

Gender Differences in Teacher Reflection Form in Secondary Schools: A Linguistic Analysis

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Abstract

This qualitative-textual approach study aimed to determine the metadiscourse markers, to examine the writing styles, and to investigate the difference in writing styles used by male and female secondary public-school teachers in the reflective essays from the nine districts of the Division of Davao del Sur. A total of 100 corpora were utilized in this study, in which 50 from males and 50 from females. This study used Hyland Metadiscourse Model, Werlich Five Types of Text Categorization, and Antconc Key Word In-Context (KWIC) in analyzing the texts. This study revealed that secondary school teachers were commonly using interactive and interactional metadiscourse features. It can also be surmised from the outputs of the teachers that male teachers used a greater number and variety of attitude markers compared to female teachers. This finding suggests that male teachers are more expressive in conveying their attitude towards their statements. Second, in the writing styles as to what text type used, the most utilized style is the expository as manifested in the reflective essays of the male and female secondary school teachers. Further, study revealed both male and female teachers were more familiar in using exposition type, less familiar in using argumentation and had never explored yet using description, narration and instruction. Finally, based on this study, it is clear enough that gender has nothing to do with writing styles used in writing reflective essays.

Keywords: education; public school teachers; gender; text type categorization, metadiscourse analysis; Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills among teachers in the Philippines is a topic that can have various dimensions and challenges. In today's milieu, many studies have explored the skills of students yet very limited studies explored the capacity and skills of teachers in writing. This for one is considered a problematic concern since public school teachers are required to submit a reflective essay in the form of Teacher Reflective Form (TRF) as mandated by the Department of Education. As mentioned in the study of Tang (98-118) that one of the official languages of the Philippines is English, which is frequently used in educational settings. However, proficiency in English writing skills may vary among teachers. Some teachers may struggle with grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, or spelling, which can affect their ability to effectively communicate in written form. Further, teachers instruct writing to their students, hence, teachers' competence in writing should be at par with acceptable standards.

The conduct of this study is of great help in knowing the quality of writing that teachers have. This may help determine an intervention that would fit the need of the teachers in terms of writing. As mentioned in the study of Alvarez (112) it is challenging for teachers to write. Addressing these challenges would require a comprehensive approach involving professional development programs, training workshops, resources, and support systems that specifically target the improvement of teachers' writing skills. Additionally, integrating writing-focused activities, strategies, and assessments into the curriculum can help enhance both teachers' and students' writing proficiency.

Teachers do not only teach, but they also write. In the field of education, teachers are considered as writers. Apart from making lesson plan, summative test, formative test, activity sheets

and all other learning resources and materials, teachers are also tasked to write various reports every end of the school year like accomplishment and narrative reports, and so with reflection reports. In fact, for the school year 2021-2022 it has been included in the Class Observation Tool (COT) that teachers should secure a Teacher Reflection Form (TRF) which serves as their supporting attachment for their Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR). However, TRF could not only be limited to serve as an attachment because it can also provide data to address some students' learning issues. TRF contains with so much ideas, perspectives, realizations and valuable reflections of teachers. Thus, reflective essays should be properly and substantially written.

Given the fact we are not natives of the English language, there is already struggles in expressing our thoughts using English. Acquiring English writing skills will be a never-ending learning. However, non-native English users do not have the choice because English is chosen as the international language This is essentially true especially in the case of the Philippines which uses English as the medium of instruction (MoI) both in private and public schools. But evidently, the English efficacy in the Philippines is getting low. In fact, according to the results of the study by (Esquivel), it was determined that Filipinos ironically have refrained from using American English and have instead appropriated it for their "own" purposes. Philippine English distinguishes itself from other world languages.

The main theory utilized in this study is the Cognitive Writing Theory of Flower & Hayes (1980) which argued that writing is a set of hierarchically organized thinking processes rather than a series of linear steps or discrete stages. Specifically, Flower and Hayes proposed a model that identified the organization of the writing process and divided the writer's world into three major parts: (1) the task environment, (2) the writer's long-term memory, and (3) the writing process. In

this model, the writer's task environment includes all of the exterior forces influencing the writer, including the rhetorical problem, the topic, audience, and situation prompting the writer to write, and the unique constraints brought on the writer by the text. The writer's long-term memory (LTM) includes everything the writer stores about the topic, including useful knowledge about the task and audience, and the writer's own plans or goals in writing. Together, the task environment and the writer's long-term memory provide the context in which the writing process occurs (Flower and Hayes).

This research was also based on gender theory. According to Judith Butler's gender theory, it is important to comprehend how men, women, and queer people behave in various circumstances, societies, and academic fields. Butler is well-known for her work on gender and identity. By employing the gender theory framework, the study seeks to analyze the reflective essays of the teachers examine writing styles of male and female secondary school teachers.

When examining writing styles, it is important to approach the topic with caution, as writing styles can vary greatly among individuals regardless of gender. However, certain general observations have been made regarding potential differences in writing styles between males and females. It is crucial to note that these observations are based on broad generalizations and do not apply universally to all individuals. Writing styles can be influenced by a variety of factors, including culture, education, personal experiences, and individual preferences.

One commonly discussed difference is that women may tend to employ a more collaborative and inclusive writing style. They may emphasize building connections and nurturing relationships with readers by using language that promotes empathy, cooperation, and consensus. Female writers may also be more inclined to incorporate personal experiences and emotions into

their writing, aiming to create a sense of connection and understanding with their audience.

On the other hand, male writing styles are sometimes associated with directness, assertiveness, and a focus on conveying information or presenting arguments logically and concisely. Male writers may prioritize providing facts, evidence, and logical reasoning to support their points, focusing on the content and the strength of their arguments. However, it is essential to reiterate that these observations are generalizations and may not reflect the writing styles of every individual. Writing styles can vary widely, and individuals may exhibit characteristics from both categories or display entirely unique approaches to writing.

It is also important to consider that societal norms, expectations, and cultural factors play a significant role in shaping writing styles. Gender roles and expectations regarding communication and expression differ across cultures and time periods, and these differences can influence writing styles to some extent. Ultimately, when analyzing writing styles, it is crucial to approach each individual as unique and consider a wide range of factors that may contribute to their writing style. It is best to avoid making broad assumptions or stereotypes based solely on gender.

Furthermore, it is important to note also that the gender theory perspective provides a theoretical framework for understanding how gender, in its diverse forms, may influence the behaviors and attitudes of individuals within specific contexts. By applying this framework to the analysis of the teachers' writing outputs, the study aims to shed light on the interplay between gender and reflective writing in the field of education in Davao del Sur. The relevance of gender theory in the study and emphasizes the importance of considering the teachers' reflective essays as a means to explore their attitudes and behaviors within the specific context of education in Davao del Sur.

It is understood that teachers have already prior knowledge on how to write different kinds of essays, narratives and reports. And teachers are not passive learners in fact many of them went to further studies like masters' and doctoral degree. Thus, teachers are actively learning and constructing meaning out of their knowledge and experiences. And these knowledge and experiences could be manifested in their reflective essay written in the TRF. Through personal experience and reflection, teachers create their own knowledge and understanding of the world.

And it is expected that this knowledge is applied in their job especially in making lesson plan, summative tests, formative tests, narrative reports, accomplishment reports and reflective essays. And all these writing outputs of teachers can create problem solving, if the teachers find problem, they can discuss with other teachers as well as with their school heads to get a solution.

Although the reflective essay has been examined from a number of perspectives in the past, I have found that the results have received relatively little attention. And in the Division of Davao del Sur, there has no attention given as to the concerns and perceptions which are expressed in the reflection form of the teachers. And this study can be very significant for at least three different reasons: first, there is a research gap because reflective essays written by teachers have not previously been examined; second, and more importantly, because the exploration of reflective essays from high stakes academic writing might clarify how teachers write English; and third, the Division of Davao del Sur authorities could draw attention to the significance of a more functional approach to teaching writing. This study can examine the level of teachers' writing abilities, identify gender differences in teachers' reflective essays, and potentially offer recommendations for what needs to be emphasized in future teaching, professional development, and formulating policies for Gender and Development (GAD) programs by using a framework of linguistic analysis that

incorporates functional aspects of writing.

The Philippine education system has made writing as part of its core competencies. Although many professionals, academics, and teachers applauded the increasing need for writing abilities, subsequent events created notable concerns. As for the "genre" or "text types," neither the concept nor the format and criteria have been distinctly and consistently established in a significant part of the Division of Davao del Sur curriculum. In teaching, as to writing engagements and interactions some teachers have only limited knowledge as to what styles and strategies need to be applied in writing reflective essay. However, teachers should learn and refresh their knowledge in writing as part of the job. It is because writing your thoughts down makes it simpler for you to draw connections between what you are thinking, what you are learning, and what you are doing. You can use your written reflection as a source of information and a proof in the future.

Reflection gives you the chance on how your own observations and experiences have influenced your way of thinking and your willingness to accept new ideas. In teaching profession, writing reflection is a way of enhancing teacher's performance in a sense that reflection could develop realizations and critical thinking. The study's conclusions shed light on the nature of science teaching and learning, how people might enhance the standard of their practices, and strategies for examining teaching and learning mechanisms and fostering change. The significance of each of the two types of reflection for promoting personal and professional development is at the center of these findings. Both forms of reflection functioned to improve knowledge, awareness, and control of oneself as well as one's classroom practice for both teachers and students (Baird, Fensham, and Gunstone).

One of the most important functions of reflection is to help teachers become aware of

their mental structures, subject them to a critical analysis, and if necessary, restructure them (Korthagen). Cognitive scientists who study how people learn have found that reflective activities enhance learning (Bransford, Brown and Cocking). This study served as a guide to the teachers what are the aspects in writing were already developed and need to be developed.

The question of what skills teachers should master in writing academic essays cannot only be studied to different genre constructs. The analysis must also be based in the gender differences and how its aims must be operationalized in the field. Another important thing also to be considered is the importance of the guidelines such as unified templates, contents, and formats to be used. This study serves as an eye opener to the Department of Education that there are writing skills of the teachers that are already developed and need to be developed.

In writing an essay there are important ways to consider. The ability to write effectively is something that has its basis in the cognitive domain. New knowledge must be learned, understood, applied, and synthesized. Writing well, in the opinion of a faculty member, entails more than simply following rules of grammar and style (Defazio). It also involves being inspired by one's creativity, problem-solving and reflecting, and revising one's work until it is ready for publication. From a student's point of view, writing may instead be an exhausting and even dreaded task that requires them to try to put their ideas on paper while learning the standards of writing, including syntax, citation style, and spelling (Defazio).

There is a significant need for teachers at all levels not only to be good written communicators, but also to understand the importance of good writing skills. "In addition, an important facet of written communication is being able to critically assess the writing of others, particularly in the field of education." The results of this study will give advantages to the Division

of Davao del Sur to plan, create and conduct some relevant trainings on how to enhance the writing skills of the teachers and Gender and Development (GAD) related projects and programs.

There were three objectives in this study. The first objective of this study is to examine the linguistic features specifically the metadiscourse features used in the TRF of the secondary school teachers. The second objective of this study is to examine the writing styles of the teachers. And the third objective of this study is to investigate how do the writing styles differ between male and female teachers.

This study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic features of the reflective essays of secondary school teachers in TRF?
2. What are the writing styles used by secondary school teachers in their reflective essay in TRF?
3. How does the writing styles differ between male and female secondary school teachers in TRF?

METHOD

This chapter contained the qualitative approach used in this study. To collect, analyze, and interpret data, researchers use several research methods. This part discussed the materials and instrument, design and procedure, role of the researcher and trustworthiness of the study.

Materials and Instrument

This study utilized the reflective essays of secondary schools public teachers written in Teacher Reflection Form or TRF. These TRF's served as attachments in Individual Performance

Commitment and Review (IPCR) of the teachers which is submitted annually.

This study utilized textual analysis through corpus linguistic approach. Corpus linguistics is an approach to language study that is methodologically based in empirical inquiry. It is based on the quantitative or qualitative examination of a corpus of written texts or transcriptions of spontaneous or partially spontaneous speech (Adamo).

A corpus is a group of natural language (text, voice or sign transcriptions, or both) that has been compiled for a particular use. Corpus research has evolved into a crucial component of almost any linguistic research. This suggests that the linguistics paradigm is finally starting to return to being more pluralistic. In corpus linguistics, language study is always the study of written (or transcribed or quoted or otherwise recorded) texts or text pieces, i.e. language which can be reproduced, heard, read and interpreted repeatedly. And the analysis of texts requires attention to textual form, structure and organization.

There were no participants involved in this study because the materials needed are the reflective essays written in the TRF of the secondary public school teachers in the Division of Davao del Sur. Among the districts included were, School 1, School 2, School 3, School 4, School 5, School 6, School 7, School 8 and School 9. A total of 100 corpora of TRF were analyzed in this study. There were 50 from male teachers and 50 from female teachers.

Table 1
Number of Corpus Utilized Per District

District	Male	Female	Total
<i>School 1</i>	10	10	20
<i>School 2</i>	2	5	7
<i>School 3</i>	3	2	5
<i>School 4</i>	12	4	16
<i>School 5</i>	2	11	13
<i>School 6</i>	6	7	13
<i>School 7</i>	8	4	12

<i>School 8</i>	2	4	6
<i>School 9</i>	5	3	8
Total	50	50	100

This study tried to examine the reflection outputs of the teachers in terms of metadiscourse features and writing styles used by male and female teachers, and their differences. Shown in Table1 is the number of reflective essays utilized from different districts.

Design and Procedure

This study used corpus linguistic analysis. “Corpus linguistics approaches is the study of language in use through corpora (singular: corpus). A corpus is a large, principled collection of naturally occurring examples of language stored electronically.” In short, corpus linguistics serves to answer two fundamental research questions as to what particular patterns are associated with lexical or grammatical features and how do these patterns differ within varieties and registers (Bennet).

A textual qualitative method approach of analyzing the data was used for this study. In determining the metadiscourse features, Hyland (2005) Metadiscourse Model was used for this study. This model consists of two categories such as interactive and interactional category. In Interactive Category there are five types, namely, transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses. In Interactional Category, there are five types also, namely, hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers and self-mentions. In examining the linguistic features used, the word-count approach was used to identify the linguistic patterns of the teachers’ TRF in secondary schools. The corpus of 100 reflective essays were analyzed using AntConc

software. The linguistic features were identified and counted electronically through Key Word in Context (KWIC) in AntConc software.

In determining the writing styles, this study used the Werlich (1976) Five Text Type Categorization. The researcher thoroughly read and analyzed the introduction of the reflective essays by text type categorization namely, description, narration, exposition, argumentation and instruction. Description focuses on factual phenomena and relations in space. Narration focuses on factual phenomena and relations in time. Exposition chooses constituent element manifested in a term or a mental construct manifested in text. Argumentation has purpose relations between concepts and phenomena. Instruction tells X what to do.

In educational context, the use of linguistics is expanding and frequently has an interdisciplinary focus. It is not only use by language teachers but also other teachers in different areas of specialization. Writing might lack in composition, significance, and even effective idea exchange in a society where technological communication is used to communicate more than ever before. The tools needed to maintain and improve the art of reading, writing, and communication are granted by teaching and studying linguistics. This is significant in the fields of education, the workplace, and society. Thus, teachers should be knowledgeable enough how to write because they teach how to write.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Linguistic features of the reflective essays of secondary teachers in TRF

Reflective essays are a specific genre of writing that involves introspection, self-analysis, and personal reflection. Linguistic features play an important role in conveying the writer's thoughts, experiences, and insights in a reflective essay. In the Department of Education,

teachers are required to submit the Teacher Reflective Form (TRF) as an important required attachment for their annual *Individual Performance Commitment and Review* (IPCR) Portfolio.. The exploration of this study is limited to analyzing the linguistic features of the selected TRF outputs of secondary public school teachers as the corpus and by using the ANTConc software which specifically looked into the metadiscourse features of the corpus. Upon generating the data from the software, the metadiscourse features that were looked upon were categorized into *Interactive* and *Interactional* .

Interactive Category has five types, namely, transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses, while the Interactional Category has five types also, namely, hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers and self-mentions.

As to the first feature, the interactive metadiscourse, results in Table 2.1 revealed that the teachers were able to use both interactive and interactional metadiscourses in their reflective essays. For the interactional metadiscourse, “*transitions*”, “*frame markers*”, “*endophoric markers*”, “*evidentials*”, and “*code glosses*” were all observed in the essays however, these were identified in limited frequencies only. The study results was able to identify transitions such as: *additionally, afterward, afterwards, and, apparently, as a teacher, at this point, besides that, but, by doing so, by doing this, by then, from there, further, furthermore, generally, hence, however, in addition, in effect, moreover, nevertheless, on the other hand, overall, therefore, through this method, thus, with that*. On the other hand, female teachers used Transitions namely: *moreover, additionally, afterwards, although, and, anyway, as a result, as well as, basically, but, furthermore, generally, however, in this regard, meanwhile, thus, unfortunately*. Transitions is the second in rank to endophoric markers of the most used interactive metadiscourse features.

The observed transitions from the outputs of the teachers implies that they are able to express semantic relation between main clauses. It can be implied that transitions are the most prominent used interactive *metadiscourse* feature. In the study of (Xu) 2021 transitions are the most frequent subcategory of interactive metadiscourse in both subcorpora, accounting for over 1/3 of the total interactive metadiscourse markers. Usually in writing in any kind of texts transitions are essential because it connects main clauses and paragraphs are made of connected sentences. These help readers grasp the appropriate meanings of elements in texts. The results implied that both male and female teachers are familiar in using the transitions. However male teachers used more transitions compared to female teachers. This means that male wrote more ideas compared to female teachers because they tried to connect more sentences using transitions.

In using the frame markers teachers utilized frame markers *such as: after all, and above all, and lastly, as a result, as part of this technique, at first glance, finally, first, in the agenda, in the end, next, second, start by, the final, the first thing, the last one, the third step, then, to start*. On the contrast female teachers used 15 frame markers namely; *as a result, fifth, first, for this reason, fourth, from there, generally, lastly, on the whole I conclude, second, the fourth one, then, third, thirdly, with this*. According to Hyland 2005 frame markers refer to discourse acts sequences, or text stages, for example, finally/to conclude/my purpose is. In writing, authors use frame markers to help to guide our readers the direction of the flow of authors ideas. These features are commonly used to present the flow in organizing the writer's ideas or narrating events.

As to the Endophoric markers, this is also known as endophora or endophoric expressions, are linguistic elements that refer back to something mentioned within the same text or discourse.

The use of endophoric markers in the outputs of the teachers implies that they have used these crucial markers for effective communication. Having these also implies that they were able to link ideas and maintain a coherent flow of information throughout their discourse. It can also be observed that they have utilized proper use of these markers ensures that the intended references are clear to the audience, allowing them to follow and understand the text or speech more easily.

As to the Evidentials, these are the grammatical category found in some languages that indicate the source or type of evidence for a statement. They provide information about how the speaker knows or came to know the information they are expressing. The evidentials that the teachers used are found in Table 1. Evidentials are particularly prevalent in languages that are spoken in contexts where speakers value precision in conveying the source of information. As observed in the frequency, this feature was used poorly in the outputs of the teachers. It is essential to note that not all languages have evidential markers, and the use of evidentials can vary in different linguistic and cultural contexts. The presence of evidential distinctions in a language reflects the way speakers in that community value the source of information and the role of evidence in communication (Mithun 317).

As to the Code Glosses, these are annotations or explanations used in linguistic and anthropological research to analyze and interpret linguistic data, particularly when studying languages or dialects that are not widely known or documented. The outputs of the teachers show very limited code glosses which are: *Another possible strategy to be used, are as follows, are the following, as well as, for example, In other words, in this regard, namely, such as*. This means that the teachers failed to provide word-by-word or morpheme-by-morpheme translations of text or speech samples to facilitate understanding and analysis of the underlying linguistic structures and

patterns. The limited code glossing limits a researcher to analyze the sentence's syntactic structure, word order, and morphological patterns in the target language, even if they do not speak the language fluently. In this study result, it is a valuable tool in linguistic research for understanding the grammatical features and nuances of lesser-known languages. However, since the outputs of the male teachers show limited contents as to this feature, it then means that the teachers need to improve in this part of their writing.

Table 2.1

Interactive Metadiscourse Markers Used by Secondary School Teachers

Transitions	Frame Markers	Endophoric Markers	Evidentials	Code Glosses
Additionally, afterward, afterwards, And, apparently, as a teacher, at this point, besides this, but, by doing so,	and above all; finally; first; second; third; fourth; fifth; the last one; as a result; start by; the third step; then; the final one; next; the first thing; for this reason; lastly; thirdly; in the agenda; as part of the technique; in the end	as a result of the offered prompt, As mentioned above, As to the situation,	according to Meredith Cicerchia, a teacher from the University of Nottingham; the said RA also stated; based on my researches; according to blogs; www.worldbank.organization; the expert mechanism on the right of IP's states that; source: https://childmind.org/guide/teachers-guide-to-addhd-in-the-classroom ; according to my internet research; Harter, 1983; DEci, 1971; according to an article in THE Effects of Goal Seetingny Kristie J. Jernigan; According to Logsdon 2022; According to the study of Alenazi 2018; According to Klumberly White 2020 of Christa Academy of School Arts and Sciences; Pursuant to Deped Order No. 62, s. 201; Deped Ordeer No. 43, s. 2013; aligned to the Deped Order No. 62, s. 2011 entitled;	Another possible strategy to be used, are as follows: are the following, as well as, for example, In other words, in this regard, namely, such as

Male

Female	and; moreover; therefore; but; apparently; as a result; further; by then; additionally; by doing this; besides that; in addition; from there; by doing this; thus; furthermore; afterwards; however; hence; at this point; overall; nevertheless; afterward; with that; on the other hand; in effect; generally;	As a result, First, For this reason, Generally, Then, Thirdly, Next, Lastly, with this	According to the scenario, as seen in the case given above,	According to, aligned to the Deped Order, Based on my researches	Along with this, for example in other words,
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The second category which is the interactional metadiscourse refers to linguistic expressions used by speakers or writers to establish and maintain communication with their audience. Metadiscourse, in general, involves language that comments on or refers to the ongoing discourse, guiding the reader or listener in understanding the speaker's or writer's intentions and attitudes. Presented in Table 2.2 are the interactional metadiscourse features found in the outputs of the teachers.

Table 2.2*Interactional Metadiscourse Markers Used by Secondary School Teachers*

	Hedges	Boosters	Attitude Markers	Engagement Markers	Self-mentions
Male	Additionally, afterward, afterwards, And, apparently, as a teacher, at this point, besides this, but, by doing so,	and above all; finally; first; second; third; fourth; fifth; the last one; as a result; start by; the third step; then; the final one; next; the first thing; for this reason; lastly; thirdly; in the agenda; as part of the technique; in the end	as a result of the offered prompt, As mentioned above, As to the situation,	according to Meredith Cicerchia, a teacher from the University of Nottingham; the said RA also stated; based on my researches; according to blogs; www.worldbank.organization; the expert mechanism on the right of IP's states that; source: https://childmind.org/guide/teachers-guide-to-addhd-in-the-classroom ; according to my internet research; Harter, 1983; DEci, 1971; according to an article in THE Effects of Goal Setting by Kristie J. Jernigan; According to Logsdon 2022; According to the study of Alenazi 2018; According to Kimberly White 2020 of Christa Academy of School Arts and Sciences; Pursuant to Deped Order No. 62, s. 201; Deped Order No. 43, s. 2013; aligned to the Deped Order No. 62, s. 2011 entitled;	Another possible strategy to be used, are as follows: are the following, as well as, for example, In other words, in this regard, namely, such as

Female	and; moreover; therefore; but; apparently; as a result; further; by then; additionally; by doing this; besides that; in addition; from there; by doing this; thus; furthermore; afterwards; however; hence; at this point; overall; nevertheless; afterward; with that; on the other hand; in effect; generally;	As a result, First, For this reason, Generally, Then, Thirdly, Next, Lastly, with this	According to the scenario, as seen in the case given above,	According to, aligned to the Deped Order, Based on my researches	Along with this, for example in other words,
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Based on the generated data from Antconc, the Hedges, being the first interactional metadiscourse feature that the teachers used in their outputs were almost the same which include: can, could, can be, should, would, might, and shall. Hedges are commonly used in various types of writing to acknowledge different perspectives, show respect for opposing views, or indicate the limitations of the writer's knowledge (Karunarathna 18). In the outputs of the teachers, it showed that they used linguistic devices to express caution, uncertainty, and politeness which made their statements appear soft and it avoided sounding overly assertive.

Boosters were mostly observed in the outputs of the male teachers. This includes: *evidently; in fact; must; should't; should not; the fact that learning; will; cannot; must; most importantly; should not be; in most cases; will be; more importantly; must be; truly; another important thing ; it is also important; yet clearly to emphasize; really; yes, it is a fact that; indeed;*

highly values; it is a known fact. It can be observed that the teachers use of interactional metadiscourse show that they emphasize clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness of their communication. It helps create a more dynamic and engaging interaction between the communicator and the audience, fostering a collaborative and participatory exchange of ideas.

As to the Attitude markers, teachers have used several words and phrases to manifest evaluative language or stance markers which are linguistic expressions used in writing to convey the writer's attitude, opinion, or emotion towards the content they are discussing. Hence, the teachers were able to utilize the crucial role of attitude markers in shaping the tone and persuasiveness of the text. Attitude markers can be positive, negative, or neutral, and they provide valuable insights into the writer's stance on a topic. Attitude markers allow writers to express their perspective while providing a more engaging and persuasive narrative. They are commonly used in various types of writing, including academic papers, essays, opinion pieces, persuasive speeches, and personal statements.

Teachers were able to emphasize the essential use of attitude markers thoughtfully and appropriately in writing as they used positive markers like: "I strongly believe that..." "It is evident that..." "This approach is commendable because..." "I am in favor of..." . These phrases help clarify the writer's position and make the text more engaging, but excessive or biased use of attitude markers can undermine the objectivity and credibility of the writing. Striking the right balance between expressing one's opinions and maintaining a fair and balanced tone is crucial in effective communication.

Engagement markers are linguistic expressions used in writing to actively involve the reader, create a sense of connection, and enhance reader engagement with the text. The teachers

employed limited engagement markers. The outputs of the teachers. In Hyland (63) terms, "engagement markers are devices that explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants".

Lastly, as to Self-mentions, this further means that they failed to maintain the reader's interest, failed to encourage interaction, and failed to make the writing more dynamic and interactive. Further, Hyland (62) indicates the explicitness degree of writer's/speaker's voice in the discourse through engagement markers hence, it is best to use these to encourage active reading, reflection, and involvement, making the text more memorable and impactful for the reader. For self-mentions, secondary school teachers used self-mentions frequently. There were 11 self-mentions identified from males namely: *as for my part, I am, I, I'll, I'm, I've, me, my, our, us, we*. On the other hand female teachers used 10 self-mentions namely: *I am, as an educator and parent, I, I'll, I'm, me, my, our, us, and we*. This means that male teachers used more self-mentions than female teachers. "Self-mentions explicit reference to author (s), for example, I/we/my/our" (Hyland).

In the outputs of the teachers, they were able to share their own perceptions, ideas, and experiences, the writers bring a personal touch to their reflective essays. This personalization can enhance the authenticity and depth of the reflection, as the teachers draw from their own knowledge and understanding to explore the topic at hand. Self-mentions were commonly using self-mentions. They personalized more their reflective essay by sharing their own perceptions, ideas and experiences. The statement suggests that self-mentions were commonly used in reflective essays. This indicates that the writers personalized their essays by including their own perceptions, ideas, and experiences.

Writing Styles Used by Secondary School Teachers

Teachers may use a variety of writing styles depending on the context and purpose of their writing. Here are some common writing styles that teachers may employ formal, instructional, reflective, academic, collaborative, personal communication, narrative, persuasive, and creative. Hence, it is essential for teachers to adapt their writing styles to suit the specific audience and purpose of their communication. Effective communication in the educational context involves clarity, coherence, and a tone that fosters a positive and supportive learning environment (Selvaraj et al 450). In this study, the writing style of teachers was also explored and analyzed through Werlich 1976 Text Type Categorization and the styles include: argumentative, narrative, expository, descriptive and instruction. Results are revealed below.

Table 3
Writing Styles Used by Secondary School Teachers

	Writing Style				
	Argumentation	Narration	Exposition	Description	Instruction
Male	1	0	49	0	0
Female	1	1	47	2	0

Table 3 presents the text type used by secondary school teachers in their reflective essays. It also shows the frequency of the text types as per male and female. Further it reveals that majority of the teachers utilized the expository style in writing their reflective essays in TRF.

Based on the results, there were two teachers who used argumentation. It is argumentation in a sense that it is reflected in the essay the phrase “I Have to disagree” and “I

partially beg to disagree”. Argumentation writing style can be challenging for several reasons. Argumentative writing requires clear and logical reasoning to present and support a position or claim. It involves developing a coherent argument with a strong thesis statement, relevant evidence, and logical connections between ideas. Constructing a well-reasoned argument that persuades the reader can be demanding.

The outputs of the teachers are in conformity with Hinkel (127) as he mentioned that argumentative writing necessitates careful organization and structure. The ideas must flow logically, with clear topic sentences, supporting evidence, and smooth transitions. Maintaining coherence and cohesion throughout the essay can be a complex task, particularly when dealing with complex or multifaceted arguments. Effective argumentative writing often relies on incorporating relevant research and evidence to support claims. This requires conducting thorough research, evaluating sources for credibility and reliability, and effectively integrating evidence into the argument. Finding and analyzing appropriate evidence can be time-consuming and challenging.

Strong argumentative writing acknowledges opposing viewpoints and effectively addresses counter arguments and these were shown in the outputs of the teachers. However, the 2 outputs were too limited. It can then be surmised that the teachers who utilized argumentative style are knowledgeable and they consider the audience's perspective and tailoring the argument to their knowledge, beliefs, and potential objections. Understanding the audience's biases, interests, and expectations is crucial for crafting persuasive arguments that resonate with them (Nelson 87).

For the narration type which involves recounting a series of events or a story, is typically

not the primary mode of writing used in reflective essays yet one teacher utilized this. Narration, with its focus on storytelling and chronological events, may not effectively capture the reflective and introspective aspects required in a reflective essay.

The teacher who used narration went beyond simply narrating events and delve into the deeper meaning and implications of his/her experiences. This can then be considered a support to the claim of Braun et al (37) that narration alone may not provide the necessary analytical depth or engage with the reflective process in the same way as other writing approaches. Narration, while useful for conveying a story, may not effectively capture or convey these introspective elements. Narration can be structured; it may not lend itself well to organizing and presenting the reflective content in a logical and cohesive manner.

However, it is important to note that elements of narration can still be incorporated into a reflective essay to illustrate specific moments or experiences. Anecdotes or examples can help provide context or support the reflective analysis. It's a matter of balancing narrative elements with the primary reflective focus. In summary, while narration can be a powerful tool for storytelling, even if it may not align with the primary objectives of reflective writing.

Notably, most teachers used exposition type by sharing their thoughts, teaching experiences and strategies in the field. Exposition style in writing among teachers refers to the way teachers present information, explain concepts, and provide instructional content to their students or readers. The exposition style is commonly used in educational settings to convey information in a clear, organized, and coherent manner. The outputs of the teachers bear the following characteristics: Clarity where they use straightforward language and avoid unnecessary jargon or complex vocabulary. Teachers use this style to ensure that students

understand the subject matter effectively. Most of them cited examples as to how the department of Education works. They also cited the practices they have in the organization such as “*I created an introductory task for the drill that can showcase the learners’ abilities, talents, and skills.*”. Most of the outputs used exposition as it was easy for the teachers to just recall and share their real life experiences about the reflective essay that they are tasked to do.

The last text type which is the instructional type was not observed from the outputs of the secondary teachers. Instructional writing, which provides guidance or directions on how to perform a task or achieve a goal, is not typically used in writing reflective essays. Instructional writing, which emphasizes providing step-by-step guidance or directions, may not align with the reflective and introspective nature of the essay. Instruction type, with its emphasis on providing instructions or guidance, may not facilitate the depth of personal analysis and reflection necessary in a reflective essay.

On a similar vein, Kim, Deoksoon, et al. (162) pointed out that instructional writing can be informative, it may not effectively capture the narrative elements and storytelling aspect that can engage readers and convey the reflective journey. It often follows a specific organizational pattern, focusing on providing clear instructions or steps. This structure may not align with the reflective essay's need for introspective exploration and the presentation of personal insights.

It is important to note that elements of instruction or guidance can be incorporated into reflective essays to provide context or support the analysis. For example, if reflecting on a teaching experience, the writer may include instructional elements to describe specific instructional strategies used. It's a matter of integrating instructional elements while maintaining the overall reflective focus.

Difference between the writing styles differ between male and female secondary teachers in TRF

In this study, the reflective essays of the secondary school teachers served as one of the academic writing in the field. The reflection outputs showed that in presenting their ideas and perceptions, teachers were also presenting citations and sources based on facts which is evident in their metadiscourse markers by using evidential devices. There no noticeable difference in the metadiscourse features utilized by both the male and the female teachers as they all have similar words and phrases used in their outputs. One significant observation only is that, most of the teachers use expository style in writing where they could easily recall and mention their experiences. With this style, the teachers are confident in their outputs for they can easily express their thoughts with the use of simple words and vocabulary. With this, it is essential for the teachers to consider writing-to-learn so they can still better their writing skill and for them to explore other writing styles.

This result can be of support to the claim of Silva et al (10-11) that writing to learn is crucial for accomplishing a wide range of educational, professional, and personal goals since it is a significant instrument for learning new information and engaging in higher levels of self-reflection.

Specifically, male teachers shared about opinions about education, experiences, learning outcomes, indigenous people and learner, learners' abilities, talent and skill. Some of them also wrote about, teaching strategies, learning disability, gifted students, instructional materials, indigenous cultures and goals of United Nation 2030 Agenda.

On the other hand, female teachers shared about, education rights, teachers' characteristics, responsibilities and accountabilities, teachers' challenges, learning disorders, differentiated learning, Indigenous People, teaching strategies. Some female teachers also discussed about rules of the government leaders, learners' strengths and weaknesses, classroom setting, Indigenous People education, learning problems, misbehavior of the students, reading comprehension problem and disorder, pronunciation problem, gender equality, Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and National Indigenous Peoples Education Framework policy. It can also be surmised from the outputs of the teachers that male teachers used a greater number and variety of attitude markers compared to female teachers. This finding suggests that male teachers are more expressive in conveying their attitude towards their statements. However, it is important to approach these observations with caution and acknowledge the individuality and diversity within each gender group.

Since teachers are the frontliners in the academe, it is important for them to express their ideas and opinions not only verbally but also through written texts. Thus, improving writing skills is very important since teachers are one of the people who write publications and documentations and this reflective essay in TRF is one of the important documents in education context since it contains important experiences, ideas and strategies of the teachers.

Implications and Concluding Remarks

Implications for Practice

The results of this study show that using metadiscourse devices and text types are commonly practice in the field of education. However, it is not commonly practice in the

Department of Education to scrutinize and analyze the academic essays made by the teachers in the field. This study justified that reflective essays, narrative reports, accomplishment reports and other academic writing should be analyzed to know how the teachers interact to the readers. In the Division of Davao del Sur, it could be suggested that writing outputs of the teachers may be analyzed to know their attitudes and intentions. And in this way, it is not only the attitudes nor intentions are realized but also the differences of perspectives between male and female teachers. Also, this could check the writing skills whether it is enough already in the field of education or there is still a need to improve.

Furthermore, the results of text type being used in which this study revealed that exposition was most used among male and female teachers, only means that teachers are already knowledgeable enough what appropriate text type to be used but lacks the exploration of using other writing styles. Teachers are still practicing the traditional way of writing or possibly copied from the internet or from their fellow teachers just for the sake in complying the attachments needed for the yearly Individual Performance Commitment and Review. Obviously, nowadays also everything could be instantly accessed in the internet, so possibly teachers could have the same styles in making their reflective essays.

Even if already professionals it could not be denied that there are still various struggles in writing and constructing sentences. However, it is good to note that despite of this, professionals are continuously learning as they proceed to the highest level of academic writing. It is for this reason that this study will be undertaken, to find out if indeed, secondary school teachers develop strategies in learning how they organize their reflective essays

This calls for the Department of Education to conduct seminar-workshops to explore

and upgrade the latest ways of writing. Teachers also could revisit the relationship between language and its use in context. That is, how they use language to be aware of and interpret various communicative situations. Thus, if teachers are trained with new styles, they could also cascade their new knowledge to their students. They could employ their knowledge in the service of language and literacy education.

This study may be used to design and implement Gender and Development (GAD) related programs and seminar-workshops that might develop the self-esteem and motivation for teachers to express themselves through writing. This might guide in policy making for higher position personnel in the Division of Davao del Sur.

Implications for Future Research

After the careful checking of the findings of this study, I found out and understood that it is not only gender that needs to be considered in analyzing the texts. Before, I thought that females could write better than males, but in this study, it made me understand that males are more interactive than females. Yet, what I have written here is not enough to embrace all the important topic to be discussed. There are still many things worth to investigate.

From the start, I recognized that this research lacks the level of criteria as to the authors of the reflective essay. There should have a consideration on these factors like area of specialization, discipline, designation and length of service that future researchers can study. For me these factors, could affect the reflections of teachers because in every area of specialization, it could be possible that they have different approaches and strategies in dealing with learners with disabilities and learners who are member of the indigenous community. In terms of designation, Teacher 1 might have different approach compared to Master Teacher 1. In terms of length of service, I guess

teachers who are still new in the field and those who have served for a long time could have a different experience so possibly their reflections could also differ.

This study is only limited to secondary public school teachers. I believe that teachers in private and elementary schools might have different experiences, perspectives and writing styles. The use of language could differ depending on experiences and context. A future study could be conducted considering other participants also. Another, I believe that there are still other linguistic features that need to take into account. This study only explored the structure of reflective essays. This study only focused on the syntax aspect of the corpora, a further research for the semantics aspect could also be explored.

Beyond the gender issue, I believe there are still other issues regarding this topic that require further research. There are still many things which need to be explored about this topic it could be studying the semantics aspect on the experiences and intentions of teachers. Many teachers' gender issues are still hiding their true attitudes and intentions in their essays and as to the reason why, that this study is not covered with. Possibly, a future study that will utilize in-depth interviews could be possible also. I firmly believed that gender does not only limit to male and female, in fact nowadays there are identified other gender also, and this might be explored by another research.

Lastly, through this study the important use of AntConc software might be appreciated not only to analyze the outputs of teachers but also to the writing outputs of the students in the Division of Davao del Sur. This software could be used in multidisciplinary academic texts.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the results of this study, I have come up with these important points.

First, male and female teachers are commonly using interactive and interactional metadiscourse features. However, in terms of interactive metadiscourse markers females used it more than males and vice versa in interactional males used it more compared to females. Moreover, the most prevailing significant difference is in using the attitude markers, which is under interactional category. This means, that males express more of their attitude to proposition compared to females.

Second, in the text type used, the most utilized is the expository style as manifested in the reflective essays of the teachers. For me, exposition is convenient to use because this type gives the writer a freedom to present his or her personal ideas. It chooses constituent element manifested in a term or a mental construct manifested in text. And this study revealed that text type being used is not affected by gender because both male and female teachers used exposition type.

Finally, based on this study It is clear enough that gender differences have nothing to do with the metadiscourse features and text types used in writing reflective essays. Thus, there are still other positive factors that could affect in using metadiscourse features and writing styles that requires further study.

Overall, the theory of Flower and Hayes on Cognitive Writing is depicted in the study results which emphasizes the essence of the writer's task environment which includes all of the exterior forces influencing the writer, including the rhetorical problem, the topic, audience, and situation prompting the writer to write, and the unique constraints brought on the writer by the text. Hence, the result of the study conforms with this theory which emphasizes that there can be a lot of

reasons when a person or a writer becomes efficient or not in his or her writing. Task environment for one, can be identified as a major influencer in enabling a writer to write well. When the reason behind one's writing is clear and with direction, then we can expect that he/she is possible to write a good output. Otherwise, when the rhetorical problem, the topic, audience, and situation prompting the writer to write, and the unique constraints brought on the writer by the text are problematic, then expect also for a problematic output .

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