in the following two examples. In example 2a provided by Hyland (2005b), the modal verb

*should* was labeled as a hedge, while Vassileva (2001) categorized *should* in example 2b as a booster. Therefore, determining such complicated items was done by closely analyzing the surrounding context. In the case of *should*, I decided to code it as a booster as I believe the writers are employing this term in TPSs to strengthen their claims or signal a level of confidence or certainty, as in example 2c from the corpus.

(2) a. "… local infrastructure projects ... **should** take up most of any slack caused by slower growth rates in the PRC." (Hyland, 2005, p. 80)

b. "The problem of meaning comprehension, … **should** take central place in psycholinguistic studies" (Vassileva, 2001, p. 95)

c. Once this occurs, we *should* seek to make every activity student centered and activities which could be used outside the classroom. (Participant #46)

The third point considered while coding the data is that quotations from external authors were not included in the analysis. This step was necessary as the metadiscoursal elements within these quotes do not reflect the voice of the TPS author but rather that of other individuals. It is true that the choice to include such quotes in the statements may indicate something that the TPS writer wanted to convey. However, it does not directly signal the writers' attitude or how they tried to engage with the readers. For instance, participant #37 included this quote from one of the students' feedback responses: "*I really enjoyed the discussion-based instruction. I also really enjoyed the thought that we could use the structure of each class to use it for my own class."* The statement contains many metadiscourse features such as *really* 'booster', *I* 'self-mention', and *enjoyed* 'attitude marker'. However, they were all excluded from the analysis.

Fourth, the metadiscoursal function can be represented in long phrases incorporating smaller metadiscoursal elements. As Hyland (2017) stated, in this case, the whole phrase could

be categorized with the metadiscoursal function that it serves, or each subunit can be coded with its corresponding metadiscourse. For instance, in example 3, the expression *very important* could be treated as a whole and seen as an attitude marker, or it could be separated and coded *very* as a booster and *important* as an attitude marker. However, treating it as one metadiscourse element would lead us to overlook the booster *very*'s role in constructing the author's stance. Therefore, in my analysis, I opted to treat each metadiscoursal element separately to acknowledge the distinct role each marker might plays. The process of metadiscourse identification is visualized in Figure 2.

(3) Teaching has been a *very important* part of my academic life (P54)

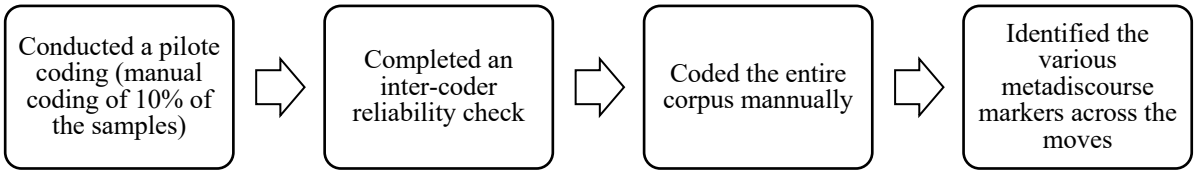


**Figure 2.** Metadiscoure Identification Proces.

**3.2.2.2 Inter-Coder Agreement Test**. Similar to the procedure taken in the move analysis, I carried out an inter-rater agreement test to ensure the consistency and reliability of the coding. I analyzed 10% of the corpus (i.e., six TPS samples) and then hired an external coder to code the same samples. It would have been better to have the same external coder who coded the moves as he would be more familiar with the texts. However, it was not feasible to hire him again at that time. The external coder for the metadiscourse was a PhD student in linguistics studying at a UK-based university. We met online, and I explained the concept and the coding book to him. Using the simple percentage equation explained earlier, and after discussing

discrepancies, an inter-coder reliability agreement of 93% was achieved. Once this high agreement was achieved, I began coding the entire corpus.

At this stage, all the 55 TPS samples in my data were coded in terms of their moves and steps and the metadiscourse markers used in each. I then used the Code Relation Browser function of MAXQDA to locate the metadiscourse usage in each move. The feature allows the researcher to see the relationship between two or more codes in the coding book. As an example, it enabled me to see all the text annotations that were coded under the code *booster* and the code *move 1* at the same time.

### *3.2.3 Research Question 3 (Readers' Perspectives)*

The analysis of the TPS experienced readers' perspectives began with verbatim transcription of the interviews. The interviews recordings were transcribed utilizing Otter.ai software, an automated transcription system that converts audio recordings into text format. I then listened to the recording again for accuracy and to ensure the transcription was free of any errors. Once the transcription was ready, they were imported into MAXQDA for analysis.

The interviews were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ritchie et al., 2003), an analytical method used in qualitative research to "classify and organize data according to key themes, concepts and emergent categories" (Ritchie et al., 2003, p. 220). Given the purpose of the interviews, the themes were coded inductively rather than deductively (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis procedure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was chosen for the interviews because it is a relatively recent framework frequently used and cited in the literature. It comprises six phases: (1) familiarizing with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) screening for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

Given that this study's primary data analysis and conclusions are based on textual analysis of statements, it is worth noting that I did not seek inter-coder reliability for the interview coding. While the interview data was helpful in expanding on the readers' expectations, the goal of RQ3 is to understand experts' perspectives on the TPS genre, including their beliefs.

To summarize, in RQ1, I analyzed TPS samples using Swales' (1990) move and step framework. In RQ2, I used the Hyland and Tse (2004) model of interactional metadiscourse and applied it to the same TPS samples as in RQ1. For RQ3, I interviewed four experienced TPS readers and then used Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach to analyze their interviews. After detailing the data collection and the analysis process for the study's research questions in this chapter, the following chapter presents the data analysis findings.

# Chapter 4: Findings

As mentioned in the previous chapters, this study aimed to investigate the rhetorical patterns and metadiscoursal features present in the TPS genre. To conduct the study, I self-compiled a corpus of TPSs and interviewed experienced TPS readers. In this chapter, I report the findings derived from my investigation. The findings in this chapter are presented in the order of the research questions (RQs) stated in chapter two. First, I presented the moves and steps in the TPS corpus (RQ1). Secondly, I comment on the metadiscourse markers found in the TPSs (RQ2). In this section, I start first by presenting metadiscourse features in the whole corpus, and I then present the metadiscourse devices in relation to the moves and steps found. Finally, I report the findings from the interviews with TPS readers (RQ3).

## 4.1 Rhetorical Patterns of Teaching Philosophy Statements (RQ1)

The analysis of the corpus revealed that writers of the TPs tended to use a combination of three moves to rhetorically construct and present their teaching philosophy, namely: *1) beliefs stating, 2) teaching practices description,* and *3) competence claim,* as seen in Table 4. Writers also used 13 steps in order to achieve the moves' rhetorical purposes. Although these moves and steps are given numbers such as move 1, 2 and 3 or step 1, 2, 3, etc., these numbers were just used for coding purposes and do not indicate the move's location in the text. The moves were woven together or occur cyclically in the texts and not always presented linearly. In the following section, I will provide a description of each move and its associated steps along with excerpts from the corpus.

**Table 4.** The Frequency of Moves and Steps Found in the TPS Corpus.

| Move/step | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Move 1: Beliefs stating** | **55** | **100%** |
| M1S1: Conceptualization of teaching | 54 | 98% |
| M1S2: Conceptualization of students and learning | 52 | 95% |
| M1S3: Related beliefs | 26 | 47% |
| **Move 2: Teaching practices description** | **55** | **100%** |
| M2S1: Highlighting learning facilitation practices | 54 | 98% |
| M2S2: Aim of the teaching practice | 39 | 71% |
| M2S3: Evidence of effectiveness | 32 | 58% |
| M2S4: Creating a classroom environment | 19 | 35% |
| M2S5: Assessment practices | 12 | 22% |
| **Move 3: Competence claim** | **42** | **76%** |
| M3S1: Professional characteristics/attributes | 34 | 62% |
| M3S2: Teaching experience | 21 | 38% |
| M3S3: Relevant experience/skills/capabilities | 16 | 29% |
| M3S4: Benefits to bring to the target school | 12 | 22% |
| M3S5: Knowledge in course design/development | 4 | 7% |

**Note.** M = move; S = step

With regard to the move frequency, as stated in the previous chapter, determining the optionality of a move or a step is not a clear-cut process in the literature. To determine if a move or a step is optional or obligatory in the present study, a cut-off point was established to measure the stability of any move or step. That is, if a certain move/step occurred in more than 95% of occurrences in the corpus, it was considered obligatory, while if it occurred in less than this percentage, it was labeled as optional. The rationale behind selecting 95% as the threshold stemmed entirely from the observed findings of the present study. As Table 4 shows, there is a pronounced gap after 95%, with the subsequent highest percentage being 76% (from Move 3

*competence claim*). This considerable difference could indicate the obligatory presence of the moves or steps appearing in more than 95%.

Considering this threshold, Move 3 *competence claim* is the only optional move in the data, as it appeared in less than 95% of the TPSs. The other two moves (i.e., *teaching practices description* and *beliefs stating*) are obligatory as they appeared in all of the TPS samples in my corpus. Table 4 cross-references the move types, their associated steps, and their frequency and percentage of occurrence.

### *4.1.1 Move 1: Beliefs Stating*

This move involved the TPS writers sharing their beliefs about teaching and learning. The move was also found to be obligatory as it appeared in all of the statements. This move is realized in three variations: *1) conceptualization of teaching, 2) conceptualization of students and learning,* and *3) related beliefs.* The average of these steps occurrence within this move is 2.4 steps per statement. This means that whenever this move occurs in a statement, it contains on average 2.4 steps. Further descriptions of the steps are provided below, along with examples from the corpus.

Move 1: Step 1: Conceptualization of Teaching [M1S1]. In this step, the writer expresses his or her personal beliefs and assumptions about the teaching profession and the teacher's role in the classroom, as in examples 4a and b. Also, in this step, writers included some of their overarching goals or objectives that they intended to accomplish. This step existed in 54 TPs (98%), making it obligatory.

(4) a. Regardless of how students end up in my classes, my job is to ensure they achieve a return on their investment of time, energy, and money. (Participant #5)

b. My mission is to help students develop linguistic and cultural knowledge beyond the textbook, draw connections between their classroom materials and broader social issues, and hone their awareness of learning strategies and their own strengths. (Participant #59)

Move 1: Step 2: Conceptualization of Students and Learning [M1S2]. The aim of the step is for the writers to express their 1) personal beliefs, 2) assumptions about students and how learning takes place, and 3) beliefs about how a certain approach could enhance the students' learning. This is also found to be an obligatory step as it occurs in all of the TPs except one, constituting 95% of the total occurrence. It is worth differentiating between this step and the previous one, M1S1. The difference between M1S1 and M1S2 lies in the focus of the underlying beliefs for each step. M1S1 centers around the educator's beliefs about their own roles, responsibilities, and goals for the teaching process. For instance, the emphasis in example 4a above is on the teacher's duty to the students, underscoring the educator's responsibilities. Likewise, in example 4b, the teacher is articulating their personal mission to teaching. In this example, although the writer touched upon her contribution to the student, this is not a conceptualization of learning as it centered around the teacher and her mission. On the other hand, M1S2 is different as it is concerned more with the student and the nature of learning itself. So, unlike M1S1, this step is more centered around the students' beliefs and what they need or how they acquire, process, or internalize knowledge. In example 5a, the statement is centered around the students and their experiences. The same is true for example 5b where the writer states how learning takes place; thus, it is coded as conceptualization of learning.

(5) a. Everyone we meet in the classroom brings a lifetime of home, community and classroom experience: they are not clean slates. (Participant #4)

b. Research on language acquisition has shown that students can learn vocabulary and grammar with mere repetition, but to actually acquire those ideas in a way that facilitates language use, they must be engaged in interaction where the meaning of the vocabulary and structures are necessary for communication (see, e.g., Lee & Van Patten 2003). (Participant #18)

Move 1: Step 3: Related Beliefs [M1S3]**.** The function of this step is to express any beliefs that might not be directly or overtly related to teaching. This step is different than the previous two as the focus here is on things other than teaching and learning. Most writers included their beliefs about languages and linguistics, as in example 6a, while others included beliefs about different concepts, such as example 6b, where the writer stated how he views administration. With a total occurrence of 47%, this optional step was the least common in this move.

(6) a. Research over the past few decades—especially on understudied languages—has revealed significant cross-linguistic variation in how languages encode meaning. At the same time, however, this expanding empirical landscape has encouraged a productive synthesis of semantic theory and typology, allowing semantic theories to both explain and be held accountable for the typological facts. (X40)

b. Like teaching, administrating can also be conceptualized in terms of environment building: shaping a vibrant, diverse, and supportive intellectual community (X6, Pos. 4)

### *4.1.2 Move 2: Teaching Practices Description*

This move is dedicated to outlining the various strategies, approaches, and topics that authors of the TPSs utilized in their classrooms. This move appeared in all 55 TPSs in the corpus, indicating that it is obligatory. It is comprised of five sub-steps: *highlighting learning*

*facilitation practices, aim of the teaching practice, evidence of effectiveness, creating a classroom environment* and *assessment practices.* Under this move, TPS authors utilized an average of 2.8 steps.

Move 2: Step 1: Highlighting Learning Facilitation Practices [M2S1]. The function of this step is for the teachers to discuss any topics, techniques, strategies, or activities they may apply in their teaching. Except for one instance, this step occurred in all of the TPSs in the corpus, accounting for 98% of the total occurrence. This makes this step an obligatory step in the TPS samples in the data. Examples 7a and b below are typical examples of this step.

(7) a. In my classes, I spend time demonstrating how technology can be used to benefit writing, such as through collaboration on platforms like Google Docs or in the revisions process with the "track changes" and "commenting" features of Microsoft Word. (Participant #17)

b. Another way I facilitate student learning is by helping students engage with course material outside of the classroom. For example, in Ling 320 (Morphology, i.e., word structure) I guide students through a course project in which the entire class gathers novel data on a topic rooted in course topics, but that is chosen together by me and the students. (Participant #18)

Move 2: Step 2: Aim of the Teaching Practice [M2S2]**.** This step outlines the purpose of implementing a particular teaching strategy or approach. The author would clearly state the motivation for their chosen instructional strategy in the previous step. About 71% of the TPSs contained this step, making it the second-most frequent step in this move. This step does not always stand alone and is usually associated with the previous step [M2S1]. Examples 8a and b show how this step occurs in the corpus.

(8) a. so that I can have more time for interactive activities during classes. (Participant #3)

b. In order to promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom, …. (Participant #21)

Move 2: Step 3: Evidence of Effectiveness [M2S3**]**. The authors of the TPSs provided information showing how their teaching practices were effective and how they positively impacted the students. Students' reactions to the teaching practices are the most commonly used indicator of evidence of effectiveness, such as example 9a. Authors of the TPs, in some instances, showcased the efficacy of their teaching by providing tangible facts about the student learning outcomes, as in example 9b. This step was identified in 58% of the samples, indicating that it is optional.

(9) a. As students anonymously recorded in a class evaluation, "I love the comments she gives. They feel very personal, easy to understand, and helpful. I've never had a teacher do something like this," and "I tend to take her advice as she wants me to succeed." (Participant #7)

b. When several of these projects are given throughout the semester, my students have shown tremendous growth in their ability to create their own knowledge and to structure convincing arguments about their hypotheses (Participant #21)

Move 2: Step 4: Creating a classroom environment [M2S4]. This step refers to the writers' description of efforts to create a conducive learning environment in the classroom (e.g., inclusive, positive, fearless). Although it could be viewed as a learning facilitation strategy and grouped with the M2S1 (i.e., *highlighting learning facilitation practices*), it was considered a distinct step for two reasons. Firstly, it has a slightly different objective than M2S1. Creating a classroom environment is a general concept that aims to set the stage for learning before learning takes place, while M2S1, as elaborated earlier, involves the actual activities that lead to

facilitating engagement and understanding. Secondly, TPS writers frequently identified this as a recurring theme that warranted a separate step. This step is optional, as it appeared in only 35% of the TPSs. The excepts below are examples of this step.

(10) a. I maintain a positive, welcoming environment where students can exert their agency as they navigate the process of identity (re)construction that comes from the language-learning process (Participant #2)

b. In my classroom and beyond, I build an inclusive and welcoming environment where students feel safe to participate, share opinions, discuss, and ask questions. (Participant #11)

Move 2: Step 5: Assessment Practices [M2S5]. This is also another optional step as it is the least common step in this move occurring in only 22% of the texts. The aim of the step is to describe the various evaluation or assessment approaches the teachers used in their classrooms (example 11a and b).

(11) a. Second, I tend to diversify the way they are evaluated for their course performance with grade. In this case, I adopted a wide range of assessment tools including homework assignment, quizzes, class participation, midterm/final exams, project presentation, and sometimes extra credit assignments. (Participant #54)

b. From most of the courses I previously taught (e.g. Java programming), if possible, I always prefer to assess student performance from either a small task given to them by the end of the course, or from their performance at each stage of a task (typically 3-4 stages) (Participant #15)

### *4.1.3 Move 3: Competence Claim*

This move captures the writers' effort to showcase their expertise in teaching and provides information about their qualifications and attributes that would present them as competent teachers. It appears to be an optional move as it occurs in only 76% of TPS, which makes it the least common move compared to the other two. This move is realized by five different steps with an average of 2.0 steps per TPS. These steps include *teaching experience, knowledge in course design/ development, personal characteristics/attributes that make an effective teacher, relevant experience/skills/capabilities,* and *benefits to bring to the target school*. None of these steps occurred in all of the move instances, so they appeared as optional steps.

Move 3: Step 1: Professional Characteristics/Attributes [M3S1]. The function of this step is to showcase the professional attributes that the writers possess that make them successful teachers. Some of these attributes are the willingness to learn and improve personally and professionally (example 12a), the awareness of diversity (example 12b), and commitment to student success (example 12c). This step appeared in more TPSs than any other steps in this move, as it occurred in 62% of the TPs.

(12) a. In highlighting how exploration and extension relates to teaching students, these words also relate to my professional development. Specifically, I continue to investigate ways to improve my teaching by exploring one new approach, assignment, or tool a semester, if it works, and how it can be extended. (Participant #57)

b. My teaching experiences and goals reflect my commitment to the advancement of underrepresented scholars from racialized and lower-income backgrounds. (Participant #48)

c. I also make myself available for consultation through office hours or emails to make sure that learners' individual needs in every aspect of the course can be addressed timely. (Participant #54)

Move 3: Step 2: Teaching Experience [M3S2]. In this step, the writers provide information about their teaching experience, such as the number of years they have taught (example 13a), the types of courses they have experience teaching in their current or previous institutions, or the types of students they have had in their classrooms (examples 13b). The step was found in 38% of TPSs in the corpus. Below are two examples of this step extracted from the corpus:

(13) a. I have over six years of experience teaching linguistics across a range of subfields. At Grinnell College, I have taught introductory linguistics, phonetics and phonology, loanword adaptation, tone, morphology, and field methods. This year, I am teaching typology and offering a course on experimental linguistics. (Participant #56)

b. I have taught (a) general and academic English as a foreign language to children and adults; (b) academic English as a second language (ESL) to international students; (c) content-based classes to children, undergraduate, and graduate students. (Participant #11)

Move 3: Step 3: Relevant Experience/Skills/Capabilities [M3S3]. In this step, the writers attempt to highlight any previous experience or skill that is not mainly teaching but could contribute to their teaching competency. For instance, the teacher may highlight the mentoring experience they may have had with students, as in example 14a, or discuss any competence they have, as in example 14b. This step occurred in 29% of TPSs.

(14) a. Upon graduation, I will have had experience in the mentoring of undergraduate and graduate level students. Along with a Second Language Studies (SLS) faculty member, I received funding from the College of Arts & Letters and the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, to mentor an undergraduate student through research, specifically through EEG and eye-tracking data collection. (Participant #27)

b. Being a French native is an advantage since it gives me extensive knowledge about the French culture. Being also from a culturally diverse background allows me to help students develop cross-cultural awareness. (Participant #60)

Move 3: Step 4: Benefits to Bring to the Target School [M3S4]. The aim of this step is for writers to present the strengths they are able to bring to the target school, the school where the TPS author is applying. Benefits might include things like the types of courses they can teach (example 15a) or any other benefits that the author can deliver (example 15b). This step is the second least frequent step, occurring in only 22% of TPSs in the corpus.

(15) a. I can teach introductory and advanced courses in phonetics, phonology, morphology, sociolinguistics (including language contact and dialect variation), and applied linguistics (including early and later language acquisition) (Participant #20)

b. Furthermore, due to my experience as a psycholinguist, I could help advise students interested in the Ph.D. Cognitive Science Designation at [Target university]. (Participant #27)

Move 3: Step 5: Knowledge in Course Design/ Development [M3S5]. The step refers to the writers' effort to highlight their knowledge and experience in designing or developing course content, exams, or any pedagogical materials. This step was the least frequently employed step in

the corpus. Only four writers of TPSs used it, constituting a mere 7% of the cooccurrence. Statements in examples 16a and b represent this step.

(16) a. I designed each of these courses, all of which, except for introductory linguistics and typology, have been new offerings in [ABC university] linguistics program. (Participant #56)

b. I also helped design lesson materials for an upper division phonetics class (LING 313). (Participant #43)

## 4.2 Metadiscourse Features (RQ2)

The manual analysis of the 45,665-word corpus revealed the identification of 3,878 metadiscourse markers used in the corpus. In Section 4.2.1 below, I first comment on the overall usage of metadiscourse markers, regardless of which move they occur in. Later in Section 4.2.2, I present the findings of the metadiscourse occurrence in the moves and steps. Throughout the presentation of the findings, I provide excerpts from the corpus to ensure clarity and coherence of the analysis. In each of these examples, the metadiscourse under discussion is bolded.

### *4.2.1 Overall Findings*

Metadiscourse markers were found to be prevalent across the TPSs. Analyzing the 3,878 markers in more detail reveals that this corresponds with 84.9 cases per 1,000 words, with one marker appearing, on average, in every eight words. This means an average of 70.5 markers in each document. This suggests that in such a relatively short genre (i.e., TPS) writers acknowledge the importance of asserting themselves in the text and presenting their claims confidently and persuasively. Such findings are consistent with what has been found in the literature that academic texts, including research articles, PhD dissertations, books, and book reviews written in applied linguistics, as a soft discipline, are heavily stance-laden (Birhan, 2021;

Hu & Cao, 2015; Hyland, 2004b; Jiang & Hyland, 2015; Kuhi & Behnam, 2011). Table 5 below shows both the raw frequency of these metadiscourse markers' occurrence in the corpus and the percentage of each marker to the total number of metadiscourse markers found. Following the table, Figure 3 offers a visual representation of the data in Table 5 in a pie chart, allowing for instant visual comparison for the metadiscourse markers found in the corpus.

**Table 5**. The Distribution of the Metadiscourse Markers Found in the Corpus

| Category | Raw frequency | Percentage to the total number of metadiscourse |
|---|---|---|
| **Interactional Metadiscourse** | **3,020** | **77.8%** |
| Self-mention | 1,920 | 49.5% |
| Boosters | 432 | 11.1% |
| Attitude Markers | 357 | 9.2% |
| Hedges | 247 | 6.3% |
| Engagement markers | 64 | 1.6% |
| **Interactive Metadiscourse** | **858** | **22.1%** |
| Transitions | 475 | 12.2% |
| Code Gloss | 228 | 5.8% |
| Frame Markers | 95 | 2.4% |
| Evidential | 52 | 1.3% |
| Endophoric Markers | 8 | 0.2% |
| **Total** | **3,878** | **100%** |

When presenting and discussing the findings later, I have opted to focus on reporting the percentage rather than the raw frequency in order to enhance the clarity and the inheritability of the findings. The table shows that the TPS writers used interactional markers (3,020 occurrences) about three times more frequently than interactive markers (858 occurrences). I first

comment on the interactional metadiscourse markers below, and afterward I will present the subcategory of interactive metadiscourse. (see Appendix F for a list of all metadiscourse markers found in the corpus).

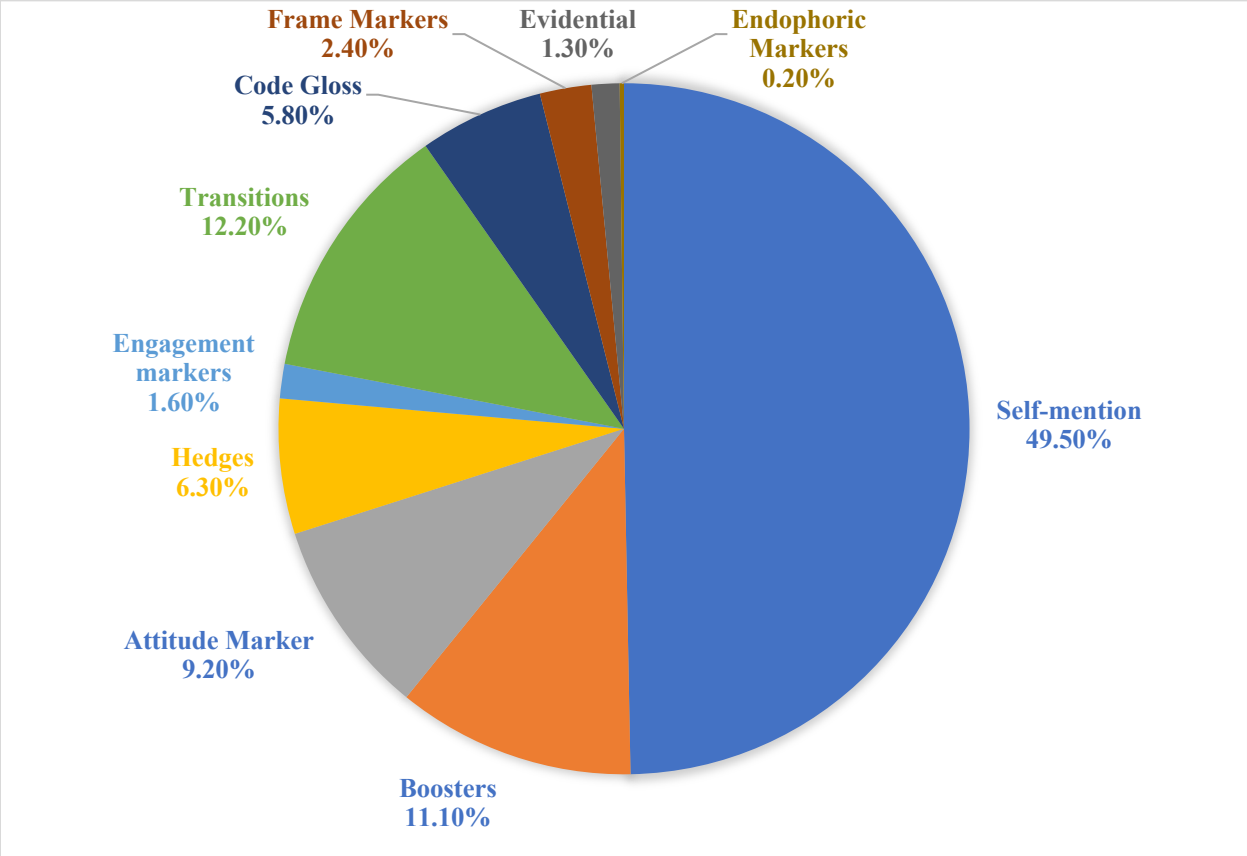


**Figure 3.** Distribution of Metadiscourse Markers in the TPSs

As shown in Table 5, we can see that the usage of the interactional markers subcategories varied significantly. Self-mention was the most frequent marker of all metadiscourse, accounting for almost half of the metadiscourse items found in the corpus (49.5%). Self-mention markers appeared in different forms in the present study: singular and plural first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives referring to the authors. The first-person pronoun (*I*) was the most common

self-mention marker, accounting for nearly half of all self-mention instances in the corpus (1,055 occurrences), followed by the first-person possessive adjective (*my*) (649 occurrences) and then the first-person object pronoun (*me*) (102 occurrences). In addition to using single pronouns, the writers also used plural pronouns. Although the use of the first-person plural to refer to the self is a common strategy in some academic discourses (Hyland, 2001) and is often employed by the writers to reduce their intrusion in the text (Hyland, 2002a), it was infrequently employed by the TPS writers in comparison to their use of the singular self-reference. Only in 92 instances did writers use either the exclusive *we*, *us,* or *ours* to refer to themselves.

A closer look at the usage of these pronouns in the corpus shows that they were used mainly for two purposes: 1) to refer to the writer and his/her students in an attempt to show that the writer is actively involved in the educational journey alongside the students as in example 17a, and 2) to refer to the writer and the other members of the educational community as in example 17b (i.e., teachers, instructors, professors). Coding the latter use of the pronouns was problematic because it could be viewed as an engagement marker where the writer is trying to bring the reader into the text, or it could be viewed as an example of reader-exclusive pronouns and coded as self-mention. However, in most of the examples where such a pronoun was used without directly referring to the writers and their students, it was accompanied by a phrase that positioned the teachers with other educators or teachers emphasizing shared experiences and responsibilities (i.e., teachers, instructors, professors). Therefore, it was believed these pronouns are reader-exclusive, as the writers are perhaps attempting to align themselves with a certain educational community rather than trying to rely on the shared understanding between them and the readers.

(17) a. During my Language and Gender class, **we** would spend the first hour discussing the reading (Participant #38)

b. The competitive nature of grad school applications and the job market make this experience vital, and it is **our** responsibility **as instructors** to provide every opportunity for students to undertake meaningful and substantial research (Participant #43)

It is worth mentioning that there were other instances of self-mention where the writers referred to themselves indirectly, such as *as a language teacher* or *as a linguist* as in example 18. These expressions were not included in the count of self-mention markers in the present study. These expressions often help providing the perspective or role in a particular context rather than a self-reference; therefore they were excluded.

(18) **As a teacher of linguistics,** of course I hope to instill in my students a love of language and an understanding of its complexities and of various theories and methodologies. (Participant #21)

Boosters were the second most interactional metadiscourse marker found in the corpus, representing 11.1% of the total metadiscourse. Boosters such as *I believe, clearly, certainly,* etc., imply the writers' certainty and emphasize the force of proposition (Hyland, 2005b); therefore, TPS writers used such a valuable rhetorical strategy to convince the readers of their claims and arguments about teaching.

On the other hand, hedges such as *might, often, relatively*, etc., were not used as commonly as boosters. It was used half as often as the boosters were used, accounting for 6.3% of the total metadiscourse markers. Hedges are the fourth in frequency in the interactional metadiscourse. Hedges are usually used to demonstrate caution about the claim presented. Unlike boosters, hedges "imply that a statement is based on plausible reasoning rather than certain

knowledge" (Hyland, 2008, p. 148). This goes against the main purpose of teaching philosophy statements, where teachers are assumed to engage in self-reflection to articulate their beliefs and expertise. TPS as a promotional genre aims to show that the teacher demonstrates a strong sense of purpose and confidence in their view of teaching and learning. However, expressions that denote uncertainty, such as *perhaps* in example 19 can potentially undermine the essence of the TPS genre. This could perhaps interpret the minimal usage of hedges in the corpus.

(19) **Perhaps** engaging in dialogue about the objectives of each activity helps students recognize its benefits … (Particioant #7)

Another common metadiscourse feature in the TPS genre is attitude markers, accounting for 9.2% of the total metadiscourse. Attitude markers reflect the writers' attitudes to propositions in order to "[convey] surprise, agreement, importance, obligation, frustration, and so on" (Hyland, 2005, p. 53). They were signaled in the corpus by adjectives (e.g., *important, appropriate*), adverbs (e.g., *essentially, fundamentally*), verbs (e.g., *prefer, love*), and nouns (e.g., *joy, key*). Attitude in the data was found to be overtly realized by adjectives, appearing in 283 instances, followed by adverbs (36 instances), verbs (23 instances), and less frequently, nouns (15 instances).

Dueñas (2010) further classifies attitude markers based on the aspect they modify into three categories: significance (i.e., relevance, importance), assessment (i.e., acuity, efficacy, novelty, interestingness, validity, strength, quality), and emotion (i.e., personal, emotional judgments) (p. 63). Table 6 shows that significance is the most frequent, accounting for the largest proportion of attitude markers in the corpus (172 instances) (e.g., *crucial, essential*). Assessment was also frequent, but with a lower number of instances (151) (e.g., *effective, excellent*). Emotion, on the other hand, was not very common in the corpus as it was only used

34 times (e.g., *enjoy, glad*). This could perhaps show that TPS writers avoid relying on showing their emotion toward their teaching philosophy and its implementation. Such explicit insertions of the "affective positions" could be indicative of subjectivity rather than objectivity (Lee & Deakin, 2016, p. 29). In other words, using such emotive terms may indicate that the writers' educational views are derived by personal feelings rather than being impartial or based solely on facts. Further analysis of the distribution of the different categories of attitude markers across the moves will be in the next section.

**Table 6.** Types of Attitude Markers in the Corpus

| Category | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Significance | 172 |
| Assessment | 151 |
| Emotion | 34 |

The last category of interactional markers is engagement markers, which are rhetorical choices writers make to acknowledge the presence of their readers (Hyland, 2005). According to Hyland (2005a), readers' engagement can be in the form of pronouns, questions, personal asides, appeal to shared knowledge, and directives (refer to Hyland 2005a for more information and examples on each). Through using such rhetorical choices, "a writer can seek to monitor readers' understanding and response to a text, and manage the impression of the writer" (Hyland, 2001, p. 552). Engagement markers were the least frequent interactional metadiscourse markers. They represent only 1.6% of the total metadiscourse. The engagement markers in the present study come mostly in the form of inclusive *we* or *our.* There were other instances of engagement markers in the format of the second-person pronoun *you* or in the form of a question. However,

these were atypical cases as only three writers used the former, and two writers used the latter, possibly indicating their personal preferences or writing style. Despite their low frequency in the genre, engagement markers present interesting patterns in terms of their appearance in the genre's various moves, as most of the engagement markers were used in Move 1 (i.e., belief stating) — more discussion about it in Section 4.2.2.

Apart from the interactional markers, the interactive metadiscourse was used much less than the interactional ones, as stated earlier. Interactive metadiscourse serves the purpose of connecting the proposition, providing elaboration, linking the different parts of the text, and presenting supporting information. Its function is to organize the text in order to "help readers recover the writer's intentions, creating surface cohesion and influencing understandings of propositional material" (Hyland & Jiang, 2022, p. 8). There were 858 interactive metadiscourse markers in the data, accounting for 22.1% of all metadiscourse.

Transitions were the most common feature of interactive metadiscourse and the second most frequent marker of all metadiscourse (i.e., both interactional and interactive). Transitions appeared in 12.2% of the total metadiscourse instances. Transition markers are conjunction and adverbial phrases that help the reader understand the relationship between clauses, which leads to understanding the writer's argument (Hyland & Jiang, 2018). It is worth mentioning here that in the current study, I followed Hyland and Jiang (2018) and Zhou and Jiang (2023) by not considering *and* and *or* in the count of transitions. They were seen as default connectors for making arguments rather than serving rhetorical purposes. Also, the same form of transition marker can function as metadiscourse by connecting the writer's argument, as in example 20a, or propositional purposes by linking events beyond the text, as in example 20b. The latter was also excluded from the count.

(20) a. Success, **however**, relies on getting to know each student on a more personal, individualized level and attention to learner needs through needs analyses (Long, 2007) (Participant #2)

b. A set key component in the student-centered learning environment I try to create is **however** activities that require students to practice, to test their understanding and knowledge (Participant #10)

The second most frequent interactive metadiscourse found in the data is code gloss, appearing in 5.8% of all metadiscourse. Code gloss is a rhetorical strategy writers use to supply additional information to the proposition through rephrasing and illustrating what they have written (Hyland, 2005). It appeared as an explicit lexical form such as *for example* or *I mean,* in an abbreviation such as, *e.g.,* or *i.e*., or within a parenthesis with no overt marker such as example 21.

(21) A hyflex design focuses on integrating face-to-face **(synchronous)** and online learning **(asynchronous)** experiences in which all students need to complete the same combination of online and in-person activities (Beatty, 2019) (Participant #57)

According to Hyland (2007b), code gloss in academic texts serves two main pragmatic functions: reformulation and exemplification. Reformulation refers to presenting or elaborating the same information that is already stated in different words in order to offer an alternative point of view or to enforce the conveyed message. Exemplification, on the other hand, involves elaborating the previous unit of the discourse using examples. The analysis of the usage of code gloss demonstrates that exemplifications were employed 82% of the time, whereas reformulations were used in only 18% of the instances. These findings indicate that writers of

TPSs often help the readers of their statements comprehend the content by providing tangible examples.

TPS writers also employed frame markers (e.g., *in sum, finally*), but the usage was significantly smaller compared to the other markers. Frame markers appeared in 2.4% of the total metadiscourse in the corpus. The infrequent use of frame markers is not surprising and could be attributed to the brevity of the genre, which minimizes the need for explicit terms to signal the text structure. The statement in example 22a is an instance of how frame markers are used in the dataset. The same applies to endophoric markers, the least frequently used metadiscourse markers in the corpus. There were only eight endophoric markers in the corpus, constituting 0.2% of the total markers in the corpus. This also could be attributed to the concise format and lack of different sections with explicit headings or subheadings that are usually found in longer texts such as dissertations or research articles. This seems to be a pattern across genres that are known for its conciseness. For instance, analogous observation was found in book reviews (Tse & Hyland, 2006). Tse and Hyland found that frame markers and endophoric makers were minimally used and have attributed it to the concise nature of the genre, which, therefore reduces the need for such linguistic items. Example 22b is for endophoric markers found in the corpus.

(22) a. **In sum**, I will ensure that I support the various needs of my undergraduate and graduate students and push them to further explore the bounds of their knowledge and abilities. (Participant #27)

b. **Below** I would like to provide examples of the teaching methodologies that I use my Russian language classes and demonstrate how these methodologies can help embrace a diversity of students and perspectives. (Participant #45)

Evidentials were also used infrequently in the corpus. This feature constituted 1.3% of the total metadiscourse markers. Evidentials help "[guiding] reader's interpretation and establish an authorial command of the subject" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 51). Close analysis of the evidential instances revealed TPS writers' strong preference for nonintegral citation. Nonintegral citation is a method of citing sources without directly incorporating the references in the body of the text. It usually appears at the end of a sentence or a paragraph (Swales, 2014). In this citation type, the emphasis is generally on the cited proposition rather than the individuals. This type of citation "[allows] writers to foreground the cited information and blend the useful information taken from various sources with their own style and purpose of writing" (Zhang, 2022, p. 12). Therefore, the preferences of this type of citation could be attributed again to the brevity of the genre. Example 23 below shows how evidentials were used in the corpus.

(23) a. it is the instructor's duty to employ humor, to be respectful to students, to be open to engaging in reciprocal learning, and thus, to create an environment that will promote and foster learner autonomy **(Cotterall, 2000).** (Participant #1)

b. **According to Dr. Susan Allan,** differentiated instruction provides multiple assignments within each unit, tailored for students of different levels of achievement, it allows students to choose, with the teacher's guidance ways to learn and how to demonstrate what they have learned and it structures class assignments which require high levels of critical thinking but permit a range of responses (Participant #46)

In sum, the overall distribution of metadiscourse markers in the data is as follows: Self-mention is by far the most common marker in the corpus (49.5%). Following self-mention are transition (12.2%), boosters (11.1%), and attitude markers (9.2%) as primary metadiscoursal features, together making up one-third of the metadiscourse of the TPSs in my data. Hedges and

code gloss were moderately used, making up 6.3% and 5.8%, respectively. Other markers were minimally used, such as frame markers (2.4%), engagement markers (1.6%), evidential (1.3%), and endophoric markers (0.2%) which together make up approximately 5.5% of all metadiscourse markers found.

In addition to uncovering the overall frequency of these metadiscourse markers within the TPS corpus, the analysis also revealed interesting patterns across statements. From Table 7, we can infer that some metadiscourse could be a standard feature of the genre regardless of the proportions of the total number of markers that appeared in the text. Four markers appeared in all 55 TPS samples, i.e., self-mention, boosters, attitude markers, and transition. These four markers have the highest proportion to the total number of metadiscourse markers and are also consistently present in every text within the corpus. This consistent appearance across the TPS samples in the corpus suggests their central role in constructing the genre.

**Table 7.** Metadiscourse Markers Appearance in the TPSs

| **Category** | **Number of texts** |
|---|---|
| **Interactional Metadiscourse** | |
| Self-mention | 55 |
| Booster | 55 |
| Attitude Marker | 55 |
| Hedges | 49 |
| Engagement markers | 20 |
| **Interactive Metadiscourse** | |
| Transitions | 55 |
| Code Gloss | 49 |
| Frame Markers | 35 |
| Evidential | 17 |
| Endophoric Markers | 8 |

Hedges and code gloss appeared slightly less frequently across the statements. Each was found in 49 of the 55 TPSs in the corpus. This means they appeared in about 90% of the statements, suggesting a common but not ubiquitous rhetorical strategy in TPSs. Interestingly, although the proportion of these markers was very low (6.3% and 5.8%, respectively), they were commonly prevalent across the statements. This shows that although these two markers are not always relied upon, they are a standard feature in the genre.

Frame markers present an interesting pattern as well. Although they constitute 2.4% of the total metadiscourse markers in the corpus, they appeared in about two-thirds of the TPSs (35 statements). Other features, such as engagement makers, evidentials, and endophoric Markers, were used less frequently, appearing in 20, 17, and 8 TPSs, respectively. Their minimal use could be indicative of context-specific to address a specific rhetorical situation (as we will see their association to the rhetorical moves in section 4.2.2 later) rather than a broad genre-wide convention. This section was devoted to presenting the findings of the metadiscourse features in the TPSs, describing their appearance in terms of their aggregate frequency within the corpus as a whole and their distribution across the statements in the corpus. The following section will continue presenting the findings about metadiscourse markers, delving further into their appearance in the genre's various moves.

### *4.2.2 Mapping of the Metadiscourse Markers in the Rhetorical Moves*

To better understand the usage of the metadiscoursal features in the text and their rhetorical functions, this section will illustrate the distribution of these markers across the three rhetorical moves comprising the genre (see Section 4.1 for more information about the moves). It is important to note here that I am not claiming a one-to-one relation between the moves and the metadiscourse markers by exploring the metadiscourse markers in each move. Such a conclusion

cannot be made unless the genre has a rigid convention, such as vows at a wedding or the oath at a public swearing (Flowerdew & Forest, 2009). In these rigid genres, there is usually no room for variation because certain sets of phrases and formulas must be followed in each move. The analysis would help us anticipate to what extent a certain marker is likely to appear in certain move.

The raw frequency of the metadiscourse items used in each move is presented in Table 8, along with the percentage of occurrence of these items in relation to the other metadiscourse markers employed in the same move. In terms of frequency, self-mention is the most frequent metadiscourse marker employed in all of the three moves, surpassing all other metadiscourse makers frequency by a substantial margin. However, the employment of the other markers across the moves and the associated steps yielded intriguing findings.

**Table 8.** The Distribution of the Metadiscourse Markers across the Rhetorical Moves

| Category | M1: Beliefs Stating | | M2: Teaching Practices Description | | M3: Competence Claim | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Raw frequency | Percentage | Raw frequency | Percentage | Raw frequency | Percentage |
| **Interactional Metadiscourse** | **1,228** | **80.2%** | **1,272** | **74.5%** | **520** | **81.1%** |
| Self-mention | 561 | 36.6% | 948 | 55.5% | 411 | 64.1% |
| Boosters | 281 | 18.3% | 114 | 6.6% | 37 | 5.7% |
| Attitude Markers | 214 | 13.9% | 98 | 5.7% | 45 | 7.02% |
| Hedges | 118 | 7.7% | 105 | 6.1% | 24 | 3.7% |
| Engagement markers | 54 | 3.5% | 7 | 0.4 % | 3 | 0.4% |

**Table 8.** (Continued).

| Category | M1: Beliefs Stating | | M2: Teaching Practices Description | | M3: Competence Claim | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Raw frequency | Percentage | Raw frequency | Percentage | Raw frequency | Percentage |
| **Interactive Metadiscourse** | **302** | **19.7%** | **435** | **25.4%** | **121** | **18.8%** |
| Transitions | 187 | 12.2% | 213 | 12.4% | 75 | 11.7% |
| Code Gloss | 36 | 2.3% | 161 | 9.4% | 31 | 4.8% |
| Frame Markers | 39 | 2.5% | 43 | 2.5% | 13 | 2.03 % |
| Evidential | 38 | 2.4% | 13 | 0.7% | 1 | 0.1% |
| Endophoric Markers | 2 | 0.1% | 5 | 0.2 % | 1 | 0.1% |
| **Total** | **1,530** | **100%** | **1,707** | **100%** | **641** | **100%** |

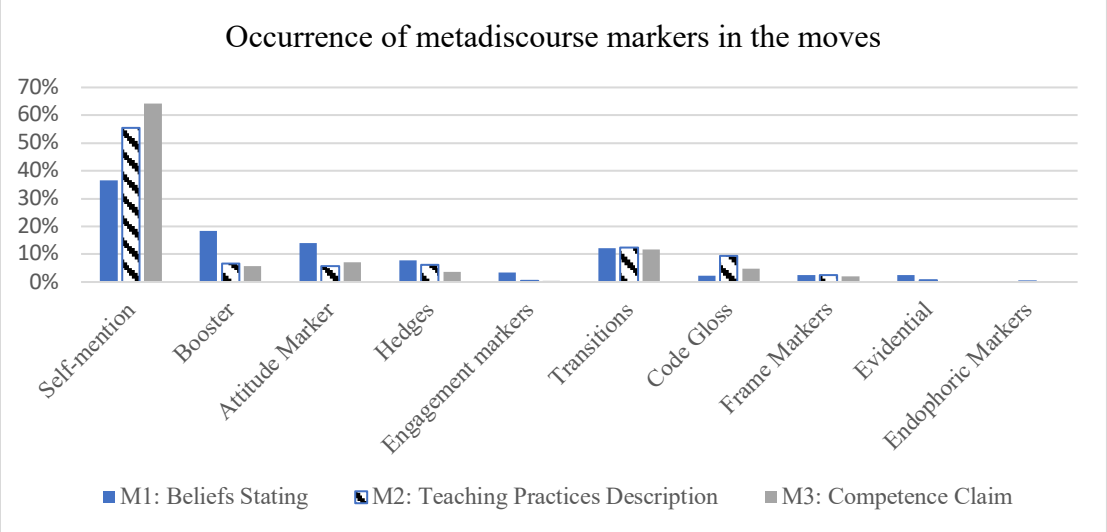


**Figure 4.** The Distribution of Metadiscourse Markers in the Different Moves

**4.2.2.1 Metadiscourse Markers in Move 1**. Through Move 1, beliefs stating, TPS writers expressed their personal beliefs, assumptions about the profession of teaching, and the teacher's role in the classroom. The utilization of interactional metadiscourse markers in this move demonstrates a noteworthy departure from their usage patterns in the other two moves. As shown in Figure 4, the first noteworthy observation is that the use of self-mention was not used as much as in Move 2 and 3. Though still the most frequent metadiscourse marker in all markers used in this move (36%), its relative proportion is lower in comparison to the other two moves 55.5% and 64%. Statements in example 24 show the use of self-mention in the TPSs.

(24) a. With this as a starting point, **I** believe it to be my responsibility to bring to the surface students' current understandings of a particular topic (Participant #37)

b. **My** perspective as an instructor guiding the learning and acquisition process in a second language classroom is two-fold … (Participant #7)

The second most frequent metadiscourse marker used in this move is boosters (e.g., *believe, must, fully, always*). The use of boosters account for 18.3% of all metadiscourse markers used in this move. The way that TPS writers employ boosters can be seen in the following examples.

(25) a. This kind of discussion leads to **greater** appreciation of linguistic diversity, and it **greatly** benefits speakers of non-standard dialects (Participant #21)

b. As future leaders, university students **must** have analytical, evaluative, metacognitive, and critical thinking skills (Participant #11)

Compared to boosters, hedges were used less frequently. Hedges are linguistics items that "[suggest] a reluctance to assert a proposition" (Hyland, 1998, p.241). Therefore, it was found that TPS writers did not use hedges as much as they used boosters in this move. Hedges

constitute 7.7% of the total number of the metadiscourse markers in this move. The pattern of occurrence of boosters and hedges in this move presents a different pattern than the other two moves. Instances of hedges usage are in example 26. This might be due to the nature of the genre that necessitates the writers to be confident in their view of teaching and learning. This might be due to the nature of the genre that necessitates the writers to be confident in their view of teaching and learning. Also, another interpretation is that these claims are somewhat universal and agreed upon, so writers are not hesitant to boast their claims, as in example 25b above.

(26) a. Critical thinking is enhanced when it is informed by different perspectives, and practicing critical thinking skills is **more likely** to lead to success in a supportive and engaging environment. (Participant #21)

b. …. because I **think** that these perspectives can help students to think more meta-cognitively about their own learning. (Participant #6)

Attitude markers (e.g., *important, essential, crucial, great, ideal*) as in example 27 were also prevalent in this move accounting for 13.9% of all metadiscourse marker occurred within this move. These markers were used less frequently in the other two moves accounting for 5.7% and 7.02% in Moves 2 and 3, respectively.

(27) a. I believe that one of the most **crucial** aspects of teaching is establishing a relationship with each student (Participant #18)

b. In my vision, how much content the students can remember from the course is far less **important** than how much course knowledge they can use to solve practical problems (Participant #15)

Another notable finding is the usage of engagement markers in this move constituting for 3.5% of all metadiscourse. As shown in Figure 4, this is a relatively high proportion compared to

the other two moves, where they account for a mere 0.4% in each move. As stated earlier, engagement markers in the entire corpus were dominated by writer-reader inclusive pronouns (e.g., *we, us. Our*). Almost all of the examples of engagement markers in this move were writer-reader pronouns as in example 26a. There were some exceptions of using second person pronoun (example 28b) or a question (example 28c).

(28) a. **We** learn to write a research report by building on **our** knowledge of writing paragraphs and synthesizing ideas from multiple authors. (Participant #31)

b. Knowing **your** students is key in connecting their learning to the real world (Participant #53)

c. **What is support knowledge**? (Participant #25)

Similar to how engagement markers were used, the TPS writers used evidential relatively more in this move than in the others. In this move, evidentials account for 2.4% of all metadiscourse markers within this move compared to 0.7% in Move 2 and 0.1% in Move 3. Such findings are expected as the writer might need to back their beliefs with some established references. They do not need to do so when discussing their instructional practices or their experiences in the other two moves. Examples 29a and b show how evidentials were used in this move.

(29) a. While students frequently bring various levels of knowledge into the classroom, this knowledge can be leveraged, shared, and used to engage in collective scaffolding as students work together **(Donato, 19994; Vygotsky, 1978)** (Participant #1)

b. **According to Dr. Susan Allan**, differentiated instruction provides multiple assignments within each unit, tailored for students of different levels of achievement (Participant #46)

Among the three moves, code gloss appeared the least in this move. Code gloss in this move constitutes 2.3% of all metadiscourse markers that occurred in the move. Code gloss accounts for 9.4% and 4.8% of all metadiscourse markers found in Move 2 and 3, respectively. Although exemplifiers instances of code gloss significantly exceeded the instances of reformulators in the genre, the use of reformulators in this move constitutes about 50% of the total number of exemplifiers. Example 30a presents an example of an exemplifier, and example 30b demonstrates how reformulators are used in this move.

(30) a. Good teachers shape the academic lives of their students by helping them develop the habits of learning, **such as** curiosity, imagination, and persistence (Participant #31)

b. Furthermore, interaction is essential for students to collect "negative evidence" that warns them of potential errors in their speech (Gass & Mackey, 2015, p. 183). **In other words**, students can receive feedback on their utterances in the form of correction or negotiation through interaction. (Participant #13)

Frame markers were also found to be used in this move, accounting for 2.4% of the total metadiscourse markers used. The statements in example 31 show their usage in this move. The usage of frame markers was consistent across all moves, with no noticeable variation or unique trend. It accounts for 2.5% of metadiscourse markers in Move 2 and 2.03% of Move 3. Thus, their presence did not yield any distinctive or intriguing observation in relation to the different moves found in the present study.

(31) a. **Finally,** when teaching, I believe it is important to develop all skills and facets of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as the development of communicative competence (Participant #1)

b. **In brief,** I wish that my students, in either an ESL or EFL context, would be able to adopt more active roles and create a community of inquiry with an open mind (Participant #13)

**4.2.2.2 Metadiscourse Markers in Move 2.** Through Move 2, writers highlight the various strategies, approaches or topics discussed in the classroom. This move contained a slightly lower proportion of interactional metadiscourse markers in contrast to the other two moves. About 74.5% of the metadiscourse devices used in this move were interactional markers compared to 80.2% and 81.1% in Move 1 and 3, respectively.

As with the same observation in the other two moves, self-mention was the most frequently used metadiscourse item, constituting 55.5% of all metadiscourse markers used in this move. Boosters and hedges were used at a similar frequency in this move, accounting for 6.6% and 6.1%, respectively. The two statements in example 32 show how writers used boosters in this move.

(32) a. My students **must** score 10,000 points to earn an A, so I build in 12,000 points worth of assignments, distributed evenly throughout the semester. (Participant #23)

b. In my classroom, I **always** encourage students to consider problems from different angles and synthesize information from several sources (Participant #11)

Concerning hedges, it was observed that TPS writers tend to utilize this rhetorical device when discussing their teaching methods in order to convey a sense of general tendency and an approach that is not absolute. This was evident in their usage of terms like *often, typically, usually, generally, tend, try to,* or other similar terms when discussing some of their techniques used in their classrooms. Through the use of these hedges, writers are showing less commitment

to their claims in a way to "make things more or less fuzzy" (Lakoff, 1973, p. 195) in order to demonstrate their flexibility in teaching, as in the two statements in example 33.

(33) a. I **generally** practice cold calling in my lectures and sections: I attempt to call on each student about the same number of times per class (Participant #43)

b. I **may** ask my students to check a powerpoint presentation and answer some questions or do some exercises before coming to class so that I can save time for in-class discussions and group activities. (Participant #3)

Apart from hedges, attitude markers constitute a low proportion in this move compared to the other two. These markers represent 5.7% of all the markers used in this move, while they represent 7.02% and 13.9% of the markers used in Moves 1 and 3, respectively. The statements in example 34 show how attitude markers are used in this move.

(34) a. I also **enjoy** giving students time to work in small groups to discuss and learn from each other in constructive ways. (Participant #21)

b. Establishing and maintaining an inclusive environment is therefore my first guiding principle and the most **essential** aspect of my teaching (Participant #20)

As for the interactive metadiscourse, transitions (12.4%) and code gloss (9.4%) were the two most frequently used markers in this move. Transition did not exhibit any distinctive patterns in this move. Code gloss markers were also present in this move in a relatively high proportion, as seen in Figure 4. It accounts for 9.4% of all metadiscourse markers in this move, while in Moves 1 and 3, the usage of code gloss was relatively low (2.3% and 4.8%, respectively). The usage of code gloss in this move is shown in the two statements in example 35.

(35) a. I seek feedback from them on what I should focus more in my classroom or online lecture recordings. **For example,** when I use a flipped classroom model, I ask my students to post discussion posts expressing what they would like me to discuss in more detail or provide more examples of (Participant #11)

b. In my classes, I spend time demonstrating how technology can be used to benefit writing, **such as** through collaboration on platforms like Google Docs or in the revisions process with the "track changes" and "commenting" features of Microsoft Word. (Participant #17)

**4.2.2.3 Metadiscourse Markers in Move 3**. This move exhibits the most promotional tone within the text, where writers overtly showcase their expertise, qualifications, and attributes that make them stand out. Not surprisingly, self-mention was the most frequent metadiscourse marker, representing 64.1% of the metadiscourse employed in this move. Examples 36a and b show how self-mention is used in this move. This is the highest proportion of a metadiscourse feature among all the three moves. It is true that self-mention was also the most frequent metadiscourse marker in the other two moves; however, its proportion was relatively lower in Move 1 and 2, representing 36.6% and 55.5% of all of the metadiscourse devices used in each move, respectively. This could be attributed to the writers' attempt to intrude into the texts and sound more assertive.

(36) a. Before becoming a faculty member at XXX, **I** taught a variety of courses (Russian language, Russian culture, Linguistics) at multiple institutions (XXX, YYY as adjunct, [University name]) (Participant #18)

b. Before entering my graduate program, **I** worked as a full-time research assistant for the XXX Project (Participant #42)

On a contrasting observation, it is worth noting that writers of TPSs did not use hedging expressions in this move as much as they did in the other two moves. Hedges were found in only 3.7% of metadiscourse instances in this move, while nearly doubling this frequency in Move 1 and 2, accounting for 7.7% and 6.1%, respectively. This means that this move is characterized by a high percentage of self-intrusion in the text and less reliance on the hedging expressions. Examples of usage of hedges are in 37a and b. This is also in line with the higher usage of self-mention potential interpretation where writers might feel that in this move where they discussed their own competency, hedging expression are not appropriate.

(37) a. Students **often** report that my enthusiasm about what I teach is contagious (Participant #20)

b. From the first day they know that I care who they are, and **I try** to illustrate that I am invested in helping each of them succeed (Participant #18)

Transition markers were also prevalent in this move, which constitute the second most frequently employed markers of all metadiscourse items in this move (11.7%). Transitions are seen to serve one of these three semantic functions: addition (e.g., *moreover*, *in addition*), comparison (e.g., *similarly*, *in comparison*), and inference (e.g., *therefore*, *consequently*) (Cao & Hu, 2014). In this move, writers mainly presented concrete factual information about their competence, which entails less complicated arguments than the other moves may. Thus, there was less need to make comparisons or inferences, typically used in constructing more complex arguments. Markers that serve the purpose of addition were the most frequently used items across the move in order to organize its content.

(38) a. **Likewise**, I helped my GiGS mentee—who did plan to continue in linguistics—solidify her research interests, assemble a competitive graduate school application, and land a competitive linguistics research position at [university name]. (Participant #40)

b. **Additionally**, I teach an elective course for non-majors on the linguistics of constructed languages (Participant #44)

Since the types of these experiences or attributes vary in nature (i.e., it could be teaching, mentoring, designing a course, personal attributes, or skills), the additive markers assist the flow of information and also assist the readers in understanding the logical relation between the information presented. For instance, writers mostly use the additive marker *also* to allow the readers to acknowledge the transition between one experience event to the other, as in example 39a and b retrieved from Step 3 of this move.

(39) a. I was **also** a mentor in the student organization in the YYY program for one year to a fellow graduate student, advising them on research, courses, and other aspects of graduate life such as work-life balance. (Participant #27)

b**.** I **also** co-supervised, with XXX, an undergraduate research assistant who helped to record, segment, and analyze data for a corpus of Spanish vowel acoustics. (Participant #43)

Attitude markers were also one of the most common markers in this move, accounting for 7% of the metadiscourse markers employed. Steps 1 and 3 of this move are the best opportunities for the TPS writers to state their evaluation of their past experiences or their own personal/professional attributes. Attitude markers help pull the reader "into a conspiracy of agreement so that it can often be difficult to dispute such judgements" (Hyland, 2018, p. 150). In example 40a, for instance, the writer employed the attitude marker *important* to highlight the

significance of one of her professional attributes, whereas in example 40b, the writers are conveying their judgment about the usefulness of the experience.

(40) a. Lastly but perhaps most **important**, students are comfortable in the knowledge that I am available for them. (Participant #17)

b. These discussions were particularly **useful** to my ABC apprentices, since they did not all plan to pursue linguistics as a career but wanted to leave the project with skills that would be transferable to their future lives and careers. (Participant #40)

In some other instances, however not very common, writers "bring affect to the surface" (Hyland & Jiang, 2016, p.262) through the use of an emotive attitude markers (e.g., love, joy, favorite, passionate) to express their affective position towards the competence claim evidence they provided. As in (41), the writer is explicitly showing her emotional attitude and passion to the experience event (i.e., being a mentor).

(41) In addition to my experience as a teaching assistant and instructor. I am also **passionate** about serving as an effective mentor (Participant #43)

### 4.3 Teaching Philosophy Statements Readers' Perspectives (RQ3)

The third research question aimed to investigate the TPS readers' perspectives on the genre and its rhetorical components. As stated in the previous chapter, the interviews were conducted with four applied linguistics professors with experience in reading or teaching TPSs. Each interview with those TPS readers consisted of a think-aloud protocol and a semi-structured interview. Four major themes emerged from the analysis of the interview transcription: (1) *TPS emphasis on practical illustration,* (2) *inclusion of impacts on students,* (3) *course-specific philosophy,* and (4) *TPS role and utility in academic application*s. The TPS readers were found to have similar views in terms of what they are looking for when reading these statements and

what makes the content of the TPS effective. Though they almost always agreed on what elements should be included in the TPS, their views on its utility and role varied. Below is more detail about the themes with accounts from the participants.

### *4.3.1 Emphasis on Practical Illustration*

All four TPS readers emphasized the importance of including concrete examples that illustrate the writers' teaching philosophy in action, which can be materialized by Move 2 (i.e., *teaching practices description*). TPS readers stated that they wanted the TPS to be personalized, representing the writer's own approach to teaching instead of merely stating beliefs or principles about education. For instance, in excerpt 1 below, Dr. Clark expressed skepticism and stated that TPS writers may write just the true things and what they were trained to write, but do not necessarily reflect their teaching practices.

> *Excerpt #1.* as a reader, I want to see more specific examples. The couple places where I felt like it really came through and was really effective was when those examples were given, like with the task-based learning. I want to see more of that because I want to know what these things look like in practice. My feeling is anybody can take the information that they've been told they should be doing their teaching, and put it into a statement (Dr. Clark)

Therefore, in the think-aloud protocol, TPS readers reacted negatively when encountering instances where no illustration was provided. For instance, Dr. Brown and Dr. Hassan responded negatively when the TPS writer in example 42 discussed his conceptualization of teaching (i.e., Move 3 Step 1) without providing evidence of his own actual instructional strategies. They wanted to see how these ideas manifest personally for the writer rather than general abstract ideas.

(42) I learned that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching and learning. My commitment is to understand what learners need and tailor lessons that meet the particularity of my group (Participant #4)

*Excerpt #2.* This is a good statement, but this person is writing more abstractly... this person did not provide examples of their approach. They just said that we vary and there is no particularity. It depends on the circumstances of the situation depends on the students the context, but at least one example should be something good to support this argument (Dr. Hassan)

*Excerpt #3.* if this were my student, if I were giving feedback to this person, I would be like, "Okay, I want to know, like, how did you learn, did you learn because somebody told you or did you learn through your own experience." (Dr. Brown)

Despite their agreements on the importance of providing concrete examples, there were divergent views regarding the extent of details provided. While Dr. Brown and Dr. Clark appreciated the in-depth details given by the TPS writer about one specific course, Dr. Smith and Dr. Hassan felt that focusing extensively on one course was not preferable, as seen in excerpts 4 and 5 below.

*Excerpt #4.* So I would say yeah, like this is going on way too long. About this one specific class, it's going on really long. Which makes me wonder, have they taught any other class except for this one class. (Dr. Smith)

*Excerpt #5.* So I don't think it's it is risky or dangerous to be too specific, I think to be specific is better. (Dr. Brown)

### *4.3.2 Inclusion of Impact on Students*

In addition to the TPS readers' preference to see examples of the TPS writers' actual practices, three of them made positive comments when they encountered areas where the TPS writers included the impact of their teaching on their students either Move 1 Step 2 (i.e., *conceptualization of students and learning*) or Move 2 Step 3 (i.e., *evidence of effectiveness*). In the excerpts below, Dr. Brown and Dr. Smith reacted positively when the TPS included Move 2 Step 3, as seen in excerpts 6 and 7 below.

> *Excerpt #6.* So giving some comments from the students' feedback, or letting the students' voices be represented here, which is nice, I suppose, characterizing themselves from the eyes of the learners. (Dr. Brown)
>
> *Excerpt #7.* I like this part here, how they're sort of talking about what students have seen as positive features of their class. That's, that's a nice feature (Dr. Smith)

Dr. Clark also found it effective to include Move 1 Step 2 (i.e., *conceptualization of students and learning*), as shown in her account below:

> *Excerpt #8.* "I like this inclusion of thinking about learners not just as, what course information they're taking in, but also what their lived experiences are and how the course maybe helps address those lived or at least acknowledges those lived experiences" (Dr. Clark)

### *4.3.3 Course-Specific Philosophy*

One of the major insights from the TPS readers is the importance of clearly distinguishing between language and content courses. To illustrate, in the linguistics domain, faculty is usually tasked with either teaching language courses to non-native speakers students

(e.g., French 101 or Spanish Vocabulary) or content courses, which typically refer to courses that explore the different concepts of linguistics (e.g., syntax or sociolinguistics). The TPS readers see teaching the two types of courses as two different experiences and would prefer to see how the writer addresses each of them. Therefore, they reacted negatively when they encountered a writer discussing their experience or beliefs in the two types of courses together or without explicit distinction between them, as in excerpts 9 and 10 from Dr. Brown and Dr. Clark below.

> *Excerpt #9.* So there's some combination here about teaching content and teaching language, which if this were my student, I would maybe ask them to tease it out or to make explicit like, "Okay, how [does this look like] when teaching both language and content?" (Dr. Brown)
>
> *Excerpt #10.* If somebody has both like English language teaching background, and linguistics teaching background, I would like to see both of those addressed to show me, you know, basically, "how do you approach both of these different kinds of content?" (Dr. Clark)

Likewise, Dr. Brown responded favorably when the TPS writer was focused on just one type of the courses and did not 'mesh' the two courses together, as in the excerpt below:

> *Excerpt #11.* So this already sounds like higher level, more academic, more sophisticated, and also more focused on just teaching linguistics, right? So, there's nothing about language teaching here. It's not all meshed together (Dr. Brown)

#### *4.3.4 Role and Utility of TPS in Academic Applications*

The fourth and final theme that emerged from the interviews with the readers is the TPS role in academic applications. Specifically, the TPS readers held different views on TPS's utility

in academia. For instance, Dr. Brown disputed its value, arguing that TPS writers say what they think they are supposed to say but may not necessarily be reflected in their educational practices. She also asserted that most TPSs look identical for her as writers are always saying what is expected to say. In her view, this makes many of these statements lack distinctiveness which ultimately renders them largely inconsequential.

> *Excerpt #12.* It's really hard for one of [statement components] to stand out… [TPS writers] are telling me everything that [they] have been trained [to say], and [they have been] programmed to believe and to say, and everybody knows kind of what's expected. (Dr. Brown)

Conversely, Dr. Hassan found it an essential tool that complements the application materials. She sees it as a document that helps in elaborating the resume and a conversation starter for the interview. In her answer to the question of the purpose of the TPS, she said, "*It can explain the resume."* She also reacted negatively when the TPS writer included many details, arguing that the writers left no room for questions in the interview, as in the excerpt below.

> *Excerpt #13.* Some details, you know, could be saved for the oral interview … when they are interviewed, they get to talk more and elaborate on that … if I am in the search committee, I think they left no chance for me to ask questions if we want to interview this person because they include too many details. (Dr. Hassan)

Finally, Dr. Smith sees the TPS as a potential pitfall indicator. Although he asserts that TPS holds major importance in the application process, he argues that its impact is greater when it is poorly written, as in excerpt 14.

*Excerpt #14.* So, I think more than anything, if your teaching philosophy is poorly written, it can hurt you …. So it definitely plays a role, especially if it's a poor quality. (Dr. Smith)

In sum, during the interviews, the TPS readers reacted positively and negatively to different rhetorical patterns in the texts. They reacted positively mainly when encountering one of these two textual elements: 1) the writers included actual examples of their own teaching, and 2) the writers included the impact of their teaching on students. They reacted negatively mainly to two elements: 1) the writers did not illustrate their abstract ideas, and 2) the writers did not distinguish between their language and content course teaching philosophies. In addition to that, the analysis reveals that TPS readers have different views of these statements, ranging from being relatively useless documents to supplementary text to a pitfall indicator.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to conduct a genre analysis of the TPS. The investigation of the genre includes textual analysis that explores three aspects of the texts: the moves and steps usually employed to convey the rhetorical purpose of the genre, the metadiscourse markers utilized by the writers, and the occurrence of the metadiscourse markers in the texts' different moves. In addition to the textual analysis, the study also included interviews with TPS expert readers to elicit their perspectives on the genre and its various components. Three research questions guided the study:

1. What rhetorical moves and steps do writers adopt in constructing teaching philosophy statements?
2. What are the metadiscoursal features writers employ when constructing their teaching philosophy statements? How do these metadiscourse markers map onto the different rhetorical moves identified in research question one?
3. What perceptions or assumptions do experienced readers of teaching philosophy statements have about the genre's rhetorical patterns?

This chapter includes a discussion and interpretation of the findings presented in Chapter 4. The discussion of the findings in this chapter is organized by research questions RQ1, RQ2, and finally RQ3.

## 5.1 Rhetorical Patterns of Teaching Philosophy Statements (RQ1)

As previous studies have extensively discussed, the genre of TPS typically comprises the educator's views of teaching and learning and how these views are enacted in the educators' actual practices. These two elements featured prominently in the TPS rubrics proposed by Kaplan et al. (2008) and Schönwetter et al. (2002). The two elements were also found in other studies that empirically examined the TPS content. For instance, Wang (2023) found that steps discussing these two elements were among the most frequently common steps in the TPSs within his data. Likewise, in another corpus-based study on TPSs, Payant and Hirano (2018) found that teaching approaches and teaching and learning beliefs were among the common topics in their data.

The present study's findings reaffirm the significance of these two major elements of the TPS genre. Through the in-depth analysis of the TPSs in my corpus, it became evident that Move 1 *belief stating* and Move 2 *teaching practices description* were indeed prevalent and considered obligatory by the TPS writers, as they were used by 100% of the writers. This indicates that the narrative of the educators' beliefs and how these beliefs are translated into action not only underscore the foundational principles of TPSs but also serve as the backbone, shaping and guiding the overall narrative and intent behind such statements. Consequently, the present study's findings not only align with the established literature but also serve to reaffirm the robust and enduring nature of these genre-specific moves, emphasizing their continued prominence in the genre of TPS.

Before diving deep into the discussion of the move analysis, it is worth mentioning that the obligatory-ness concept remains underdefined or lacks clarity. Obligatory as a term denotes that something is essential or cannot be omitted. However, an obligatory move in genre analysis

does not necessarily mean it must appear in every text. Therefore, determining whether a move is obligatory or optional varies in previous studies on various genres, as stated in Section 3.3.1. There is no definitive threshold genre analysts may refer to in their analysis. When researchers report the obligatory-ness threshold in their studies, they do not usually explain the process by which why they decided this limit in particular.

Given the lack of consensus on the process of setting the obligatory-ness threshold, it was believed that the process in my study needs to be systematic throughout the analysis. A clear and systematic approach would help operationalize the concept and allow future researchers to build or duplicate the current study. I decided to follow a data-driven method, as explained in Section 4.1. The rationale was based on observing a pronounced disparity in the occurrence frequencies of the moves and steps, which may indicate a natural breakpoint between obligatory and optional moves and steps within the genre.

Turning to the moves findings, within Move 1, it comes as no surprise that TPS writers tended to articulate both their beliefs about teaching and about students and learning, which have been proposed and discussed in the TPS literature. What adds an Interesting dimension to this observation is their articulation of related beliefs (i.e., Move 1 Step 3, used in 47% of the statements) that are not necessarily about teaching or learning. Although the step was optional, it was interesting to be observed in the genre. As indicated in Section 4.1, the beliefs in this step mostly revolve around languages and linguistics. Such a layer of the educators' beliefs about the subject matter did not appear in the previous TPS literature. The absence of this step in the literature could be because previous studies adopted a more generalized approach lacking discipline specificity. In the present study, where all TPSs were written within the linguistics domain, the occurrence of this step could also be due to the foundational nature of these beliefs

to the field of linguistics itself. Applied linguistics as a discipline has dual dimensions: pedagogical represented in language teaching, and theoretical represented in linguistics theories and applications. As such, these beliefs inform the linguists' pedagogical approaches and are not limited to representing their academic or theoretical stances. This could perhaps explain the occurrence of [M1S3] in the present study and not in the existing literature.

In the TPS genre, there is a subtle art of self-representation. Therefore, apart from stating their beliefs, TPS writers often tactfully discuss their educational practices (i.e., Move 2, in 100% of all statements). They do so not merely to illustrate what they are doing in the classroom but also as a strategic act of self-promotion. This move is space for the writers to "display their creativity, enthusiasm, and wisdom" (Chism, 1998) in their selection and application of the instructional strategies they adopt, which ultimately would present "a competent teacher identity in the classroom" (Wang, 2023, p. 9). The concrete evidence of the educators' personalized instructional practices would potentially "increase the applicant's chances of standing out from the other applicants" (Payant, 2017, p. 650).

The findings of the present study suggest that when TPS writers promote themselves by showcasing personalized teaching practices, they usually do that by describing what they do in the classroom [M2S1] (i.e., *highlighting learning facilitation practices).* This step was obligatory in the current study (used in 98% of the TPSs), which also aligns with Wang's (2023) findings. It contains details about the writers' different actions in the classroom, in which writers are showing their competence as educators.

Apart from discussing their overall teaching practices, writers were less likely to discuss aspects related to the students' assessment methods, as this appeared in only 22% of the statements. Discussing student assessment strategies was usually present in previous studies

discussing TPS components (e.g., Kaplan et al., 2008; Schönwetter et al., 2002). Interestingly, in the present study, the writer's description of their assessment practices (Move 2 Step 5) was not frequently included (used in 22% of the TPSs). This observation presents a similar trend to what Payant and Hirano (2018) found in their study, where discussion of assessment practices did not appear in their corpus. They found neglecting the student assessment practices surprising. They asserted that "[in] all education settings, we believe that it is critical that pedagogical practices foster learning and that we can provide evidence of the relationship between what we do and student learning outcomes." (p. 46). Echoing this, I found Step 5 of Move 2 *assessment practices* rarely employed by the TPS writers. This would require further analysis to understand the rationale for lacking discussion assessment practices in TPSs. However, one possible interpretation for this finding is that the TPS is usually very short, and writers might prefer to use the space for describing other teaching practices that would show their creativity and commitment to teaching rather than assessment practices where creative and innovative twists might be limited. In other words, detailing conventional assessment approaches may not benefit the educator's, especially given the writers' desire to stand out among other educators.

Even in conventional or traditional methods, assessment is a significant part of teaching practices. Therefore, a teacher's philosophy should include their assessment methods as they are not only used to gauge the students' understanding but also to inform the instructors' teaching strategies and approaches. However, given that the hiring committee has numerous TPSs to review and the concise nature of the TPSs, writers should focus on discussing assessment strategies that are more creative and make them stand out among other applicants. This becomes even more crucial these days with more classes being delivered online and the advent of generative AI. These have changed the educational settings and context and made some of the

conventional assessment approaches not as effective as they should be. These new changes necessitate more innovative assessment approaches that align with current educational practices. Therefore, it is a missed opportunity for the writers not to discuss their most creative assessment approach they adopt in their classrooms as part of their educational philosophies.

Some other topics and themes proposed or found in the TPS literature did not appear in the present study. For instance, Wang (2023) found that TPS writers employ a move to express gratitude which functions as a closing move. This move has two steps: in the first step, writers recognize and thank their institution and students, and in the second, they express appreciation to the gatekeepers. Such omission of this move in the present study could be attributed to the context in which TPS were written. The TPSs in Wang's study were all written by professors applying for an award presented at the same university with which all TPS writers are affiliated. Thus, the award, the selection committee, and the applicants are all parts of the same university. Therefore, such recognition of peers, students or the institution could be seen as strategically beneficial in this context.

Also, thanking the gatekeepers was not found in the present study. Such a step is analogous to the common steps that appear in cover letters, such *as polite ending* (Henry & Roseberry, 2001) or *expression of politeness or appreciation* (Hou, 2013). Wang (2023) stated in his study that no cover letter was required for the award application. Therefore, writers might feel obligated to add a polite ending at the end of their statements. However, the TPS is generally required, along with a cover letter and other application materials (Alexander, 2012; Yeom et al., 2018). For this reason, the TPS writers in the current study might not need to thank the audience if they have already done so in the cover letters. Another justification could be that TPS writers might not necessarily write their statements with a specific audience in mind. Unlike other

promotional genres, such as personal statements or cover letters, the same TPS could be used with applications for different positions or posted on the individual website. This might justify the absence of the thanking the gatekeepers' step in the present study.

Although it was rarely used, Move 3-Step 4, called *benefits to bring to the target school* (used in 22% of statements), is the closest to the two steps in Wang's (2023) study. Here we can see the focus on the two steps in the closing move in Wang' study is centered on the institution and how the institution has impacted and benefited the TPS writers. However, in Move 3-Step 4 in the present study, the focus was on how the individual may provide impact to the target institution. This shows the importance of considering the context in which the TPSs were written to understand their rhetorical components better.

Apart from the observation found in relation to Move 1 and 2, Move 3 also brought forth its own interesting findings. In addition to the writers rhetorical effort to covertly show their competence through a narrative of the teaching practices in Move 2, they also show preferences to explicitly showcase their teaching-related experience that would portray them as competent teachers, which can be captured by Move 3 *competence claim* (appearing in 76% of all statements). Such rhetorical strategy is found to be a characteristic of other promotional genres. For instance, the move of *competence claim* was seen in grant proposals (Connor & Mauranen, 1999) and both personal statements and statements of grant purpose (Kessler, 2020), where writers employed this move in an attempt to showcase their experiences and qualifications aiming to demonstrate their strong candidacy for the grant. Moreover, the move also resembles the move of *establishing credentials* found in personal statements (Ding, 2007) and job application letters and sales promotion letters (Bhatia, 1993).

This finding was also observed in Wang's (2023) study on TPSs written by professors from different disciplines applying for a teaching award. He found that TPS writers in his corpus "intentionally prioritize and elaborate" aspects of their competence both inside and outside their classrooms in order to promote themselves (p. 12). It is intriguing to note that the majority of the articles in the TPS literature discussed in Section 2.4, which were predominantly non-empirical in nature, did not include this as a part of their proposed TPS models or evaluation rubrics. The empirical investigation of the TPS genre, both in this current study and in Wang's study, reveals that this is a frequent component of the TPS genre. This methodological difference might interpret this observation. In previous non-empirical studies, the authors relied on their experience (e.g., Chism, 1998) or in consultation with some stakeholders (e.g., Schönwetter et al. 2002 & Kaplan et al. 2008) without an in-depth analysis of actual texts. Therefore, such elements could go unnoticed, or it could be assumed that competence claims are supposed to be included in other genres that usually accompany the TPS, such as the curriculum vitae or cover letter. This highlights the importance of conducting more in-depth textual analysis to provide a "thick description" of the genre (Bhatia, 1993, p. 47).

## 5.2 Metadiscourse Features (RQ2)

After discussing the moves and steps that comprise the genre in Section 5.1, this section discusses the metadiscourse markers utilized by the TPS writers. Starting with the observation related to the distribution of the metadiscourse markers across the statements in the corpus, we can draw a parallel to the concept of obligatory and optional moves in genre analysis. In move-step analysis, as stated earlier, an obligatory move means that it is essential for the discourse. An optional move indicates that it is considered an additional element to the genre but not necessarily required. The analysis revealed that some metadiscourse markers are ubiquitous in all

statements, rendering them obligatory to the genre. The consistent use of *self-mention, boosters, attitude markers,* and *transitions* across all the statements indicate they are obligatory within the genre of TPS. The obligatory status of these markers can be linked to the convention of the genre that necessitates the utilization of certain rhetorical strategies to successfully convey the writer's message and meet the audience's expectations.

The findings also show an interesting pattern with hedges and code gloss. These two markers appeared in 90% of the statements but constitute a low proportion of the total frequency of the markers, accounting for only 6.3% and 5.8% of the metadiscourse markers, respectively. This infrequent but consistent use of these two markers may suggest that although they are not always relied upon, they are standard rhetorical elements in the genre.

The present study's findings show that other markers were optional to this genre. *Engagement, evidential,* and *endophoric markers* were used way less frequently across the texts (appearing in only 20, 17, and 8 samples, respectively). These optional rhetorical strategies may offer flexibility and personalization in the tex. This allows TPS writers to address certain rhetorical situations or tailor their statements to potentially resonate with the intended audience.

Apart from discussing the observations of the appearance of metadiscourse markers across the statements, metadiscourse features present an interesting pattern when compared to their overall frequencies. The findings show that interactional markers dominate the genre, constituting 77.8% of the metadiscourse. The prevalence of the interactional markers suggests that TPS writers are more inclined towards intervening in the text to convey a "visible presence of the writer and the reader in the discourse" (Tse & Hyland, 2006, p. 775) rather than managing the flow of the information through interactive markers. The divergence of the use of interactional markers compared to interactive ones is not surprising due to two reasons. First,

being a promotional genre, the TPS aims to make the writer stand out among other applicants. This necessitates that writers make persuasive and convincing claims and arguments that signal their stance and attitude toward teaching, thus warranting more interactional markers. Second, the brevity of the genre might minimize the need for interactive markers. For instance, in the corpus for the present study, the average document length in terms of word count is 846 words. Also, apart from using paragraph breaks, there are no distinct subheadings or titles to indicate different sections, and the "structural or thematic cues may be interwoven into the texts instead of being explicitly announced" (Wang, 2023, p. 9).

Interestingly, while interactional metadiscourse markers predominate the genre (77.8%) and the interactive ones were notably less prevalent (22.1%), transitions were the second most frequent subcategory (12.2%). The TPS genre is characterized by the amalgamation of various abstract ideas to demonstrate the teacher's convictions supported by evidence from past pedagogical experiences as well as the teacher's future goal. These kinds of interrelated topics and concepts demand the use of transitional markers to facilitate the logical flow and coherence of this information. This perhaps shows the writers' clear intentions to make the relation between their TPS elements unambiguously understood (Tse & Hyland, 2006).

Another notable finding was the high incidence of self-mention (49.5%), especially in the first-person singular forms. There are two possible explanations for this observation. The first relates to the nature of the genre. The TPS serves as a platform for educators to discuss their own beliefs about teaching or present some of their previous successful teaching practices. This would necessitate a heavy presence of personal voice, hence warranting the frequent use of self-reference. The second justification related to the writers' aim is to ensure that their position or stance is clearly and unmistakably understood as a reflection of their own beliefs or their own

experience. As Hyland (2002a) states, the use of self-mention pronouns “leaves readers in no doubt where [the writers] stand and how their statements should be interpreted” (p. 1093). The writers’ decision to use the most overt rhetorical strategy of intruding in the text by using first-person pronouns not only affects the ideational meaning of the discourse but also helps promote personal credibility, which will ultimately make a more acceptable and convincing argument (Hyland, 2001). Therefore, it seems that TPS writers are aware of these pronouns' influence in the discourse and have used them strategically in their TPSs.

Apart from the most frequently occurring markers, engagement markers were underutilized in the corpus. The usage of engagement markers was curious, with notably low frequency across the TPSs (1.6%). Although this finding is congruent with Supasiraprapa and De Costa’s (2017) findings, where engagement markers were rarely used in TPSs in their study, it is still seen as very interesting. The TPS is a promotional genre whose overall purpose is to persuade the audience of the teachers’ possession of certain beliefs, qualities, and expertise, as seen in the communicative purposes of the moves discussed in Section 4.1. To add a persuasive tone to the academic text, writers usually engage the readers in the argument to make them “real players in the discourse” in order to lead them toward their preferred interpretation (Hyland & Zou, 2022, p. 25). As Feng and Ma (2019) commented, in academic writing, “writers not only present themselves as competent insiders, projecting an authorial stance or community recognized personality, but perhaps, more importantly, pull readers along in the joint construction of disciplinary discourse in acceptable ways” (p. 32). Such rhetorical choice was found to be prevalent in different academic genres in different contexts, such as research articles (Hyland & Jiang, 2016), book reviews (Tse & Hyland, 2006), academic blogs (Zou & Hyland, 2020), and doctoral students’ confirmation reports (Jiang & Ma, 2019). This observed disparity

between the discussed importance of engagement markers, their extensive use in academic texts, and their limited usage in the corpus is interesting.

This infrequent use of engagement markers could be attributed to TPS being introspective in nature and not usually crafted with a particular audience in mind. When TPS writers craft their statements, they do so without a precise group in sight. Other academic promotional genres, such as personal statements, may be more audience-oriented, where the content and tone would vary depending on the requirements and the preferences of the target academic institution. TPSs usually remain a single version used across various applications or even published on individual websites. Therefore, since the TPS is often intended to be universally applicable and not tailored to a specific readership or opportunity, they might lack engagement markers typically found in other promotional texts. This could be suggestive of the low use of engagement markers in the corpus.

Transitioning to the use of the metadiscourse markers in each move, I will discuss the metadiscourse found in Move 1. Since the goal of Move 1 typically revolved around articulating the writers' own beliefs, assumptions, or goals, the low usage of self-mention was surprising. Self-mention constitutes 36.6% of the markers in the same move compared to 55.5% and 64.1% in Move 2 and 3, respectively. The low proportion of self-mention in this move compared to the other two moves could be attributed to the distinct focus of each move. Move 2 centers on showcasing the writers' own teaching methods, and Move 3 delves into personal experiences and attributes. In contrast, TPS writers in Move 1 express beliefs and convictions that are not necessarily centered around the writer, but it could be a general discussion of good teaching practices and how learning takes place. Thus, there may be less need for self-intrusion and involvement compared to the other two moves.

The universality of the educational views that writers include in their TPSs might play a role in their decision to incorporate certain metadiscourse markers. When writers include their educational beliefs in the TPS, they strategically select the ones that are widely known and accepted. To better explain what universality means in this context, consider the examples in 43a and b. It is less likely that someone in academia would not be aware of these views or would disagree with them. The minimal use of code gloss and the higher presence of boosters and engagement markers in this move could be attributed to the universality of the views TPS writers usually discussed in this move.

(43) a. I also believe it is important to provide students with opportunities to engage in pair and group work so that students can learn not just from the teacher, but also from each other. (participant #1)

b. Everyone we meet in the classroom brings a lifetime of home, community and classroom experience: they are not clean slates. (participant #4)

The findings show that TPS writers tended to be confident and assertive when expressing their beliefs and convictions about teaching and learning in this move. This is most evident in their more frequent usage of boosters and low frequent utilization of hedging expressions (18.3% vs. 7.7%, respectively). Despite the fact that boosters are a "hazardous strategy" that could potentially invite criticism due to their assertive nature (Zou & Hyland, 2021, p. 233), writers still utilize these markers predominantly when discussing their beliefs. Hedges, on the other hand, "[suggest] a reluctance to assert a proposition" (Hyland, 1998, p.241). TPS is a genre that should naturally elicit boosters, so writers appear confident in their practices. Conversely, by using hedging, writers might be unsure of what they are claiming, which might explain the predominance of boosters over hedges in the TPS genre. Another possible explanation of the

divergence in the use of boosters and hedges in this move is the fact that some of these beliefs are primarily universal and might not necessarily be challenged by the audience. Therefore, TPS writers might not hesitate to include such linguistic terms to strengthen their claims.

Apart from hedges and boosters, code gloss in this move was also found to be interesting (2.3% of all metadiscourse in the move). The proportion of code gloss in this move compared to the other metadiscourse markers in the same move was the least in comparison to the other two moves (9.4% and 4.8% in Move 2 and 3, respectively). Code gloss is a rhetorical strategy that increases comprehension by rephrasing, explaining, or clarifying the previous proposition in order to ensure that the readers can grasp the writer's intended meaning (Hyland, 2005b). Considering the universality of the educational views, writers may assume that readers are familiar with these views, minimizing the need to elaborate further, as seen in example 41 earlier.

In a contrasting observation, the findings show that most of the engagement markers used in the corpus were used in this move. As previously stated, engagement markers were used very minimally in the TPSs in the dataset for the current study; however, it was interesting to see that almost all of the engagement markers found occurred in this move in particular. The primary focus of Move 1 is on the teachers' views of teaching and learning. This could be a general discussion of exemplary teaching strategies and how learning takes place. However, the discussion in Move 2 and 3 is different as it takes a more personalized turn to focus on the authors and their own experiences. When TPS writers discuss the universal educational beliefs in this move, they are more inclined to pull the readers into the text and emphasize the relevance of the writer's belief to the reader's educational convictions and perspectives. They do so by using the second-person pronoun *you* (example 44a) or the first-person plural pronoun *we* or *our*

(example 44b). However, they might be less motivated to use such reader-reference pronouns in Moves 2 and 3 when they prioritize personal aspects of their own teaching practices and experiences.

(44) a. Getting students to interact deeply with the target material is much easier if **you** have a solid rapport with them (Participant #17)

b. In short, true learning can only take place unless until we get to know who **our** students are (Participant #46)

Apart from the metadiscourse found in Move 1, Move 2 also presents interesting patterns. TPS writers in the present study were sometimes cautious when discussing their teaching practices. This is mainly evident in their balanced use of hedges and boosters and the low proportion of attitude markers compared to the other two moves. This may indicate that the author's stance when discussing their teaching strategies and approaches is marked by both "authority and circumspection" (Lancaster, 2016, p. 21). One plausible justification for this could be attributed to the TPS writers' desire to be balanced between the assertion of their knowledge of their instructional approaches and their openness to other methods. Such a balanced use of boosters and hedges may demonstrate the writers' flexibility and adaptability in their instructional practices.

Besides the balanced use of hedges and boosters, another notable finding was in the use of the code gloss in Move 2 (9.2% of the total metadiscourse markers in the move). The findings show that most of the code gloss markers used by the writers occurred in this move. The TPS writers may have recognized that simply stating abstract ideas about their classroom approaches or techniques is insufficient. Instead, they rely on giving more specific and concrete examples to "make their ideas accessible and persuasive" (Hyland, 2007b, p. 270). For instance, in the

statement in example 45, the writer started with the general approach she adopted in her class and then moved to the specific and provided a real-world example of classroom activity implementation. Thus, TPS writers in this move were trying to make their TPSs more personalized by presenting examples of how their teaching philosophy is enacted. This perhaps explains the extensive use of code gloss in this move.

(45) I try to include perspectives from a range of sub-disciplines of linguistics and related fields in my teaching. **For example**, when I teach psycholinguistics, in addition to talking about theories of language comprehension, production, and acquisition, we spend part of the semester discussing how psycholinguistic data can bear on linguistic theory. (Participant #21)

Moving forward to Move 3, the most notable observation in this move was that the proportion of self-mention (64.1% of all markers in the move). This demonstrates higher frequency when compared to self-mention used in Moves 1 (36.6%) and Move 2 (55.5%) in proportion to their other metadiscourse markers used in the same moves. Also, it was found that the proportion of hedges in this move was notably low compared to Moves 1 and 2 (3.7% vs. 7.7% and 6.1%, respectively). This disparity between the prevalence of self-mention, which represents the writers' "invasive stance" (Zou & Hyland, 2022, p. 237), and the remarkably low proportion of hedges where writers tone down their commitment to the proposition indicates that writers feel more confident in the accuracy and reliability in the information they are presenting in this move. To explain this further, consider the statement in example 46; the hedging expression *tried to* may indicate some sort of uncertainty, a rhetorical strategy that TPS writers seem to avoid. This highlights the writers' intention to overtly position themselves by using assertive expressions and avoiding uncertainty.

(46) I have tried to bring my experiences with me as I transitioned to teaching a range of linguistics courses at [ABC University] (Participant #18)

Overall, these findings highlight the use of metadiscourse in the genre of the TPS, with each move exhibiting unique patterns. These patterns likely reflect the varying rhetorical purposes for each move, such as the shared views of teaching and learning in Move 1, the need to present a narrative that is both adaptable and personally resonant in Move 2, and the self-assured competence in Move 3.

### 5.3 Teaching Philosophy Statements Readers' Perspectives (RQ3)

The textual analysis of the TPS revealed the rhetorical purposes of the genre's different moves and steps and how these purposes potentially influenced the use of metadiscourse markers. The investigation of the TPS readers' perspectives, on the other hand, provided further insights into the genre.

During the think-aloud protocol, TPS readers reacted favorably to Move 2, where writers included examples of actual practices from their experiences. As Samraj and Monk (2008) noted, readers come with pre-defined expectations of what they want to see in the genre. All four TPS readers have the same expectation of what they want to see in the TPS, i.e., the teachers' actual teaching practices. Despite the fact that TPS is always defined as a narrative of the teachers' educational beliefs, goals, and practices, what readers would like to see are concrete examples rather than abstract ideas about educational beliefs and goals. The TPS readers see the articulation of the actual teaching practices in Move 2 as the real reflection of the writer rather than stating their educational beliefs in Move 1. As Dr. Brown noted, "*my feeling is anybody can take the information that they've been told they should be doing in their teaching and put it into a*

*statement*." These practical examples may allow TPS readers to relate to or assess the fit of the educator in a specific teaching context or institution.

Another interesting finding was that despite the fact that TPS is prevalent across academic institutions in the US, the perception of the genre remains undefined among the evaluators. As the findings suggest, the views of the genre range from being a relatively useless document (Dr. Brown) to a supplementary document (Dr. Hassan) or a pitfall indicator (Dr. Smith). Previous studies have found other perceptions of the genre, such as the interviewees in Wang's (2023) study stating, "I, or we, viewed [TPS] as a critical space to see the candidate's teacher persona" (Wang, 2023, p. 11). These divergent views of the genre might question the need for TPSs in the future, which may require further investigation into the utility of the genre. What matters for us in the current study is how these views and expectations may influence the writing practices of the genre.

For instance, different questions could be raised here. Suppose the TPS readers question the utility of the genre due to its typical uniformity, as Dr. Brown's stance in the current study. In that case, the question is whether departing from the conventional uniformity that usually characterizes TPSs would make a more effective statement. However, innovation, especially in high-stakes genres, "carries risks, so authors are more likely to play it safe and adhere to at least most of their expectations" (Tardy, 2016, p. 91). This risk aligns with the other views of the genre as a pitfall indicator. Readers who view the genre of TPS this way would primarily exclude poor-quality TPSs, and exceptional ones might not considered as a factor in determining a strong candidate. Therefore, TPS writers might feel less motivated to adopt any innovative approach and prefer to stick to the genre's typical conventions.

The other question is related to the view of the genre as supplementary to the other application documents making it a core part of the application chain (Wang, 2023), “whereby one genre is a necessary antecedent for another” (Swales, 2004, p.18). This view may align with the view of the genre seen in the TPS literature. Writing a TPS with this view in mind, writers might approach the genre differently. For instance, the writers might save some teaching examples for the interview, as Dr. Hassan has preferred. Therefore, the readers' perceptions of the TPS genre demonstrate the complex and multifaceted nature of TPS in the academic domain which also adds to the challenges novice writers might face when writing a TPS.

# Chapter 6: Conclusion

The present study set out to explore the genre of TPS written by academics affiliated with US-based universities within the linguistics discipline. I analyzed a small corpus of TPSs, systematically describing the moves and steps characterizing the genre. Central to my investigation was identifying the metadiscourse markers utilized in the genre. I also explored the association of metadiscourse and the genre's moves. In addition to the textual analysis, I interviewed gatekeepers to better understand their perspectives on the genre and its writing practices. This chapter provides the study's implications, limitations, and recommendations for future studies.

## 6.1 Implications

The findings of the present study have three important implications: implications for pedagogy, implications for readers and writers of TPSs, and methodological implications. These implications are detailed below.

### *6.1.1 Implications for Pedagogy*

The analysis of the rhetorical structure and the interactional features of the TPS genre in the current study suggest several pedagogical implications. The most critical implication for pedagogy is that the present study's findings could be beneficial in EAP instruction. Most MA and Ph.D. programs, particularly in linguistics, teach their students to create teaching portfolios as part of their preparation for the job market. In these programs, the emphasis on crafting an effective TPS is usually prioritized, given its high-stakes nature. Teaching the genre usually

involves EAP practitioners who are experienced in EAP writing. Those practitioners might face a dilemma when they are required to teach such a genre to their students. This dilemma stems from the fact that TPS is usually occluded, and the instructors themselves – particularly if they are early-career teachers – might not have had the chance to be exposed enough to the genre to build the genre knowledge.

In light of this, it is very common in these classes that practitioners rely on their intuition or unauthentic resources in the absence of research-informed resources (Chan, 2009; Leopold, 2023). With the limited literature of empirical studies investigating the genre of the TPS, the present study's findings could potentially aid those practitioners in changing their modus operandi from relying on their intuition or experience when teaching the genre to adopt a more evidence-based framework. Therefore, the typical rhetorical structure of the TPSs found in the present study could be incorporated into the TPS teaching materials. For instance, EAP practitioners might refer to it to draw the students' attention to how TPS writers typically articulate their educational beliefs. They can highlight that TPS writers typically include three layers of beliefs. The first centers around the educator’s beliefs about their own role, responsibilities, and goal for the teaching process; the second is concerned more with the nature of learning itself and the students themselves and what they need or how they acquire, process, or internalize knowledge. Third, to a lesser degree, are other teaching-related beliefs, such as beliefs about languages and linguistics. The same also is true with the other two moves and what are the common or less common rhetorical strategies or steps usually employed by the TPS writers.

In a similar vein, the present study's findings could hold significant potential to assist those engaged in training or giving feedback to TPS writers outside the classroom context. For

instance, most universities, especially in the US, organize professional development workshops or seminars to help students increase genre awareness and assist them in developing their TPSs. Facilitators of these workshops can also have sub-sessions during the workshop to shed light on the typical components of the genre as well as the concept of metadiscourse and how it is relevant to the TPS genre. These sub-sessions may include activities that assist in leveraging the metadiscourse markers to clearly articulate and present a competent teacher identity (Supasiraprapa & De Costa, 2017).

In addition to workshops, university writing centers might also benefit from knowledge gained from the present study about the typical metadiscourse markers in the TPS and their use across the different moves. Many students seek out these centers to review and refine their TPSs. It would be important for the tutors in these centers to be trained well on the usage of the metadiscourse markers in the genre of TPS and how these markers would play a role in shaping the writer positions. Having those tutors enroll in workshops or information sessions that discuss the typical rhetorical components of the genre as well as the writers' strategic use of metadiscourse would be helpful. For instance, they can be shown the standard (i.e., obligatory) and the less commonly used metadiscourse markers in the genre. Those tutors can also be exposed to the typical use of the metadiscourse markers to discuss different topics in the text (i.e., moves).

Since tutors will primarily work with students less experienced in writing, it is essential for novice writers to first become aware of the concept of metadiscourse and understand how these linguistic items can be used to establish the writers' stance and engage readers. It is true that some of these markers are obvious, such as the use of transitions or evidential; however, others might be more complicated, and novice writers might struggle with them. The use of the

more complex metadiscourse markers may require a sophisticated understanding of language nuance, which might not be fully developed for novice writers. For instance, tutors can focus on metadiscourse such as hedges and boosters. Recognizing the importance of these two markers and their roles in meaning-making, EAP instructors often bring this to their students' attention, advising them to use or not use them in their writing in different academic genres, such as dissertations or research articles. Given the importance of these two markers in conveying the writers' message, students should be exposed to how they are used in TPSs in order to help them set the balance of assertiveness they might adopt in their TPSs.

Besides the writing centers, another helpful resource for TPS writers can be university websites, which usually offer guidelines on TPS composition. As indicated in Section 1.2, these sources have some limitations that might render them ineffective. More effort might be needed from the creators of these pages to make their guidelines more beneficial. In light of the crucial role the metadiscourse marker plays in the articulation and interpretation of the TPS, it would be a good idea when offering these guidelines on the university websites to incorporate a discussion about the use of metadiscourse markers, especially in relation to the different topics (i.e., moves) discussed in the statement. In a more practical example, instead of providing informational or structural advice or samples of TPSs, they can pinpoint the typical moves and linguistic features used in the genre. For instance, they can highlight how these metadiscourse markers were used in the samples and how the presence or the lack of these markers would signal the communicative intention of the text's different moves. This addition would enhance the depth of the guidelines and allow writers to craft a more impactful interpersonal statement.

One might argue here that, given the TPS reader's dissatisfaction with the current situation of the genre uniformity, providing the students and novice writers with the typical

rhetorical structure and typical metadiscourse marker usage would further increase the genre uniformity. This might result in having statements that sound even more alike. In response to this argument, it is essential to know that uniformity in structure or form does not necessarily mean uniformity in content. To better understand the difference between these two ideas (uniformity in structure and content), consider the analogy provided by Bhatia (1999, p. 25) in the following excerpt:

> "Practicing a genre is almost like playing a game, with its own rules and conventions. Established genre participants, both writers and readers, are like skilled players, who succeed by their manipulation and exploitation of, rather than a strict compliance with, the rules of the game. It is not simply a matter of learning the language, or even learning the rules of the game, it is more like acquiring the rules of the game in order to be able to exploit and manipulate them to fulfil professional and disciplinary purposes."

In light of this, it is worth noting here not to take the findings too far to a certain point of being too perspective. Such an approach could limit the writers' creativity and the genre innovation (Bhatia, 2004a). Therefore, the findings should not be interpreted as a perspective template of TPS but rather a reference that educators may rely on to increase theirs or the students' genre knowledge. The genre knowledge can then be "a resource to exploit generic conventions to respond appropriately to the requirements of professional practices rather than a blueprint for replication" (Bhatia, 2004a, p. 239). Therefore, I emphasize the importance of flexibility and creativity in TPS writing and caution against being overly formulaic. It is true that being too perspective and constraining following a particular structure will add to the uniformity of the genre, which may yield statements lacking individuality and authenticity. Put simply,

educators may consider the moves and steps in the present study as a guideline that can inform, but not strictly define, their or their students' freedom when crafting their own version of their TPSs.

### *6.1.2 Implications for Writers and Readers of the Statements*

The genre's typical structure and the readers' perspectives revealed in the present study could help novice writers craft their own TPSs. By novice here, I do not only refer to undergraduate or master's students, but it encompasses anyone who did not have the chance to learn or repeatedly encounter TPSs. Among those novice writers are non-native speakers of English. The TPS might not be as common elsewhere in the world as in the US. Some non-native English speakers might need to write their TPSs within the US context. Given that in educational contexts, what holds significant meaning in one culture might not necessarily have the same weight in another. Non-native speaker writers crafting their statements in the US context might be challenged in anticipating what the readers or evaluators of the genre are looking for. The challenge novice writers face when writing a genre they are not familiar with amplifies when writing occluded ones (e.g., TPS), which often have opaque guidelines or unclear expectations. For instance, beginner writers of the genre, including non-native speakers of English, can benefit from the TPS readers' perspectives revealed in the current study. They could have an idea about what the readers of their statements will be interested in more (i.e., the actual teaching practices). Otherwise, their statements may focus on elements that might not interest the gatekeepers.

Another clear example of how TPS writers might benefit from the current study's findings is how TPS differs from other genres in terms of its readership. As the findings show, the TPS genre is usually characterized by a lack of engagement markers or thanking moves, which support the idea that TPS is typically written to be universal and with no specific audience

in mind. This shows the significance of the present study's findings and how they can be used to increase the students' genre knowledge. Including explicit language that talks to the readers might weaken the statement as it may show that the TPS writer is trying to craft something with the aim of pleasing the audience instead of accurately discussing his/her philosophy. These conventions and the nuance stylistic characteristics of the genre might not be apparent for novice writers given that similar academic professional texts such as statements of purpose or cover letters are always expected to be tailored to each position or institution an applicant is applying for.

In addition, with the generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology revolution, novice writers are expected to use this technology in crafting their TPSs. These AI-generated texts might create texts somewhat similar to the genre convention; however, these texts might lack the interpersonal touch essential to make a clear and compelling message. The exploration of the metadiscursive practices in the current study can show novice writers how to add their voices or articulate their identities in their statements, even if AI has fully or partially produced them.

Besides writers, the findings could be helpful for readers as well. As seen in Section 2.4, different attempts were made to create rubrics that help TPS readers bring clarity and consistency in their evaluation process (e.g., Kaplan et al., 2008; Schönwetter et al., 2002). These rubrics are beneficial for the readers as they provide clear expectations and benchmarks, offering a roadmap for what to anticipate. However, the current study's findings can add another lens to how readers view the TPS content. It, of course, could help the readers expect how such a genre is structured so that readers can easily navigate and assess the statements because they know what to expect. More importantly, the metadiscourse marker usage and their distribution across the various moves highlight the need for TPS readers to cultivate a more in-depth understanding of the role

of metadiscourse in these texts. The presence or lack of appropriate metadiscourse markers can denote something about the position and the commitment the writers hold to their educational beliefs or approaches. Therefore, this added dimension of how TPS is being evaluated and the rigid rubrics frequently used would significantly enhance the evaluation process, ultimately leading to a more comprehensive understanding of the writers' pedagogical stance.

### *6.1.3 Methodological Implications*

This study is an actual departure from what Swales (2019) has called "circumscribed move-step analyses" of academic texts (p. 76). In his argument, Swales urged researchers to go beyond just the textual analysis to incorporate the perception of the writers or the readers of the genre. This current study corroborates this stance, emphasizing the importance of such insights for a thorough understanding of the genre. The various phases the investigation has gone through hold the potential to guide future researchers in conducting comprehensive genre analyses of academic texts. It starts from manually compiling the corpus of occluded genres from multiple writers, moving to a thorough analysis of these texts. The analysis included several phases, starting from identifying the moves and steps, exploring the metadiscourse markers in the entire genre, and then combining the two frameworks in an attempt to examine the distribution of metadiscourse in the different moves. All of these steps were done manually, but with the help of a qualitative data analysis software. The interviews were also divided into two phases (i.e., think-aloud and semi-structured) to ensure the readers' perspectives were accurately and thoroughly elicited. This multi-phase triangulated detailed data collection and analysis process can offer graduate students and early career scholars (and even EAP practitioners) a blueprint for nuanced investigations in their genre-based studies (also see Casal & Kessler, 2024 for a related discussion).

## 6.2 Limitations

The present study has revealed insightful findings regarding the rhetoric of the TPS genre. However, it also has some limitations. First, one of the shortcomings of the present study is its limited scope. The TPSs in the present study are all drawn from one discipline (i.e., linguistics) within only the US context. Therefore, cross-disciplinary or cross-cultural comparison of the genre would add to our understating of its rhetoric—more discussion in Section 6.3.

Another limitation is that the present study did not consider writers' perspectives in analyzing the construction of the genre. Interviews with writers would have been fruitful in providing insightful perspectives on their rhetorical choices, metadiscourse choices, or how they view the genre compared to the gatekeepers. However, for the current study, the TPSs were previously written, meaning they might not be aware of why they made certain rhetorical choices when writing the statements. For this reason, not including the writers' perspectives was considered a major limitation in the present study. Thus, researchers may consider integrating the perspectives of TPS writers in the future.

The study was also limited due to the use of the think-aloud protocol. Although TPS readers commented on language-related issues during the think-aloud protocol, such as word choice or incorrect grammar structure, none commented on the use of metadiscourse. It is important to note that no specific instruction was given to the TPS readers before the think-aloud protocol. The rationale behind this deliberate decision was to gain authentic insight into what those expert TPS readers would find interesting, important, or even not important. Therefore, the possible justification behind the absence of comments on metadiscourse despite its prevalence in the corpus is that the think-aloud protocol helps elicit immediate reflection rather than focusing on

detailed linguistics features. Metadiscourse is usually embedded and may not be consciously recognized, which makes it hard to identify using this elicitation method. Follow-up interviews with the TPS readers were needed and should be considered by future researchers to elicit more about their views on the use of metadiscourse after having them read the TPSs more than once so they could recognize different linguistics features that might go unnoticed in the first round of interviews.

### 6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

As stated in Chapter 1, the current study focuses on TPSs written by academics within the linguistics domain. It is already attested in the literature that the rhetorical patterns writers adopt can be profoundly influenced by their discipline or institutional contexts. Hyon (2017) referred to these two broad categories as small and big cultures. Therefore, comparative studies within the small and big cultures might be fruitful in understanding the TPS rhetorical practices between the cultures.

One recommendation for future research is to compare the rhetorical practices in the genre of the TPS across two or more different disciplines. The pedagogical aspect of the linguistic discipline makes it heavily teaching and practice-oriented, so it would be interesting to see how writers of other disciplines would organize and compose their TPSs. Wang's (2023) study has examined TPSs across different disciplines; however, his study did not delve into the differences between these disciplines and also was conducted in a different context (i.e., an award application). As has been already attested in the literature, genres are "sensitive to disciplinary variation" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 34), where individuals within disciplines share various objectives, norms, and conventions that "constrain the discursive practices" embedded within the discipline (p. 150). Thus, Hyland (2005a), Samraj and Monk (2008), and Swales (2019) have

called for the importance of considering a cross-disciplinary approach when examining academic discourse. Swales (2019) urged researchers to find more useful, interesting areas of research that would make more significant contributions to the literature, including studies that would generate "well-judged investigations that produce interesting comparisons between ESL/applied linguistics and some other field or fields" (p. 76).

ESP literature shows great appreciation for the soft-hard dichotomy. According to Hyland (2004c), "the hard-soft distinction is by no means clear cut; it does offer a useful way of examining general similarities and differences between fields" (p. 93). Individuals in the soft (e.g., linguistics and education) and hard (e.g., physics and engineering) disciplinary communities have "different views of knowledge, different research practices, and different ways of seeing the world" (Hyland, 2002b, p. 389). Therefore, it would be interesting to see these discipline-specific differences and how they might influence TPS writing. Future researchers can build on the present study's findings and Wang's findings to see how the rhetorical structure or the metadiscourse usage may vary across soft and hard disciplines or in two disciplines within the same category.

With regard to the big cultures, there are compelling opportunities for researchers to broaden their scope of analysis to TPSs in other countries. This would enlighten us on different aspects of the genre, such as different rhetorical strategies employed by writers of different cultures, the extent to which they intrude in their texts, and the different expectations readers of different cultures might have. Similar to Chiu's (2016) work on personal statements in the US and the United Kingdom, big culture comparison studies could be conducted to see the difference in the discursive practices between the two cultural or institutional contexts.

Apart from the comparative studies, future studies are needed to elaborate more on the usage of each metadiscourse marker in the genre. The current study focused on how metadiscourse markers are generally distributed across the moves that compose the genre. Although there were discussions on the different functions each metadiscourse might serve, there is also room for further work to investigate each category of the metadiscourse markers more deeply. Such a narrow approach happens to be fruitful in other academic genres. For instance, Liu et al. (2023) thoroughly examined the use of code gloss in the genre of three-minute presentations, and Walková (2019) focused solely on using self-mention in research articles. Their extensive analysis of the occurrence of a specific category of metadiscourse helped them to understand the nuance in the usage of that specific marker and how it contributes to conveying the overall rhetorical message. In light of these studies, among others, more research needs to be undertaken to understand the use of the metadiscourse markers in the genre of TPS more clearly, including in the rhetorical moves that make up the genre.

In addition, several questions within the TPS remain unresolved, providing a room for future researchers to investigate the genre more deeply. For instance, the use of quotes in the genre. This study excluded quotes from the analysis as it was believed that these quotes do not signal the TPS writers' position, as stated in Section 3.3.2. However, quotes continue to be an intriguing research subject. Future research could focus on using these quotes and how they are used. By examining the usage of quotes, researchers can explore intertextuality patterns, which are the ways in which certain texts may be related or influenced by other texts. The quotations found in the TPSs were not only quotes from different scholars about educational concepts but were also quotes from students' feedback. This is also an interesting area for future researchers

to investigate the rhetorical purposes of including such quotes, as well as the themes that TPS writers typically focus on when including quotes from student feedback.

Another potential area of study future researchers might do is to go beyond interviewing expert TPS readers to elicit their perspectives about the genre's rhetoric and have them rate a selection of TPSs based on their effectiveness. This rating process could then be linked with the rhetorical analysis in order to identify and compare the moves and steps as well as the use of metadiscourse across the different rating levels. This approach would provide us with insightful indicators of the rhetorical characteristics of strong TPSs.

In a nutshell, this dissertation significantly contributes to our understanding of academic promotional and occluded genres by offering a detailed analysis of the rhetorical and metadiscoursal elements that define TPSs. Investigating the genre-specific conventions, particularly the use of metadiscourse markers and their distribution across the genre's various moves, provided valuable insights into the art of crafting effective academic promotional texts. This dissertation's findings may inform the EAP practitioners and other stakeholders about the genre-specific conventions (e.g., obligatory and optional moves and metadiscourse markers) that might guide them in writing or teaching such statements. Beyond the pedagogical significance, the dissertation bridges a gap in the existing literature by bringing to light and contributing to understanding the metadiscursive practices in academic promotional texts, which has been less studied in the literature. The findings of the dissertation highlight the necessity for future research to explore the genre in various contexts (e.g., disciplinary or cultural), to gain a deeper understanding of its characteristics and variations.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval

UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA

EXEMPT DETERMINATION

September 23, 2022

Khalid Alghamdi
[redacted]
Tampa, FL 33647

Dear Khalid Alghamdi:

On 9/23/2022, the IRB reviewed and approved the following protocol:

| | |
|---|---|
| Application Type: | Initial Study |
| IRB ID: | STUDY004752 |
| Review Type: | Exempt 2 |
| Title: | The Statement of Teaching Philosophy: Genre Analysis and Readers Perspectives |
| Protocol: | • STP study PROTOCOL - edited |

The IRB determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review.

In conducting this protocol, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Please note, as per USF policy, once the exempt determination is made, the application is closed in BullsIRB. This does not limit your ability to conduct the research. Any proposed or anticipated change to the study design that was previously declared exempt from IRB oversight must be submitted to the IRB as a new study prior to initiation of the change. However, administrative changes, including changes in research personnel, do not warrant a modification or new application.

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit a new request to the IRB for a determination.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Plazarte
IRB Research Compliance Administrator

**Institutional Review Boards / Research Integrity & Compliance**
FWA No. 00001669
University of South Florida / 3702 Spectrum Blvd., Suite 165 / Tampa, FL 33612 / 813-974-5638

**Appendix B. Teaching Philosophy Statements Solicitation Email**

Dear [recipient's name],

My name is Khalid Alghamdi and I'm a Doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida. I'm reaching out to collect responses from linguistics professors and PhD students for my dissertation that investigates the rhetoric and the discursive features used in teaching philosophy statements (IRB reference STUDY004752).

The key to this research is compiling a collection of teaching philosophy statements. Thus, I am reaching out to academics whom I believe their participation will add valuable insights to my study based on their qualifications and expertise. While searching online, I came across your profile and contact information on your department's webpage.

The link below is a brief survey that asks for some basic information in addition to uploading the most recent version of your teaching philosophy statement. The survey should only take about two minutes to complete, and you can upload the statement directly into the survey.

Survey link: https://usf.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3eM1y0SdGLUOW58

I'd really appreciate any help you can provide and thank you for your time! If you have any questions, please email me at Alghamdik@usf.edu.

Sincerely,

**Khalid Alghamdi, M.B.A, M.A.**
PhD candidate, World Languages Department
Graduate Assistant, Office of High Impact Practices and Undergraduate Research
University of South Florida
Tampa Campus
Alghamdik@usf.edu

## Appendix C. Teaching Philosophy Statement Collection Survey

### Demographic information

Q1. What is your major/field of research?

Q2. What is your current academic status?

□ Master Student
□ PhD student
□ Instructor
□ Assistant Professor
□ Associate Professor
□ Full Professor
□ Other, please specify _____

Q3. What is the name of the university that you are currently working/studying at? (you can write N/A if you prefer not to answer).

Q4. What is your range?

□ 25 – 29
□ 30 – 34
□ 35 – 39
□ 40 – 44
□ 45 – 49
□ 50 – 54
□ 55 – 50
□ 60+

Q5. What is your gender?

□ Male
□ Female
□ Non-binary
□ Prefer not to say

Q5. Do you consider yourself a native speaker of English?

□ Yes
□ No, please include what is your first language

Q6. At the time of drafting the **most recent version** of your teaching philosophy statement, how many years of teaching experience did you have?

Q7. Finally, in order to have a thorough understanding of the typical components of teaching philosophy statements and how they are structured, I am collecting authentic samples of teaching philosophy statements for analysis.

I would appreciate it if you could provide me with your most recent teaching philosophy statement by uploading it to the link below. If you need more information about the study, you can reach out to me at Alghamdik@usf.edu.

The uploading link

## Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA

**Welcome to the research study!**

**Informed Consent to Participate in Research**
**Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study**

**Title:** The Statement of Teaching Philosophy: Genre Analysis and Readers Perspectives STUDY004752

**Overview:** You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this document should help you to decide if you would like to participate. The sections in this Overview provide the basic information about the study. More detailed information is provided in the remainder of the document. Study Staff: This study is being led by Khalid Alghamdi who is a PhD candidate at the University of South Florida (email: Alghamdik@usf.edu). This person is called the Principal Investigator. He is being guided in this research by Dr. Camilla Vasquez and Dr. Matt Kessler.

**Study Details:** This study is being conducted at the University of South Florida. The purpose of the study is to understand the rhetorical structure and the linguistic features of teaching philosophy statements written by graduate students or professors in linguistics working or studying in the United States. One of the objectives of the study ask the potential participant to provide their updated teaching philosophy statements and answer some background and related questions.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to participate and may stop your participation at any time. There will be no penalties or loss of benefits or opportunities if you do not participate or decide to stop once you start. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not affect your job status, employment record, employee evaluations, or advancement opportunities. Benefits, Compensation, and Risk: I do not know if you will receive any benefit from your participation. There is no cost to participate. You will not be compensated for your participation. This research is considered minimal risk. Minimal risk means that study risks are the same as the risks you face in daily life. Confidentiality: Even if I publish the findings from this study, we will keep your study information private and confidential. Anyone with the authority to look at your records must keep them confidential.

**Why are you being asked to take part?** You are being asked to take part because you are either a graduate student or a professor of linguistics, applied linguistics, second language acquisition, TESOL, or a related field.

**Privacy and Confidentiality** I will do my best to keep your records private and confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Certain people may need to see your study records. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are: • Principal investigator and the advising professors.
The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who gave oversight responsibilities for this study, and staff in USF Research Integrity and Compliance. It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses because you are responding online. Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. No guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet. However, your participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet.

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, call **Khalid Alghamdi** at **503-**[redacted] or at **Alghamdik@usf.edu**. If you have questions about your rights, complaints, or issues as a person taking part in this study, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 or contact the IRB by email at RSCH-IRB@usf.edu. I may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name. I will not publish anything else that would let people know who you are. You can print a copy of this consent form for your records. I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by proceeding with this survey, I am agreeing to take part in research, and I am 18 years of age or older.

- ◯ I consent, begin the survey
- ◯ I do not consent, I do not wish to participate

→

## Appendix E: Interview Questions

### *Task 1: Think-Aloud Protocol.*

The first part of the interview is think-aloud protocol, which is a common procedure used in texts based interviews in qualitative studies. In this task you are kindly asked to read the document out loud and simply comment on anything that come to your mind

For instance, you may read one sentence or one paragraph and comment on what you found effective, clear and interesting, important or not important. Read it as if you are reading it as if you are a committee member reading an applicant teaching philosophy statement.

After reading each statement, I asked the participant to provide me with their overall evaluation of the statement.

### *Task 2: Semi Structured Interview*

1. What do you think is the purpose of the statement of teaching philosophy?
2. How important is the statement of teaching philosophy in the hiring process? In other words, how much weight would you give to the statement of teaching philosophy compared to the other application materials?
3. What do you consider is the most important element or component in the statement of teaching philosophy? Or let's say you are part of a search committee and reading TPSs for applicants; what will you be looking at?
4. In your opinion, what is a frequently included aspect of teaching philosophy that you think is not essential to have?
5. Would you like to see more of what the applicant was actually doing in their classrooms, or how they conceptualize learning and teaching, or their previous achievements in teaching?
6. How does the format and structure of a teaching philosophy statement affect your perception of the document?
7. How specific do you think the teaching philosophy should be? In other words, would you like to see more details about the teaching approaches or the authors' beliefs (for example, you would like to know how the teacher is teaching content courses and language courses, or you just want to see their overall approaches)
8. Do you believe graduate students should learn how to write a statement of teaching philosophy? Or is it a genre that should be left to writers' freedom to write whatever and however they are willing to do so?

## Appendix F. Metadiscourse Markers Found in the Corpus

***Hedges***

a bit
about
almost
appears
as applicable as possible
as closely as possible
as much as I can
as much as possible
can
could
do my best
feel
generally
i'd like
if possible
in my experience
in my vision
indicates
largely
likely
little bit
mainly
may
might
most
most often
much
often
perhaps
possible
possibly
relatively
see
seem
seemed
seemingly
particularly
simply
some
some point
some way
sometimes
somewhat
tend
think
to a reasonable extent
tried
tried my best
try to
typically
unlikely
usually
very often
whenever possible
would
would likely

***Boosters***

actually
always
belief
believe
certainly
clear
clearly
completely
consistently
continually
continuously
deeper
deeply
demonstrated
demonstrates
entirely
especially
extremely
find
firmly
found
full
fuller
fully
genuinely
great
greater
greatest
greatly
has shown
heavily
high
highly
hilariously
in fact
incredibly
invariably
knew
know
more
most
must
necessary
never
of course
particularly

proved
realize
realized
really
recognize
seen
should
shown
significantly
since
so
strongly
too
tremendous
true
truly
well
will

***Attitude Markers***
appropriate
appropriately
awesome
bad
be happy to
beneficial
beneficially
best
better
central
centrally
confident
core
cornerstone
critical
crucial
crucially
deleterious
effective
effectively
efficient
enjoy
enjoyable
essential
essentially
even
excellent
excited
exciting
favor
favorite
fortunate
fortunately
fundamental
fundamentally
genuine
glad
good
great
greatest
happy
hard
high
high-quality
hope
hopefully
ideal
important
importantly
insightful
integral
interesting
invaluable
it is a joy
key
like
love
main
major
marked
meaningful
necessary
nicely
one of the core
passionate
pleasant
popular
prefer
preferred
primarily
primary
profoundly
proper
pure joy
reasonable
rewarding
rich
robust
significant
solid
strong
stronger
surprisingly
useful
valuable
value
vital
well

***Self-Mention***
I
my
myself
our
us
we

***Engagement Markers***
our
ourselves
us
we
you
your
wh- questions

***Transition***
accordingly
additionally
afterward
again
also
although
as a result
as such
at that time
at the same time
because
besides
broader still
but
consequently
due to
even though
for the same reasons
for this purpose
for example
for instance
I mean
i.e.
however
in a similar manner
in a similar vein
in addition
in all contexts
in doing so
in general
in order
in this case
in this sense
in this way
initially
likewise
moreover
overall
rather
relatedly
similarly
since
so
taken together
thereby
therefore
this has resulted
though
thus
to this end
whereby
While
with this as a starting point
with this in mind
With this as a starting point
Yet

***Frame Markers***
finally
first
in sum
in a nutshell,
in brief
in conclusion
in regard to
in short
its purpose is twofold
last but not leas
lastly
numbering (1), (2), (3)
overall
regarding
roman numeral (i), (ii)
second
secondly
specifically
then
third
through this process
to conclude
ultimately

***Endophoric Markers***
in what follows
in this statement
in this narrative
in the following sections
below I …
(see appendix).

***Code Gloss***
an example
e.g.
in one example
in other words
like
namely
say
specifically
such as
that is
that means,
this in turn means
to illustrate
which means

## Appendix G: The Two Statements Used in the Think-Aloud Protocol

### Participant #4

As an instructor of Second Language Acquisition and Syntax courses, I aim to foster autonomous, goal-driven and collaborative learners. I anchor my pedagogy in three interrelated principles. First, learning happens in the space between our expectations and students' needs - therefore, it emerges from negotiation. Second, the interaction between humans themselves and humans and the world is key for cognitive development. Finally, just as important as meaningfulness, for learning to occur, students need a sense of purpose and application.

Everyone we meet in the classroom brings a lifetime of home, community and classroom experience: they are not clean slates. Therefore, I don't see myself as a recipient of knowledge to be poured over my students. I am a facilitator of learning. My extensive tenure as a language instructor has allowed me to apply and assess a plethora of teaching methodologies in my classes. From the textbook-based Grammar Translation Method to the comprehensive Communicative Approaches, I learned that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching and learning. My commitment is to understand what learners need and tailor lessons that meet the particularity of my group. Just as important, I consider the practicality of the methods, and the possibilities they might provide for my learners, be them social, economic or political.

I believe that as far as our educational standards are being met, there is enough room to accommodate everyone's needs and interests. In my classes, learners participate in syllabus design and provide feedback in the middle and at the end of each term. To attend to their needs, I bring a multitude of tasks that cater for different learning styles. Students have reported that a flexible syllabus allows them to see the applicability of what they learn. They have also described my classes as instructive, dynamic and diverse. When students are heard and their needs are considered, they understand that they are able to devise action steps on their own.

I advocate for cooperation for learners to realize their potential, be it through interaction with a peer or me: learning happens in the middle. Much similar to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, I work to meet students where they are and scaffold their way to success. I make sure I get to know my students either during my office hours or group work, and learners collaborate with their peers in assignments and in class discussions. I encourage students to work in groups to solve complex Syntax problems in the classroom. Students also engage in collaborative discussions through Joint Productive Activities in which they assess and seek consensus pertaining to SLA theories and applications. This has resulted in multiple interdisciplinary, intercollege and international projects.

By promoting cooperation with peers and supporting learners individually and in small groups, learners can develop metalinguistic skills and benefit from explicit teaching when required. I have received positive feedback on how my implicit teaching techniques combined with explicit support appeals to a diverse audience and makes linguistics tangible and logical. Promoting collaboration has also resulted in safe spaces in which learners can voice their needs and share insights on motivation, anxiety and time management.

Finally, at the core of my teaching practice is the belief that learning must be not only meaningful, but purposeful. It is true that learners will acquire language when they can relate it to their real lives, but learning takes place in actual, purposeful interactions. By following a Post-Methodological approach to language teaching, I have been able to adopt Task-Based and Project-Based learning experiences in my classrooms in which learners have the chance to generate an outcome that will be useful in their everyday lives. In my classes, students have written articles for publication, recorded podcasts, created YouTube channels, and carried out elicitation sessions for language documentation. All these products have been shared with external audiences providing them with tangible results which are beneficial for their professional careers.

My pedagogical principles were built on a solid foundation of research and empirical experience. I strongly believe that an effective classroom is the one in which teaching practice and academic theory are consonant. These maxims that I have developed throughout my teaching career are an illustration of how I see the world: regardless of our statuses, we are in constant negotiation, in constant cooperation and searching for a purpose in what we do.

**Participant #38**

A few goals are central to my teaching in any Linguistics class. Teaching Linguistics is teaching students to view phenomena as interconnected systems, rather than just the parts of the whole; to recognize patterns and connect ideas into a coherent analysis; to embed those analyses within existing data and theories and have confidence in effectively communicating them to many types of audiences; and, perhaps most importantly, to be instilled with an appreciation of human and linguistic diversity.

The activities I use in teaching correspond to these goals. When I had the opportunity to design my own course, Language and Gender, during the 2018 summer session, I chose a research proposal as the focal point of their work in the class. Students selected a topic that inspired them and worked closely with me and their ''research groups' of classmates, filling out weekly goal-setting sheets to keep them on track. By encouraging students to find their own sense of intellectual purpose, I made integrating the course material relevant, engaging, and goal-oriented. The students practiced doing what "real linguists" do and effectively communicating what they had done.

During my Language and Gender class, we would spend the first hour discussing the reading. Prior to our class meeting, students were asked to make forum posts to the course site responding to the reading. These posts allowed me to see where people were in terms of understanding the reading, but more importantly, it gave students an alternate method of participation. Some students don't feel comfortable bringing up their ideas and questions in class, but that doesn't mean that they aren't worth bringing up. By allowing students to participate in this way, I minimized the risk of students and their ideas 'falling through the cracks.' I also created reading guides that offered notes and asked questions for each reading. These guides served several goals: they modeled how I read journal papers by pointing out the things I was keeping track of and found important; they provided a starting point in reading the paper for students who felt less confident; and they were a chance to fill in knowledge gaps for some of the terms and concepts that came up in the paper but were beyond the scope of the class. The second hour featured either a guest lecture or a short in-class activity and discussion. It was very important to me to expose the students to the many different types of thinking around language and gender being done by as many different types of thinkers as possible. Visits included an excerpt from a colleague in Computer Science's paper on gender and machine translation, a video from a high school friend who works as an American Sign Language interpreter on gender in ASL, and visits from my lab director, Prof XXX, about his experiments in speech perception and gender/sexual identities that were on the syllabus. It was very rewarding to me to leverage my personal and professional networks to bring a diverse set of voices to my students. Following these visits, the students had a chance to talk to me, each other, and the visitors about what they had heard or read.

During the course of the term, it is important for my students and I to have a chance to assess how things are going. As a GSI for a discussion section, I usually open with review questions which students can answer individually or in groups. In addition to demonstrating the inter-relatedness and continuity of concepts, this gives me a chance to see how students are retaining the past week's material. In Language and Gender, I opted for weekly open-note quizzes and a final paper and presentation. Making the quizzes open-note allowed the questions to be deeper and more thoughtful; rather than evaluating students' ability to recall facts, I was able to probe their ability to interpret them in light of other course material and their own experiences and interests. Since my first semester as a GSI, I have also given the students a chance to give me anonymous feedback at least once per term. One of the things I learned from these surveys is that the character of the student-led discussion in my Language and Gender class left students feeling uncertain what the important parts of the papers were. I proposed that I start the discussions with the five or fewer most important things I took away from each paper before moving onto the students' thoughts. They responded well to this compromise, which helped transition my students, for many of whom this was their first discussion-based class, away from a traditional lecture format.

I strive to foster a classroom environment that is inclusive and mutually respectful. One of the ways I do this is by asking the students to suggest and ratify a list of 'community norms' on the first day of class. Although the wording varies from group

to group, common norms are to share space, be patient, and to assume the best about others. This actively engages the students in reflecting about what makes their learning pleasant and successful and puts them in control of their learning environment. If conflict ever does arise, it can be addressed in relation to the norms we all agreed to. Other steps I take on the first day include introducing myself with my pronouns and inviting students to choose whether they'd like to as well, letting students write down anything they want to communicate to me privately, and including in my syllabus cultural, health, and academic resources across campus. I am candid with them about my own struggles and background, letting them know that my door is always open to them.