Metadiscourse in Upper Secondary English Essays: Exploring Genres in L1 and L2 Educational Contexts

by

James Jacob Thomson

Dissertation for the degree
PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR
(Ph.D.)

Acknowledgements

Undertaking doctoral research can be an arduous and solitary affair, but I have had the fortune of being able to work under the aegis of three excellent supervisors and alongside a league of competent and inspiring colleagues. Although only my name is on the front cover of this dissertation, their influence has had a considerable impact on its content.

Firstly, I would like to thank the giants on whose shoulders I have been able to stand. To Ion Drew, my main supervisor, for his astute insight and support throughout the entire Ph.D. To Maria Kuteeva and Oliver M. Traxel, my secondary supervisors, for their invaluable feedback and unwavering encouragement. To Milica Savic, not only for giving me the confidence to apply for the Ph.D. in the first place, but also for continually following my progress and even taking the time to act as the internal censor for the mid-way evaluation. And to Carmen Sancho-Guinda, who acted as the external censor for the mid-way evaluation, for her enthusiastic engagement with and feedback on this project.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to a number of people who generously agreed to contribute at various stages of this project. To Liviana Galiano and Caroline Gentens: their excellent work as second raters was crucial for testing the present methods. To all the teachers and pupils who agreed to submit essays and partake in interviews: collaborating with them was the highlight of my Ph.D. To all the scholars whose research has been a great inspiration for my own: I hope this dissertation does justice to their work and is recognised as a worthy contribution to the field.

Finally, I would like to thank family, friends and colleagues who have provided academic input and shown endless emotional support: my wife Linn Ellise, my mother and father, my sister Kate and brother-in-law Grant, my close friends, and the work hard, play hard community of "third floor" Ph.D. fellows.

Abstract

This exploratory research project aims to investigate metadiscourse features in English essays written by upper secondary pupils attending schools in Norway, Sweden and the UK. Metadiscourse refers to the linguistic features that authors use to interact with their readers. This project recognises two main types of metadiscourse: signposting and stance. Signposts are words and phrases that authors use to guide their readers through the unfolding text. Stance markers are used to offer evaluations, navigate knowledge claims, and anticipate reader reactions. A large body of research has investigated the use of metadiscourse in professional and tertiary-level educational settings. However, comparatively few studies have investigated metadiscourse features in pre-tertiary essay writing. This research project contributes to this currently limited pool of research by analysing metadiscourse in final-year upper secondary pupils' English essays in both L1 and L2 educational contexts. Furthermore, by incorporating interview methods, this research also aims to investigate English teachers' general views towards metadiscourse and to what extent their instruction affects their pupils' compositional decisions.

The project involved collecting a corpus of non-fiction essays and holding interviews with teachers in upper secondary schools situated in Norway, Sweden and the UK. The essays were written for assignments set by teachers and grouped in five genres: political essays, literary essays, opinion pieces, linguistic investigations and commentaries. A metadiscourse taxonomy was adapted based on previous studies and a close reading of a sub-sample of 50 essays. The resulting taxonomy, which comprises 26 sub-categories and accounts for over 1,000 metadiscourse types, was utilised in four steps. Firstly, the types were used to electronically scan the corpus using a concordancing program. Secondly, the concordance lines were manually read to filter out non-metadiscoursal results. Thirdly, the number of each metadiscourse sub-

category per 1,000 words in each essay was calculated. Finally, the descriptive statistics and concordance lines were used to identify trends regarding the use of each sub-category in the corpus. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were held with 19 teachers to gain insight into the metadiscourse-related advice they offered their pupils. The interview data were used to supplement the interpretation of the results from the textual analysis. The findings are reported in four articles that each focus on separate aspects of metadiscourse and different stages of the research process.

Article 1 reports results from a preliminary study using a sub-set of 56 essays collected from the Norwegian and UK schools. This preliminary analysis was conducted in order to devise the adapted taxonomy, as well as to gain insight into the pragmatic usage of metadiscourse features in the upper secondary essays.

Article 2 reports the results from an analysis of signposts in a corpus of 115 essays from the Norwegian, Swedish and UK schools, supplemented by data from the teacher interviews. Whereas the pupils frequently used a wide range of linguistic features to explicitly signal sentential relations, their use of markers that signal structural relations was somewhat sporadic, probably due to the short length of the essays. Although signposts were used similarly across the three educational contexts, their usage seemed to reflect the purposes of the target genres. While the UK teachers tended not to address the use of these features, the teachers in Norway and Sweden tended to provide pupils with decontextualised lists of signposts, which raises questions about whether upper secondary teachers in these L1 and L2 contexts should offer more explicit instruction in the pragmatic use of organisational features.

Article 3 reports results from an analysis of epistemic stance and engagement features in the same corpus, alongside data from the teacher interviews. The pupils used a wide range of features to navigate knowledge claims, draw on extra-textual material, and anticipate reader

reactions. These features seemed to be used in ways that reflected the communicative purpose of the target genre. The findings also indicated that the pupils sometimes used boosters inappropriately, which suggests pupils at this level may benefit from explicit instruction in the appropriate use of these features. The interviews revealed that the teachers offered advice regarding epistemic stance and engagement features, but this was sometimes inconsequential, categorical, or outdated.

Article 4 reports results from an analysis of attitude markers in 135 essays collected from the Norwegian, Swedish and British schools. For this study, 218 attitude markers belonging to four sub-categories were used to scan the corpus. The results revealed the wide range of types that the pupils used to offer their affective evaluations of the material in question and how these varied across the educational contexts and genres. While many other metadiscourse features seemed to be used similarly across the educational contexts, attitude markers were more varied and frequent among pupils in the UK. This may be explained by several factors, such as the UK pupils having a broader lexical vocabulary, or that the UK genres required pupils to more frequently offer their affective reactions.

Overall, these articles offer insight into the wide range of linguistic features that pupils rely on to signal textual relations, negotiate knowledge claims, engage readers, and express attitudes. On the one hand, many of these features seemed to be used at relatively similar frequencies across the three educational contexts. This might demonstrate the seemingly high written proficiency of L2 learners of English in Norway and Sweden. Alternatively, this may partly be due to the linguistic similarities of Norwegian, Swedish and English, enabling the Scandinavian upper secondary pupils to directly transfer many metadiscourse features from their L1s to English with relative success. On the other hand, metadiscourse usage seemed to reflect the communicative purposes of the target genres. Other factors may also

have influenced the pupils' metadiscourse usage, such as teacher advice, essay writing prompts, and individual preferences. The interview data suggest that the teachers tended to offer advice that was somewhat disconnected from professional writing practices, which consequently requires further investigation.

This project contributes to the field by offering insight into the types, frequencies and usage of metadiscourse features among this under-researched group. The analysis required compiling an adapted taxonomy that accounts for the idiosyncratic types and sub-categories that characterised the corpus, which provides a comprehensive starting point for future studies that aim to investigate how metadiscourse features are used in pre-tertiary educational contexts. A further major contribution of this project is the use of interview methods to investigate teacher views regarding metadiscourse-related instruction. The findings have implications for teachers who aim to develop their pupils' pragmatic knowledge of how signposts and stance markers vary across different genres. Engaging pupils in writing essays of varying lengths across a range of genres can contribute to preparing them for the written demands they are likely to face in higher education and among professional discourse communities.

Sammendrag

Dette forskningsprosjektet har som mål å undersøke metadiskurs i skriftlige innleveringer skrevet av elever ved videregående skoler i Norge, Sverige og Storbritannia. Metadiskurs er et begrep som handler om lingvistiske trekk som forfattere bruker for å samhandle med sine lesere. Prosjektet ser på to hovedtyper av metadiskurs: organisatorisk metadiskurs og interaksjonell metadiskurs. Organisatorisk metadiskurs (*signposting*) er en sambetegnelse på ord og fraser som forfattere bruker for å føre sine lesere gjennom teksten. Interaksjonell metadiskurs (*stance*) brukes for å uttrykke personlige reaksjoner, å tilpasse epistemiske påstander, eller å forutse lesernes reaksjoner. En stor mengde forskning har undersøkt slike lingvistiske trekk i tekster skrevet i profesjonelle og akademiske sammenhenger. Imidlertid har relativt få studier undersøkt metadiskurs i tekster skrevet av skoleelever. Dette forskningsprosjektet bidrar til den eksisterende forskningen ved å analysere metadiskurs i skriftlige innleveringer skrevet av avgangselever ved videregående skoler i både L1- og L2- utdanningsfaglige. I tillegg tar denne forskningen i bruk intervjumetoder for å undersøke engelsklæreres generelle holdninger til metadiskurs og i hvilken grad deres undervisning påvirker elevenes skriftlige valg.

For prosjektet var det samlet inn et tekstkorpus bestående av sakprosa skriftlige innleveringer av sakprosatekster, og intervjuer ble gjort med lærere på videregående skoler i Norge, Sverige og Storbritannia. De skriftlige innleveringene som ble samlet inn, var besvarelser på oppgaver lærere hadde gitt, og tekstene tilhørte fem sjangrer: politiske oppgaver, litterære oppgaver, kronikker, lingvistiske undersøkelser og refleksjonstekster. For å analysere de lingvistiske trekkene som elevene tok i bruk, ble det utarbeidet en operasjonalisering av metadiskurs ut fra tidligere forskning og ut fra en nærlesing av 50 innleveringer. Den endelige operasjonaliseringen, bestående av 26 kategorier og over 1000 metadiskursmarkører, ble benyttet i fire steg. Det første steget var å

anvende ordtypene for å analysere tekstkorpuset med et dataprogram. Det andre steget var å lese resultatene nøye for å fjerne forekomster som ikke fungerte som metadiskurs. Det tredje steget var å regne antall forekomster av hver metadiskurskategori funnet i hver oppgave per 1000 ord. Det siste steget var å bruke deskriptive statistikker og tekstutdrag for å identifisere mønster som avtegnet seg i bruken av hver metadiskurs kategori i datasettet. I tillegg ble semistrukturerte intervjuer holdt med 19 engelsklærere for å få innsikt i hvilke skriveråd de ga elevene sine. Intervjudataene ble brukt for å supplere tolkningen av resultatene fra den tekstlingvistiske analysen. Funnene er rapportert i fire forskningsartikler som hver for seg setter søkelys på ulike sider ved metadiskurs og ulike stadier i forskningsprosessen.

Artikkel 1 rapporterer resultatene fra en pilotstudie som tok i bruk 56 oppgaver samlet fra videregående skoler i Norge og Storbritannia. Formålet med denne studien var å utarbeide operasjonaliseringsmetodikken, samt å få innsikt i hvordan elevene som deltok i undersøkelsen brukte metadiskurs i sine skriftlige oppgaver.

Artikkel 2 rapporterer resultatene fra en analyse av organisatorisk metadiskurs i et tekstkorpus på 115 oppgaver fra de norske, svenske og britiske videregående skolene. Undersøkelsen suppleres med resultater fra lærerintervjuene. Elevene brukte et bredt repertoar med lingvistiske markører for å signalisere tekstrelasjoner på setningsnivået. Deres bruk av markører som signaliserer strukturelle relasjoner framsto likevel sporadisk. Dette er sannsynligvis fordi innleveringene var relativt korte. Organisatorisk metadiskurs ble brukt på lignende måter på tvers av de tre utdanningsfaglige kontekstene. Imidlertid reflekterte bruken de kommunikative hensiktene i de aktuelle sjangerne. Lærerne i Storbritannia pleide ikke å instruere deres videregåendeskoleelever i bruken av organisatorisk metadiskurs. Flere av lærerne i Norge og Sverige ga sine elever dekontekstualiserte lister over organisatoriske markører. Disse funnene kan indikere at engelske lærere også burde tilby

eksplisitt undervisning i bruk av organisatoriske markører i L1- og L2-kontekster.

Artikkel 3 rapporterer resultater fra en analyse som undersøker hvordan metadiskurs brukes for å tilpasse epistemiske påstander og å direkte engasjere leserne i 115 oppgaver skrevet ved de norske, svenske og britiske videregående skolene, samt data fra lærerintervjuene. Elevene brukte et stort repertoar av lingvistiske markører for å justere sine påstander, å sitere kilder og å forutse lesernes reaksjoner. Disse trekkene reflekterte i noen grad de kommunikative hensiktene i de aktuelle sjangerne. Elevene brukte noen ganger forsterkere (*boosters*) på måter som ikke var passende. Dette tyder på at videregåendeelever kan få nytte av eksplisitt instruks i passende bruk av disse strategiene. Intervjudataene viser hva slags skriftlige råd lærerne ga til elevene sine om epistemiske påstander og om å direkte engasjere leserne. Imidlertid var deres råd noen ganger motstridende, kategoriske eller utdatert.

Artikkel 4 rapporterer resultater fra en analyse av holdningsmarkører i 135 oppgaver samlet inn fra de norske, svenske og britiske videregående skolene. I denne studiens analyse av tektkorpuset ble det tatt i bruk 218 holdningsmarkører som tilhørte fire underkategorier. Resultatene viser hvordan elevene uttrykte sine følelsesmessige evalueringer av det gitte materialet, og hvordan disse varierte på tvers av utdanningsfaglige sammenhenger og sjangre. Mens mange andre metadiskurskategorier ble brukt noe likt på tvers av de tre utdanningsfaglige kontekstene, var holdningsmarkører mer varierte og frekvente i innleveringer skrevet av elever i Storbritannia. Det kan være flere årsaker til dette, som for eksempel at elever i Storbritannia har et større leksikalsk ordforråd, eller at sjangerne som ble tatt i bruk i Storbritannia, krever at elever oftere uttrykker sine følelsesmessige evalueringer.

Til sammen tilbyr disse artiklene innsikt i mangfoldet av lingvistiske trekk som elever tar i bruk for å signalisere tekstrelasjoner, tilpasse epistemiske påstander, engasjere sine lesere og uttrykke sine holdninger.

På den ene siden ble mange av disse markørene brukt på like måter på tvers av de tre utdanningsfaglige kontekstene. Dette henger kanskje sammen med det tilsynelatende høye skriftlige engelsknivået blant elever i Norge og Sverige. Alternativt er dette kanskje en følge av de lingvistiske likhetene mellom norsk, svensk og engelsk som gjør at de skandinaviske elevene til en viss grad kan direkte oversette metadiskurs fra sine første språk til engelsk. På den andre siden speilet bruken av metadiskurs de kommunikative hensiktene i de aktuelle sjangerne. Andre faktorer kan også ha påvirket elevenes bruk av metadiskurs, som for eksempel lærernes skriveråd, oppgavespørsmål og individuelle preferanser. Intervjudataene indikerer at lærerne ga noen skriveråd som syntes lite forankret i profesjonelle praksiser, men dette må undersøkes videre.

Dette prosjektet bidrar til forskningsfeltet ved å gi innblikk i ordtypene, frekvensene og bruken av metadiskurs blant en gruppe som har fått lite forskningsoppmerksomhet. For analysen var det behov for å utarbeide en tilpasset operasjonalisering som tar høyde for de idiosynkratiske ordtypene og kategoriene som var til stede i tekstkorpuset. Operasjonaliseringen kan være et nyttig utgangspunkt for fremtidig forskning som har som mål å undersøke metadiskurs i skriftlige innleveringer skrevet av skoleelever. Et annet viktig bidrag er bruken av intervjumetoder for å undersøke lærernes holdninger mot metadiskurs-relatert undervisning. Funnene har betydning for lærere som ønsker å undervise sine elever angående hvordan organisatorisk og interaksjonell metadiskurs kan variere på tvers av sjangrer. Ved å jobbe med innleveringer av forskjellige omfang på tvers av flere sjangrer kan lærere forberede sine elever på de skriftlige kravene som elevene sannsynligvis kommer til å møte ved høyere utdanning og i profesjonelle diskursfelleskap.

List of articles

Article 1

Thomson, J. J. (2020). Metadiscourse in upper secondary pupil essays: Adapting a taxonomy. *Nordic Journal of Literacy Research*, *6*(1), 26-48. https://doi.org/10.23865/njlr.v6.1720

Article 2

Thomson, J. J. "They just waffle about the topic"? Exploring signposting in upper secondary essays in different educational contexts and genres. Manuscript to be submitted to *Acta Didactica Norge*.

Article 3

Thomson, J. J. Exploring epistemic stance and engagement in upper secondary pupil English essays. Manuscript to be submitted to *Journal of Pragmatics*.

Article 4

Thomson, J. J. (2020). Attitude markers in upper secondary pupil essays across educational contexts and genres. *CERLIS Series, 9*, 31-57.

Table of contents

List of figures

List of tables

Appendices

1   Introduction

This research project aims to investigate linguistic features that upper secondary pupils use in English essays to interact with their readers, focusing on two overarching categories: stance and signposting. Within the scope of this project, stance refers to linguistic features that writers use to express their affective evaluations, moderate their knowledge claims, and engage their readers (Hyland, 2005). Signposting refers to linguistic features that writers use to explicitly guide readers through the unfolding text (Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015). These two categories fall under the umbrella term "metadiscourse" (e.g. Hyland, 2019), which is a concept that has received growing research attention since Vande Kopple's (1985) seminal work. Studies (Dahl, 2004; Fu & Hyland, 2014; Hasselgård, 2016; Hu & Cao, 2015; Vande Kopple, 2002; Ädel, 2006) have investigated metadiscoursal features in writing belonging to a range of professional and tertiary-level discourse communities, demonstrating how such features vary according to contextual constraints and communicative purposes. However, few studies (Dobbs, 2014; Qin & Uccelli, 2019) have investigated metadiscourse in pre-tertiary essay writing. This project thus aims to contribute to the small pool of existing research by exploring the metadiscourse features that characterise upper secondary writing in the present educational contexts and genres. In order to address this aim, a corpus of essays written for authentic school assignments (i.e. the essays were written for school evaluations set by teachers) was collected from upper secondary schools situated in Norway, Sweden and the UK. Interviews were held with teachers at the participating schools regarding the metadiscourse-related advice that they gave their pupils. The findings of this exploratory study offer insight into the metadiscoursal strategies used by pupils at this educational level, which holds implications for English teachers who aim to train their pupilss to recognise how communicative demands can vary according to contextual constraints.

Essay writing is one of the central modes for evaluating pupils' subject knowledge at most levels of education and in most school subjects, from the humanities to the sciences. In essays, pupils are not only required to prove their grasp of the topic at hand, they also have to demonstrate grammatical control and rhetorical prowess. They have to consider their readers' processing needs whilst adhering to conventions determined by the target genre and by the examiners. Overcoming this balancing act can be challenging, but mastering these skills is essential in order to succeed both in school and in higher education. Although metadiscoursal features play an important role in many aspects of essay writing, little is known about how they are addressed at the upper secondary level and about which features upper secondary pupils rely on, hence the point of departure for this project.

Although Harris (1956) is cited as having coined the term "metadiscourse", Vande Kopple (1985) was among the first to operationalise the term into what is known as the interpersonal model (e.g. Hyland, 2019; see section 2.2.3). Since then, linguists have operationalised metadiscourse in a range of ways and for a range of research purposes. In fact, the term has become so widespread that the biannual "Metadiscourse Across Genres" conference was established in 2017, dedicated to the dissemination of metadiscourse-related studies. Unlike other terms with the "meta-" prefix (e.g. metalanguage), scholars, despite their different approaches, agree that metadiscourse should not be taken literally to mean "discourse about discourse" (Hyland, 2010). Instead, metadiscourse refers, to varying degrees, to linguistic features that writers rely on to moderate knowledge claims, engage readers, and explicitly mark textual organisation (Mao, 1993). However, disagreements remain regarding which linguistic features should be considered metadiscoursal (see Chapter 2).

The majority of approaches to metadiscourse have been devised to investigate features of professional and tertiary-level writing (e.g. Hu & Cao, 2014; Ädel, 2006), which may therefore not be directly applicable

to pre-tertiary writing without risking that certain features are overlooked (e.g. Hyland & Milton, 1997; Qin & Uccelli 2019). For this study, the operationalisation of metadiscourse has been adapted, based on previous studies and on the present data set, in order to offer a comprehensive account of the features present in the corpus. Accordingly, while some studies refer to "textual metadiscourse" (Vande Kopple, 1985), "interactive metadiscourse" (Hyland, 2019) or "metatext" (Mauranen, 1993a), this study uses the term "signposting" (Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015) to investigate the pupils' use of organisational features. Whereas some studies refer to "interpersonal metadiscourse" (Vande Kopple, 1985) or "interactional metadiscourse" (Hyland, 2019), this study uses the term "stance" (e.g. Hyland, 2005; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012) to investigate the pupils' use of features that establish and maintain relationships with their readers. If these features are to be addressed in an upper secondary setting, this terminology is considered to be more accessible for teachers and pupils.

This research project was originally developed within a larger project called "intercultural competence in school and society" based at the University of Stavanger. Intercultural competence can be defined as "the ability to embody and enact intercultural sensitivity" (Bennett, 2013, p. 11-12). Although this project does not focus on intercultural competence, previous metadiscourse research has found that different languages and different discourse communities make different metadiscoursal demands (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014; Dahl, 2004), which has implications for approaching writing instruction in schools from an intercultural perspective. Thus, instead of intercultural competence, this study focuses more on the communicative competence of pupils in first language (L1) and second language (L2) contexts, which links to concepts such as intercultural rhetoric (Connor, 2004). Previous studies have reported that Norwegian, Swedish and British tertiary level students differ in their use of metadiscourse. For example, Norwegian and Swedish students have been found to use greater frequencies of signposts when writing in

English than British students (Hasselgård, 2016; Ädel, 2006). This study investigates essays written by final year upper secondary pupils, which thus grants insight into the metadiscoursal competence that can be expected of pupils immediately prior to entering higher education.

1.1 Aims and research questions

The overall aim of this project is to explore the metadiscourse features of essays written at 14 upper secondary schools in Norway, Sweden and the UK. Norway, Sweden and the UK are referred to in this project as "educational contexts". These contexts represent educational systems in which upper secondary pupils are usually proficient in English and are contexts to which the author's affiliated university had access. While English is, of course, taught as an L1 in the UK, it is taught as an L2 in Norway and Sweden, which occupy top ranking positions in terms of English proficiency (Education First, 2019). In both Norway and Sweden, English is a highly prioritised subject from year 1 and remains compulsory until year 11 (Skolverket, 2020b; Udir., 2020). By the age of 16, pupils in these contexts are required to take national written exams, held exclusively in English. Furthermore, English is widely used outside schools in these contexts, for example in films and video games (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). Although the curricula in these contexts do not explicitly draw parallels with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages[1] (CEFR), the competence aims for upper secondary pupils are comparable with the B2-C1 levels (Council of Europe, 2001).

However, although some tentative comparisons are drawn in the articles, the primary aim of this project is not to compare L1 and L2 competencies. Accordingly, although the majority of the pupils in

---

[1] The CEFR is an internationally recognised European set of standards for evaluating the linguistic competencies of language learners. It describes six levels of ability, with A1 being the lowest and C2 being the highest. B2 is the fourth level, at which point learners are considered to be independent users of the target language.

Norway, Sweden and the UK had Norwegian, Swedish and English as their L1, respectively, this was not the case for all pupils. The intention was for the data to more closely resemble the diverse classrooms in which English teachers tend to work. The common denominator for all pupils was that they had elected to take English courses during their final year of upper secondary school (see section 3.2 for a more detailed description of the courses). They therefore represent, to some extent, writers who are in a transitionary phase from secondary to tertiary level education.

In order to investigate metadiscourse features in upper secondary writing in these contexts, a corpus of essays was collected and interviews were held with teachers about the extent to which they addressed metadiscoursal features in their writing instruction. Unlike corpus-linguistic studies that draw on large data sets in order to investigate lexico-grammatical patterns, this study uses corpus-assisted methods to identify the metadiscourse types[2] that upper secondar pupils rely on, explore the various communicative functions that they fulfil, and investigate the factors that might affect their usage. Combined with interview data, the findings offer implications both for writing instruction and for future studies of pre-tertiary writing.

The results are reported in a series of four articles, which draw, to varying degrees, on the textual and interview data sets. These articles are briefly outlined here and are summarised in greater detail in Chapter 4. The overarching research question that links the four articles is:

- What types, frequencies and functions of metadiscourse are present in upper secondary English essays written in L1 (UK) and L2 (Norway and Sweden) educational contexts?

---

[2] Investigating "types" involves considering "each graphical word form" (McEnery & Wilson, 2003, p. 32).

This project also employed a second, subordinate question regarding the teachers' general views about teaching metadiscourse features, which applies to articles 2 and 3:

- What connections can be drawn between the pupils' use of metadiscourse and teachers' reported instructional practices?

The first article uses a smaller text corpus (56 texts; 97,470 words) to explore the kinds of metadiscourse on which upper secondary pupils rely. The research questions for this article are:

- Which metadiscourse features are present in five genres of non-fiction English essays written by upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian3 and British schools?
- How are metadiscourse features used in each of the five genres in the corpus?

Since previous research has largely focused on professional and tertiary level writing (Dahl, 2004; Ho & Li, 2018), identifying the types of metadiscoursal features used at the upper secondary level was an essential step towards establishing an analytical basis for the subsequent articles. Article 1 therefore focuses on both signposting and stance features and presents a taxonomy that is specifically compiled to analyse this particular corpus. The article reports descriptive statistics and text extracts in order to explore and describe the kinds of metadiscourse markers that were prominent in this selection of texts.

The second article uses a larger corpus of 115 texts from the Norwegian, Swedish and British schools and aims to identify the signposting types used by the pupils, as well as the functions they fulfil. Furthermore, this article draws on data from teacher interviews, used to supplement the textual analysis. The research questions for this article are:

---

[3] No Swedish essays had been collected before writing article 1, hence their omission.

- What are the (sub-)categories and types of signposts used in upper secondary level essays written in the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts?
- How frequent are signposts and how are they used by pupils in each of the educational contexts and genres?
- What connections can be drawn between the pupils' use of signposting and teachers' reported instructional practices?

This article uses descriptive statistics and text extracts to identify the signposting trends in the corpus. Quotes from the interviews are used to highlight the teachers' general views about signposting instruction and to tentatively draw connections with the pupils' use of signposts in the corpus.

The third article investigates the pupils' use of epistemic stance and engagement markers. Initially, this article was intended to report all of the stance-related results. However, attitude markers featured more prominently in the corpus than expected. Thus, article 3 focuses on epistemic stance and engagement features. A separate article (article 4) reports the attitude marker results. Epistemic stance refers specifically to metadiscourse markers that moderate knowledge claims (e.g. Biber et al., 1999). Engagement markers are used to explicitly recognise the role of the writer and their readers in the text (e.g. Hyland, 2005). The research questions for this article are:

- Which categories, types and frequencies of epistemic stance and engagement markers are used in a corpus of upper secondary essays collected from the Norwegian, Swedish and British educational contexts?
- To what extent do epistemic stance and engagement markers reflect the purposes of different essay genres?
- To what extent is the pupils' use of epistemic stance and engagement markers connected to their teachers' reported practices?

This study presents the epistemic stance and engagement types that were identified, and uses descriptive statistics and text extracts to identify trends of usage that were present in the corpus. Furthermore, links are drawn between the pupils' strategies and their teachers' advice regarding epistemic stance and engagement features.

The fourth article focuses on the pupils' use of attitude markers in a selection of 135 of the essays. Attitude markers are typically considered to be a category of stance (e.g. Hyland, 2019). However, the essays proved to contain a much wider range of attitude markers than would be expected in professional and academic writing. This category was therefore addressed in a separate article in order to grant enough space to fully consider how pupils expressed their affective reactions. The research questions for this study are:

- Which attitude marker types are used in a corpus of upper secondary pupil essays?
- How do attitude markers in upper secondary essays vary across educational contexts and genres?

This study offers an adapted taxonomy of attitude markers that both borrows from previous studies of attitude (e.g. Mur Dueñas, 2010) and evaluation (Martin & White, 2005). Inferential statistics were used to compare how frequencies of these features compared across the three educational contexts and the five genres. The findings illustrate some of the trends that seemed to characterise the pupils' use of attitude markers.

This extended abstract supplements these four articles, offering an overview of the theory, previous studies and research methods that were involved in conducting this research. Each article is outlined in further detail in Chapter 4, the overarching implications that can be drawn from all four articles are discussed in Chapter 5, and the articles are attached at the end of this extended abstract.

1.2 Structure of this extended abstract

This extended abstract is written to act as a broad framework for the articles that were written as part of this Ph.D. project and show how they are linked together. Chapter 2 both outlines the theoretical framework underlying this research project and reviews previous studies within the field. In order to establish the theoretical framework, several of the previous models of metadiscourse are outlined and discussed, illustrating how the concept has been developed and applied since Vande Kopple's (1985) seminal work. Chapter 3 describes the methods that were used to carry out this research. This is divided into five main sections, which describe the research design, the sampling process, the collection of the textual and interview data (including ethical considerations), and the considerations concerning validity and reliability. Chapter 4 establishes the links between the four articles and summarises the main aims and findings in each of them. Chapter 5 offers a comprehensive discussion of the overall findings from the four articles. This chapter is split into four main sections. The first discusses how metadiscourse features were used in the present corpus of upper secondary essays. The second section discusses the benefits and challenges of adapting a taxonomy, as well as how the present taxonomy can contribute to future studies aiming to investigate metadiscourse features in pre-tertiary writing. The third section discusses the main implications for English teachers. Finally, the fourth section discusses the limitations of the research project, particularly those related to the present textual and interview data. Chapter 6 concludes the extended abstract by summing up the main findings, contributions, and implications. The four articles are included after the references and appendices.

2   Theoretical framework

This chapter offers an overview of the theories, approaches and previous studies that were considered relevant when undertaking this project. It begins with a brief introduction to broader theories and background issues that are used to contextualise the project: the field of second language acquisition (SLA), the status of English in Norway, Sweden and the UK, theoretical approaches for L1 and L2 writing instruction, and some of the main understandings of the term "genre". Following this, theories that are central to this project are introduced. Firstly, arguments from both sides of what can be called "the propositional dichotomy" are outlined. Then, the models of metadiscourse (e.g. Ädel, 2006; Hyland, 2019) that were considered for this project will be described and the pros and cons of each model will be discussed. Finally, there will be an overview of the previous studies of metadiscourse, particularly those that have investigated metadiscourse use across languages and discourse communities, and in tertiary and pre-tertiary level writing.

2.1   Second language acquisition and written competence

In order to provide some contextual background, this section outlines theories that distinguish between first, second and foreign languages. Then, the status of English in the present educational contexts is described. There is a brief overview of theories related to the teaching of writing in L1 and L2 contexts. Finally, understandings of the term "genre" will be briefly discussed.

2.1.1 Distinguishing first, second and foreign languages

Linguists have long attempted to distinguish between first, second and foreign languages. The distinctions can be made at the individual level

and at the societal level. At the individual level, a person's first language (L1) can be considered to be the language (or languages) that they acquire in the first years of their life. In order to distinguish a person's first from their second language, scholars have proposed the critical period hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967), which states that, in order to achieve L1 competence, language learning must take place before reaching a certain age. After a certain age, the chances of acquiring a new language with L1 competence decreases. Several theories have been offered to explain this phenomenon (Ellis, 2008b), for example that L1 competence cannot be achieved after the brain has reached a certain stage of development (Penfield & Robert, 1959; Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978). There has been much debate regarding the age at which the critical period ends (e.g. Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994; Johnson & Newport, 1989). According to a recent study by Hartshorne, Tenenbaum and Pinker (2018), the critical period ends at around 17 years of age. While the critical period hypothesis can be used to distinguish L1 from L2 acquisition, some scholars argue that it is not useful for the purposes of L2 teaching, as it can set unrealistic goals for language learners (e.g. Muñoz & Singleton, 2011). One definition that aims to offer stronger support for L2 teaching is offered by The Douglas Fir Group (2016), which comprises of 15 leading scholars[1] who represent a range of sub-fields within SLA. They state that a second language is learned "at any point in the life span *after* the learning of one or more languages has taken place in the context of primary socialisation in the family" (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016, p. 21).

At the societal level, Kachru (1992) proposed that English usage can be divided into three concentric circles: the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle. In the inner circle are countries (such as the UK) where English is used as a *first* language on a social and governmental

---

[1] The Douglas Fir Group members are: Dwight Atkinson, Heidi Byrnes, Meredith Doran, Patricia Duff, Nick C. Ellis, Joan Kelly Hall, Karen E. Johnson, James P. Lantolf, Diane Larsen–Freeman, Eduardo Negueruela, Bonny Norton, Lourdes Ortega, John Schumann, Merrill Swain, and Elaine Tarone.

level. In the outer circle are countries (such as India and Nigeria) where English is prominently used as a *second* language in social and governmental settings. In the expanding circle are countries (such as China, Russia, Norway and Sweden) where English is not prominently used at social and governmental levels but is taught as a *foreign* language in schools. In other words, these circles can be used to distinguish whether a language should be considered a first, second or foreign language in a given context.

However, Kachru's (1992) concentric circles have been criticised on several fronts. Firstly, the concentric circles have been associated with imperialist values by ascribing a higher status to English-speaking colonial countries (Bruthiaux, 2003; Modiano, 1999). By placing countries such as the UK and the USA in the inner circle, the theory implicitly recognises that they set the norms for English usage. The countries in the outer and expanding circles are therefore limited in developing their own varieties, which consequently undermines local communicative practices (Xiaoqiong & Xianxing, 2011). This links to issues that have been raised with using native speaker competence as a model for language learners (Paikeday, 1985). Drawing these lines has brought to light that speakers of English in the inner circle (between 320-380 million) are outnumbered by speakers in the outer (150-300 million) and expanding (100-1,000 million) circles (Crystal, 1997). Consequently, it has been estimated that a minority of English interactions take place with an L1 speaker of English present (Burt, 2005). By using speakers of English from countries like the UK to set standards for what to expect of language learners, language teaching institutions risk establishing unattainable goals (Ortega, 2019). Scholars have suggested that, instead of native-speaker norms, learners should work towards acquiring communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980) using alternative terms, such as "multicompetent speaker" (Cook, 1999) or "competent language user" (Lee, 2005). There has also been a push among some scholars towards setting standards according to the

concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which places more emphasis on the competencies that are needed for two speakers with different first languages to communicate (e.g. Jenkins, et al., 2011; Simensen, 2013).

One model that circumvents the issues that have been raised regarding Kachru's (1992) concentric circles was proposed by The Douglas Fir Group (2016). This model recognises that language use is influenced on three levels. First is the micro-level, which relates to individual cognition and emotions. Second is the meso-level, which refers to local contexts, such as the family, school, and social organisations. Third is the macro-level, which refers to ideological structures that are maintained on a societal level (e.g. political and religious systems) and shape institutional language use. With this model, they aim both to expand the horizons of researchers, teachers and learners and to raise awareness of the cultural and historical implications of their communicative actions (2016, p. 25). A simplified version of this model is shown in figure 1.
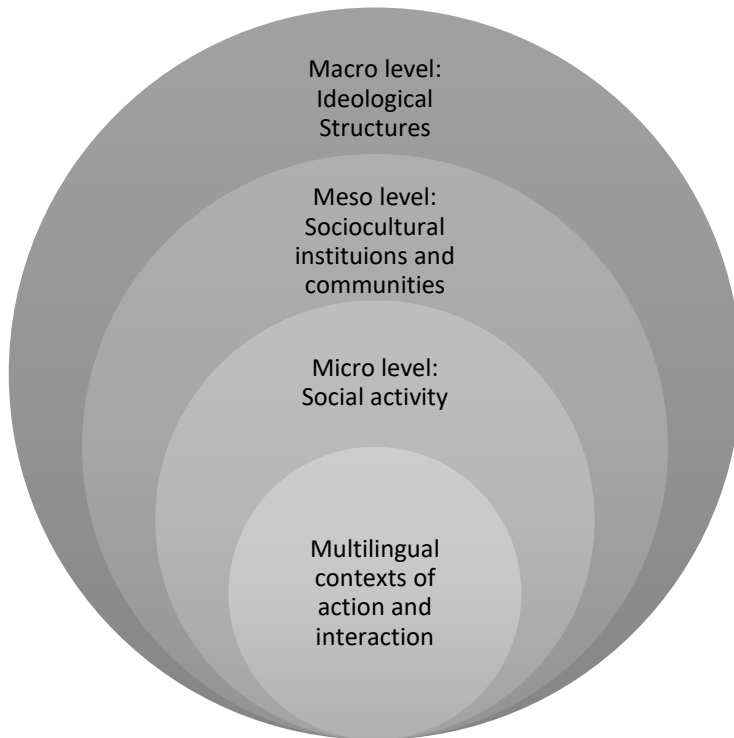
Figure 1. The multifaceted nature of language learning and teaching (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016, p. 25)

By considering these three levels of language use, this model recognises that the status of a language is constantly shifting, as multilingual users of varying competencies navigate multimodal communicative events. This perspective also applies to the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts, where the status of English is, to a certain extent, continually being negotiated at all three levels. However, despite efforts to scrutinise the issues with using native speakers as a model for language learners, many teachers and students continue to work towards native speaker standards (e.g. Ahn, 2011; Subtirelu, 2013).

2.1.2 English in the Norwegian, Swedish and British educational contexts

This section considers the status of English in the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts, particularly at the upper secondary level. In the UK, English is the official language and is used as a first language by approximately 92% of the population (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Three other languages are considered to be first languages: Gaelic, Ulster Scots, and Welsh. Additionally, there are sizable communities in which languages such as Polish, Panjabi and Urdu are spoken (Office for National Statistics, 2013). The British Council (Tinsley & Board, 2013) argues that the UK is facing a "language deficit" in that many UK speakers are monolingual speakers of English and lack knowledge of other languages. They call for UK governments to take a more pragmatic approach to devising language policies in order to accommodate economic interests and to deepen cultural relationships. In other words, while English is firmly embedded at the societal level in the UK, its exact status remains subject to debate (Mathieu, 2017).

In schools, English is one of three compulsory "core subjects" at lower secondary levels (alongside mathematics and science; DfE, 2014). At the upper secondary level, pupils opt which GCE A-level (General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level) subjects they wish to take,[2] and are consequently not required to choose an English-related subject. While the UK government issues national curricula, exams are administered by privately-run examination boards. Subjects therefore vary across schools based on the exam boards with which schools choose to work. The largest examination board is AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance) and was the only board represented in the present data collection.

---

[2] There are alternative qualifications to A-levels in the UK, but these were not offered at the participating schools and are therefore not described here.

As for Norway and Sweden, although the status of English in these countries is seemingly quite similar, scholars tend to debate the status of English in *either* Norway or Sweden, rarely considering the two together. Investigating some of the similarities and differences between these two educational contexts is one of the impetuses for including both in this research project. The relatively similar status of English in these contexts can be attributed to historical and political factors. Historically, Norway was under Danish rule until 1814, when Denmark was forced to yield their rule to Sweden (Mardel, 2021). Although Norway managed to write its own constitution during this process, it shared a monarch with Sweden until 1905. Furthermore, although Norway and Sweden each have their own official languages, these share much of the same pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar (Haugen, 2009). Additionally, there are many linguistic similarities between Scandinavian and English languages due to their shared Germanic roots (Haugen & Markey, 1973). Thus, according to the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis (Cummins, 1979), which proposes that a person's proficiency in their L2 is partially linked to their L1, a Scandinavian learner of English is likely to be linguistically advantaged compared to learners whose L1 is not as typologically close to English as Norwegian and Swedish. Considering that language learners rely to a certain extent on their L1s when communicating in their L2 (e.g. Lardiere, 2009; Mohamed-Sayidina, 2010), a Scandinavian learner of English may be able to directly transfer rhetorical practices from their L1 with relative success.

Politically and economically, Norway and Sweden both have strong ties with the UK (Griffiths, 2001; Hammond, 2018). Many Scandinavians also migrated to the USA in the late 19th century, thereby creating long-lasting family ties and cultural affinities. In terms of Kachru's (1992) concentric circles, Norway and Sweden are both, when considered at face value, in the expanding circle of English usage. In other words, English is not primarily used in governmental settings, but it is taught at schools, and could be considered a foreign language. However, this view

does not account for the relatively widespread use of English in educational (Hellekjær, 2007), and professional (Ljosland, 2008) settings. Extramural English (used outside the classroom) is commonplace as, for example, audio-visual media are often consumed in English (Sundqvist, & Sylvén, 2016), and English is generally ascribed a higher status than other foreign languages (Hyltenstam, 2004). Both countries have also appointed language councils (ISOF, 2021; Språkrådet, 2021) and proposed measures to conserve the Norwegian (Proposisjoner til Stortinget, 2019) and Swedish languages (Ministry of Culture, 2009), partly because of concerns related to the influence of English. Consequently, there are debates about whether English should be considered a foreign language, a second language, or whether the EFL/ESL distinction should be discarded altogether in these educational contexts (e.g. Berggren, 2019; Rindal, 2014). When considering that the status of a language is constantly negotiated at the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016), especially in the Norwegian and Swedish contexts, siding with a particular camp is no simple task.

In Norwegian and Swedish schools, English is a highly prioritised subject. It is compulsory from the first year of primary school until the end of secondary school (Skolverket, 2018; Udir., 2019). The English subject is also prioritised over other foreign languages, such as French and Chinese, and is treated as a separate subject with its own learning aims (Udir., 2020; Skolverket, 2020). Furthermore, possibly in order to circumvent the EFL/ESL debate (Berggren, 2019; Graddol, 1997; Rindal, 2014), the Norwegian and Swedish curricula do not explicitly refer to English as a foreign or a second language. One similarity in the teaching of English across all three educational contexts is that there is a focus on engaging pupils in meaningful oral and written exchanges, reflecting the tendency for communicative methods of language teaching, particularly in Norway and Sweden, to be favoured (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These similarities thus make the Norwegian, Swedish

and British educational contexts ideal for investigating linguistic features pertaining to organisation and writer-reader relations in essay writing.

2.1.3 Writing in L1 and L2 contexts

Having considered the challenges with distinguishing between first, second and foreign languages and how these apply to the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts, this section looks briefly at what this means for written competence. Although distinctions can be made between L1 and L2 writing instruction, they share some common denominators. Both share the goal of teaching literacy skills so that people can participate in various social, educational and professional events (Graham, 2019). While people have used writing to maintain social relations for hundreds of years, recent technological advances have made commonplace the use of SMS, e-mail and social media services to keep in touch with friends and family (Freedman et al., 2016). Literacy skills underpin many educational practices, from using texts to disseminate knowledge to using essay writing tasks to evaluate students (Defazio et al., 2010). A wide range of professional contexts rely on employees' literacy skills for accomplishing daily tasks and solving problems (Reynolds et al., 1995). Furthermore, literary practices in social, educational and professional contexts are in constant flux. Adapting to these ongoing changes can prove to be challenging for writing instructors (Hannon, 2007).

Although instructors may incorporate a range of approaches to teaching writing, such as introducing students to textual functions and promoting written creativity (Hyland, 2003), a seemingly more common goal for second language speakers is to learn to read and write in relation to specific purposes or genres. This is exemplified by branches of language teaching such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP; e.g. Hyland, 2006) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP; e.g. Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). One of the overarching goals of these fields is to investigate the hypothesis that written standards for structuring texts and

making knowledge claims are culturally bound. One of the studies that initiated this interest was Kaplan (1966), who found that students with different language backgrounds formulated their written work in different ways according to the influence of their L1. Although Kaplan's study has been criticised for being reductive and legitimating colonial power relations (e.g. Kubota & Lehner, 2004), it sparked the establishment of the field of intercultural rhetoric (Connor, 2004), which aims to investigate how rhetorical patterns differ across cultures.

Studies within intercultural rhetoric have highlighted some of the stylistic patterns that can vary across so-called "big" cultures, which refers to, for example, national cultures (Hinds, 2011; Holliday, 1999; Mauranen, 1993a; Valero-Garces, 1996). However, the focus on big cultures has been subject to criticism:

> There has been too much impact on classrooms, that is, encouragement of explicit, uncritical teaching of rhetorical norms, and resulting complicity in assimilationist tendencies rather than empowerment of learners as appropriators of dominant forms and conventions for their own purposes. (Belcher, 2014, p. 61)

In order to distance the field from the notion that writing practices are bound to all-encompassing, static cultures, scholars have proposed new labels, such as "critical contrastive rhetoric" (Kubota & Lehner, 2004) and "cosmopolitan practice" (Canagarajah, 2013). These labels account for postmodern critiques of colonial power relations and recognise the ongoing negotiation between institutionalised practices and individual understandings (Belcher, 2014). Thus, more credence has been given to writing practices among "small" cultures ("any cohesive social grouping"; Holliday, 1999, p. 237) and individuals (Atkinson & Sohn, 2013), which has also affected the study of metadiscourse (e.g. Dahl, 2004; Ädel, 2006).

A major challenge for writing instructors is to accommodate and build on the written competencies of individual learners in multilingual classrooms. On the one hand, some consider that gaining acceptance among a given discourse community can be equally challenging for both L1 and L2 users (Hyland, 2016). This claim is contested, however, as some argue that it overlooks the linguistic privilege of L1 speakers (Politzer-Ahles et al., 2016). In other words, the threshold for learning specific written conventions may be lower for L1 speakers, and native-like English is often favoured by publications. L2 learners, in contrast, must both overcome the challenge of learning English vocabulary and grammar, and internalise the stylistic conventions that are considered acceptable among professional communities. Hence, there have been calls for granting L2 speakers greater influence on the norms that typify the writings among scientific communities (Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014; Mauranen, 2012).

In order to train L2 learners to recognise and utilise the linguistic features that reflect the communicative purposes among specific discourse communities, scholars have suggested the use of of genre pedagogies (e.g. Ellis & Johnson, 1998; Kuteeva, 2013; Tribble, 2010). These approaches involve requiring students to analyse and compose texts belonging to different genres. One of the advantages is that L2 learners often have a repertoire of rhetorical strategies that they use when writing in their L1 that can be transferred to L2 writing (Gentil, 2011; Uysal, 2012). Furthermore, directly transferring these strategies might be more successful between languages that share similar roots, such as Norwegian, Swedish and English (Dahl, 2004; Haugen & Markey, 1973).

2.1.4 Genre

For this project, in order to represent the kinds of writing with which pupils engage, teachers were asked to provide essays from recent assignments. Consequently, the essays that were collected represent

several genres (see Chapter 3). Thus, this section offers a brief overview of theories pertaining to genre in educational settings.

It should be noted that "genre" is a complex term that has been approached differently within different research fields. Hyon (1996) identified three fields in which scholars have attempted to operationalise and investigate the term genre: English for specific purposes (ESP), systemic functional linguistics (SFL), and New Rhetoric studies. The present research project has implications for teaching English writing and therefore follows definitions that stem from ESP[3] studies, particularly those inspired by Swales' (1990) seminal work, *Genre Analysis*. Although these definitions are usually used in connection with tertiary-level writing instruction, they have also been used in previous studies of pre-tertiary writing (e.g. Berggren, 2019). One of the more succinct and recent definitions of genre within the ESP field is offered by Flowerdew (2011, p. 140): "Genres are staged, structural communicative events, motivated by various communicative purposes, and performed by members of specific discourse communities". This definition outlines three main elements that will be explicated in relation to the aims of the present project: communicative events, communicative purposes, and discourse communities.

The first element in Flowerdew's (2011) definition of genre involves identifying the communicative event that is taking place. In educational settings, communication takes place during events such as lectures, seminars, and exams (Balboni & Caon, 2014). Hymes (1974) recognised several factors that determine the nature of a particular communicative event, which include[4]: the participants (i.e. the interlocutors), the mode of communication (e.g. speech or writing), and the setting in which the event takes place. To a certain extent, communicative events usually follow a pre-determined, recognisable structure. For example, in

---

[3] English for Specific Purposes (ESP) refers to the teaching of English for particular discourse communities, such as business or academia.
[4] Note that this list is not exhaustive.

developing the *Create a Research Space* (CARS) model, Swales (1990, p. 141) recognised that research article introductions are highly conventionalised and follow a series of "moves", which involve "establishing a territory" within a given research field, "establishing a niche" within that territory (by, for example, raising questions, or identifying a gap in the research), and "occupying the niche" (explaining how the study addresses the questions, or fills the gap). Scholars have subsequently attempted to identify conventionalised moves in other academic and professional genres, such as business and administrative letters (e.g. Bhatia, 1993; Flowerdew & Wan, 2006).

The second element of Flowerdew's (2011) definition of genre involves identifying the purpose for which a given communicative event is taking place. Members of a discourse community tend to categorise communicative events based on the communicative purposes that are being fulfilled (Bhatia, 1993). In other words, genres are defined by the goals that writers aim to achieve in performing a given communicative act. However, Askehave and Swales (2001) point out that identifying a communicative act's purpose can be complicated, not least because experts within a community may disagree on which purposes are being fulfilled. For example, within journalism, some authors may consider the purpose of their articles to be to inform readers of current events, while others may consider it to be to shape public opinion (Swales, 1990). One extreme solution to this problem is to dispose of "purpose" altogether, instead identifying genres based on structural elements, as in Systemic Functional Linguistics (e.g. Halliday & Hasan, 1989). However, this solution becomes flawed when considering communicative events that follow a single structure but fulfil different purposes (e.g. compare news articles with satirical news articles). A more viable solution could be to identify a text's genre according to how it "repurposes" previous genres (Askehave & Swales, 2001; Yates & Orlikowski, 1992). Nevertheless, following Askehave and Swales (2001), this research project considers

that recognising a text's purpose(s) is an indispensable step in recognising the genre to which it belongs.

The third element of Flowerdew's (2011) definition of genre involves identifying the discourse community within which a communicative event takes place. The notion of discourse community stems from social constructivism, which is a theory that recognises how meaning is not only created within an individual, but is also co-created together with others (Nystrand, 1996; Stetsenko & Arievitch, 1997; Swales, 1990). A discourse community can to some extent be equated with a speech community, which is a group of people who have a shared understanding of how language should be used and interpreted (Hymes, 1974). However, the criteria for determining what constitutes a discourse community are more specific. Swales (2014) recognised several criteria that can be used to distinguish a discourse community as a group of people who have: shared goals, standardised modes of communication, mechanisms for providing and receiving feedback, conventionalised genres, specialised vocabulary, and a set of requirements for entry. Using these criteria, one can distinguish the difference between, for example, the applied linguistics and medical sciences discourse communities, as each have their respective goals, genres, and specialised vocabularies.

In sum, following Flowerdew (2011), this project considers a genre to be determined by the communicative event that is taking place, its purpose(s), and the discourse community within which it is taking place. However, applying these criteria to essays written by upper secondary pupils can be problematic. Regarding communicative event, the communicative event under observation is that of school evaluations, where the participants are the pupils and their teachers, the mode is written, and the setting is the English subject at upper secondary schools (Hymes, 1974). Regarding purpose (Bhatia, 1993), school essays can be written for a range of purposes, such as demonstrating knowledge, reflecting on one's learning, or persuading readers of a particular point of view. These purposes may be perceived differently by different

teachers and pupils, making it difficult to arrive at a consensus on exactly which purpose(s) a text should fulfill. Nevertheless, considering the purposes of the present essays proved useful for distinguishing the genres to which they belonged. For example, some essays in the present corpus were written to discuss various perspectives (e.g. the political essays), while others were written to persuade readers of a particular viewpoint (e.g. the opinion pieces; see Chapter 3). Finally, regarding discourse community, it could be argued that upper secondary pupils are still in the process of being socialised into specific discourse communities (Duff, 2010). For example, the specification for the English language subject in the UK states that the goal of the subject is to provide pupils with "writing skills which are invaluable for both further study and future employment" (AQA, 2019). Thus, for this project, it was recognised that the participating pupils and teachers had shared goals, relied on specific genres, and used specialised vocabularies (Swales, 2014). For example, the curriculum for the creative writing subject in the UK (AQA, 2013) requires that pupils learn creative writing skills, use specific genres (poetry, short stories and commentaries), and utilise a specialised vocabulary.

2.2   Theory of metadiscourse

Since Vande Kopple's (1985) seminal work, metadiscourse has been reconceptualised in various ways. The changes which are made in each operationalisation of metadiscourse usually stem from the philosophy and the linguistic theory on which they are based. The philosophical part of the debate concerns whether metadiscourse functions to support the main meaning conveyed in a text, or as carrying meaning itself. In other words, the point of contention is whether metadiscourse should be considered as "propositional" or as "non-propositional". The linguistic part of the debate concerns which theory should be used as a basis for defining metadiscourse. Various scholars have proposed models of metadiscourse based on different theories of language, such as the

interpersonal model (e.g. Vande Kopple, 1985), based on Halliday and Mattiessen's (2014) functional grammar, and the reflexive model (e.g. Ädel, 2006), based on Jakobson's (1990) linguistic metafunctions. This section presents various approaches to defining metadiscourse in order to offer background for some of the decisions that were made when conceptualising this research project.

2.2.1 A brief definition of metadiscourse

To begin with, the definition of metadiscourse used for this study will be briefly outlined. This research recognises two main linguistic functions of metadiscourse, which are somewhat similar to those that underpin the interpersonal model (see section 2.2.3; Bax et al., 2019; Farahani, 2019; Hyland, 2019; Qin & Uccelli, 2019). The first function is related to organising the ongoing text, helping to guide a reader through the ideas and arguments that a writer wishes to present. In this study, the punctuation marks, words and phrases that perform the functions are referred to as "signposts" (e.g. Adbi & Ahmadi, 2015) and fall under the following broad categories:

- Transitions: used to indicate relations of addition, comparison or causation between ideas (e.g. "in addition", "however", "as a result").
- Code glosses: used to mark when an example is being given (e.g. "for example", "such as").
- Phoric markers: used to enumerate points and refer to other parts of the current text (e.g. "first", "finally", "as mentioned").
- Topic markers: used to indicate different stages in the text (e.g. "In this paper, I will discuss", "moving on", "to sum up").

The second function encompasses linguistic features used to moderate knowledge claims, express affective attitudes, and explicitly establish a dialogue between the author and their readers. In this study, the punctuation marks, words and phrases that perform these functions are

said to express an author's "stance" (e.g. Hyland, 2005), and fall into the following categories:

- Hedges: used to withhold commitment to statements (e.g. "perhaps", "almost").
- Boosters: used to emphasise an author's claims (e.g. "without a doubt", "definitely").
- Evidentials: used to attribute information to text-external sources (e.g. "according to", "X claims").
- Self-mentions: used to mark the author's presence (e.g. "I will discuss", "in my opinion").
- Engagement markers: used to directly address readers (e.g. "you may know", "as we have seen").
- Attitude markers: used to mark the author's personal reactions (e.g. "interestingly", "surprisingly").

Bringing these functions together, metadiscourse can be defined as markers used to signal textual relations and to position writers and their readers in relation to the material in question.

2.2.2 The propositional dichotomy

In defining metadiscourse, Vande Kopple (1985) claimed that language can be considered to carry either propositional or non-propositional meaning. Since metadiscoursal features are used to signal textual relations and to maintain writer-reader relations, Vande Kopple considered them to be secondary to a text's main message and therefore ascribed them with non-propositional status. This view is based on the three metafunctions of language outlined by Halliday and Matthiessen[5] (2014): the ideational, the textual and the interpersonal. The ideational metafunction, which encompasses propositional (i.e. non-

---

[5] Vande Kopple does not clearly define the term "propositional" himself, relying instead on Halliday and Mattiessen's definition of the ideational metafunction.

metadiscoursal; Vande Kopple, 1985) material, refers to aspects of language that "construe[.] human experience" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 30). In other words, it is that which names concrete objects and abstract concepts and conveys the content of what one wishes to communicate. The latter two metafunctions were the point of departure for operationalising metadiscourse (Vande Kopple, 1985): the textual metafunction refers to linguistic aspects that organise the message one wishes to convey; the interpersonal metafunction refers to aspects that writers use to establish their position and anticipate the views of their readers. The textual metafunction can be likened to signposting features and the interpersonal metafunction to stance features.

When taken a priori, the distinction between propositional and non-propositional language seems a logical one. However, when putting it into practice, analysing what does and what does not carry propositional meaning is more problematic (e.g. Hyland, 2019; Ifantidou, 2005). For example, the phrase "In this paper, I will discuss" contains three metadiscourse markers ("paper" is a topic marker"; "I" is a self-mention"; "will discuss" is a phoric marker). However, these markers have clear denotative meaning: "paper" refers to the text in question, "I" refers to the writer, and "discuss" refers to the speech act taking place. Thus, considering that a number of metadiscourse markers can be considered to carry propositional meaning, applying the non-propositional criterion when conducting a textual analysis becomes problematic.

There seem to be three trends in dealing with this dichotomy in the metadiscourse literature. The first is simply to tacitly accept Vande Kopple's (1985) distinction (e.g. Dahl, 2004; Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1995). The second is to try to delineate more clearly what is and what is not propositional (Khabbazi-Oskouei, 2013). The third is to redefine metadiscourse in a way that rejects the propositional vs. non-propositional dichotomy (e.g. Ifantidou, 2005). The following sections take a closer look at how these trends are manifested in the literature.

Accepting the propositional dichotomy

Vande Kopple (1985, p. 83) offered the following definition of metadiscourse:

> On one level we supply information about the subject of our text. On this level we expand propositional content. On the other level, the level of metadiscourse, we do not add propositional material but help our readers organise, classify, interpret, evaluate, and react to such material. Metadiscourse, therefore, is discourse about discourse or communication about communication.

In other words, Vande Kopple considers propositional information to be the main message one wishes to convey, while non-propositional information aids the reader in interpreting this material. This definition has since been adopted in numerous metadiscourse-related studies (e.g. Dafouz Milne, 2008; Dahl, 2004; Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1995). While these studies provide important contributions to the field, none of them provide criteria specifically for recognising non-propositional language features. This is problematic when considering that several metadiscourse categories (e.g. self-mentions) clearly carry denotative, propositional meaning. This raises the question of how strictly these researchers have applied Vande Kopple's distinction. Did they omit from their analyses instances of metadiscourse that carry propositional meaning? Or did they tacitly accept the definition without fully considering its practical implications? The analytical frameworks used in these studies would suggest the latter. For example, in a study of newspaper discourse, Dafouz-Milne (2008) argued that columnists' use of metadiscourse is auxiliary to the propositional material. However, her ensuing analysis considered second person pronouns to be features of metadiscourse. In directly addressing the reader, second person pronouns have a discernible referent, which thus undermines ascribing them with non-propositional status. While these studies adopted the propositional

dichotomy in defining metadiscourse, they did not seem to consider its implications in practice.

Redefining the propositional dichotomy

The second approach is to elaborate on how metadiscourse can be operationalised using the propositional/non-propositional dichotomy. This approach is represented particularly by Khabbazi-Oskouei (2013), who not only addressed the distinction, but also proposed an innovative taxonomy. Khabbazi-Oskouei (2013, p. 94) acknowledged that there are a host of expressions that may carry metadiscoursal meaning in some situations, but not in others. For example, the word "first" would function as a metadiscourse marker in the phrase "my first argument is" in that it helps to organise the writer's arguments. On the other hand, in the phrase "the first person across the line", the word "first", by describing a temporal order, carries a text-external denotation. These considerations thus require a researcher to account for the polysemic nature of language by considering how certain markers contribute to the overall message.

Following this, Khabbazi-Oskouei (2013, p. 95) argued that, although language can be seen as carrying either propositional or non-propositional meaning, this distinction manifests as a continuum rather than as a dichotomy. Thus, metadiscourse encompasses both propositional and non-propositional linguistic features. Khabbazi-Oskouei claimed that the reason that metadiscourse is associated with non-propositional material is because "there is a great deal of overlap in the range of items that fall into the non-propositional end of the propositional/non-propositional continuum" (p. 95). By recognising that metadiscourse features can also be considered as propositional, she accounted for categories that clearly denote real-world entities, such as self-mentions. To illustrate how some metadiscourse may be propositional, Khabbazi-Oskouei provides the following example (p. 94):

1) <u>Really</u>, it was terrible.

2) It was <u>really</u> terrible.

In the first example, Khabbazi-Oskouei argued that "really" adds no propositional information to the statement. In contrast, the second example has propositional value in that it intensifies the meaning of the adjective "terrible". In practice, by recognising that metadiscourse can carry propositional information, both instances would be included in an analysis of metadiscourse as both propositional and non-propositional: the former as an attitude marker and the latter as a booster. Accordingly, Khabbazi-Oskouei (2013, p. 101) proposed a "propositional and non-propositional continuum", a model that shows the degree to which each metadiscourse category is either propositional or non-propositional.

However, when putting this continuum into practice, it remains unclear how propositional and non-propositional language should be distinguished. Taking one example from Khabbazi-Oskouei's continuum, attitude markers can be either propositional or non-propositional depending on their sentential placement. They are considered to be non-propositional when separated from the clause, but propositional when integrated into the clause (Khabbazi-Oskouei, 2013, p. 99). Thus, the attitude marker "extraordinarily" would be non-propositional in the sentence: "Extraordinarily, the wrong person was elected". In contrast, the attitude marker "extraordinary" would be propositional in "It was an extraordinary election". In both cases, these attitude markers modify the statement by establishing the writer's emotional reaction towards events during an election. It therefore seems fallacious to distinguish the former as non-propositional and the latter as propositional according to their sentential placement. Consequently, it seems that reconceptualising the propositional dichotomy as a continuum remains problematic for the purposes of conducting corpus-assisted studies.

Another issue arises when using Khabbazi-Oskouei's propositional continuum to analyse metadiscoursal features. This concerns how one can distinguish metadiscourse from other discoursal elements. If metadiscourse can encompass *both* propositional and non-propositional meaning, the distinction between propositional and non-propositional seems to be redundant as a criterion for recognising metadiscoursal features. In other words, Khabbazi-Oskouei seemed only to address this issue in terms of defining metadiscourse in itself, but not in terms of how metadiscourse relates to other features of language. In practice, this continuum does not delineate where metadiscourse ends and where non-metadiscourse begins.

Rejecting the propositional dichotomy

The third approach is to recognise the impracticalities of defining metadiscourse based on what is and what is not propositional. This approach has taken a variety of forms, involving both reworked definitions and innovative operationalisations. This discussion will limit itself to just two of these (Hyland, 2019; Ädel, 2006).

In redefining metadiscourse, Hyland (2019) argued against using the propositional dichotomy as a criterion for identifying metadiscoursal features. Firstly, by classing metadiscourse as non-propositional, one assigns it a secondary role. In other words, one would ascribe varying levels of status to individual aspects of language. However, such a hierarchy would ignore the essential role that metadiscourse plays in communicating a message. Instead, Hyland (2019, p. 23) contended that hierarchies are unnecessary: "metadiscourse can [...] both be of equal importance to what is asserted and overlap with it". Furthermore, all aspects of language can convey propositional meaning, "with each element expressing its own "content": one concerned with the world and the other with the text and its reception" (Hyland & Tse, 2004, p. 24). Thus, the propositional dichotomy does not provide a logical set of

criteria that can be used to distinguish metadiscourse from other linguistic features.

In a similar vein, Ifantidou (2005) argued that metadiscourse cannot be non-propositional since it has implications for truth-value. For example, the hedge "maybe" has fundamental implications as to how a statement should be interpreted. On the one hand, saying "it's blue" implies that a speaker is making an observation, whereas saying "*maybe* it's blue" implies that a speaker is offering a speculation. Taking another example, a writer may choose to add information using transitions such as, "in addition", "also", or "moreover". While these transitions are synonymous, using a transition of comparison would change the way in which links would be understood. Saying "in addition, it's blue" would imply that observations are being consolidated, but saying "on the other hand, it's blue" would imply that observations are being contrasted. If a speaker intends to signal a relation of addition and uses a phrase such as "on the other hand", the listener would almost inevitably misinterpret the message (Rooij, 2012). Finally, Mao (1993) observed that metadiscourse can also contribute to the truth value of speech-acts that writers perform. For example, if one presents a well-known fact with the phrase "I hypothesise", the act of hypothesising becomes untrue (Mao, 1993, p. 266).

Instead of ascribing metadiscourse with secondary, non-falsifiable, or non-propositional status, it is more pertinent to identify its communicative functions. Hyland's (2019, p. 43) definition recognised the specific communicative functions that metadiscourse fulfils without leaning on unverifiable criteria:

> Metadiscourse is 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.

Following this, Hyland (2019, p. 41) rejected Vande Kopple's (1985) use of Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) metafunctions (the ideational, textual, and interpersonal) as criteria for distinguishing ideational material from textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. Hyland argued that this distinction is flawed since all metadiscourse can be considered to be interpersonal. Although what Vande Kopple labelled as interpersonal metadiscourse explicitly positions the writer and reader in relation to the material in question, textual metadiscourse plays an essential part in guiding the reader through the unfolding text by linking ideas and framing textual events. Accordingly, Hyland (2019) offered an operationalisation of metadiscourse that relabelled interpersonal and textual metadiscourse, using the terms "interactional" and "interactive" metadiscourse, respectively (Thompson & Theleta, 1995).

Ädel (2006, p. 209-212) also rejected the propositional dichotomy, arguing, in a similar line of reasoning, that metadiscourse carries propositional content: "[i]nstead of defining metadiscourse in terms of truth-conditional semantics, we can find a more useful definition by focusing on its linguistic functions". However, while Hyland's (2019) approach is to reimplement Vande Kopple's (1985) model, Adel's *reflexive* model takes an alternative point of departure by drawing on Jakobson's (1990) theory of language. This will be further discussed in section 2.2.3.

This study subscribes to rejecting the propositional dichotomy as an approach to categorising metadiscourse features. Instead of trying to distinguish what does and does not carry propositional meaning, this study follows approaches that recognise metadiscourse as fulfilling a fixed set of linguistic functions (e.g. Hyland, 2019; Mao, 1993; Ädel, 2006). These approaches arguably offer a more logical and robust set of criteria that can be more readily applied to a textual analysis. This is particularly relevant when analysing pre-tertiary essay writing, which may contain, for example, lexical and spelling errors. Thus, instead of trying to distinguish propositional and non-propositional material, it was

considered more manageable to analyse how individual types functioned in their respective contexts.

2.2.3 Models of metadiscourse

Metadiscourse has been the focus of a large number of studies, among which numerous approaches to operationalising metadiscourse have been offered (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014; Khabbazi-Oskouei, 2013; Uccelli et al., 2013). The majority of previous studies have focused on investigating metadiscourse in academic and journalistic writing (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014; Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Fu & Hyland, 2014; Gillaerts & Van de Velde, 2010). Accordingly, Ädel (2018, p. 55) observed that "It is predominantly highly visible and high-prestige genres in academia that have been investigated thus far". Thus, adopting an approach that is essentially conceived for analysing high-prestige genres may not be appropriate when analysing other genres and modes that have received considerably less attention. This section outlines some of the previous metadiscourse models (see also Amiryousefi & Rasekh, 2010) in order to establish the rationale behind devising the taxonomy used for this study.

In order to represent the various ways in which the metadiscourse concept has been operationalised, several models will be reviewed alongside their main strengths and weaknesses. It should be noted that this discussion is not exhaustive and, although they are also considered to be valuable approaches to investigating metadiscourse, it omits models such as the cooperative principle model (Abdi et al., 2010), metadiscoursal nouns (Flowerdew, 2015; Jiang & Hyland, 2016) and the visual model (Kumpf, 2000). The taxonomies included here were prioritised for two main reasons. Firstly, they illustrate how researchers have defined metadiscourse according to different linguistic theories. For example, "the reflexive model" (Ädel, 2006) is based on six metafunctions of language proposed by Jakobson (1990), while "the relevance theory model" (Ifantidou, 2005) is based on Sperber and

Wilson's (2004) relevance theory. Secondly, these models were considered in the process of devising the taxonomy used for the present research project.

Although many studies have drawn on similar criteria, there remain disagreements on how metadiscourse should be defined, as well as on details regarding which linguistic features should and should not be included. These disagreements are highlighted by Ädel and Mauranen (2010), who labelled different approaches to metadiscourse as being either "narrow" or "broad". Narrow approaches include those that see metadiscourse as "reflexive" (e.g. Salas, 2015). This means that words and phrases are considered metadiscoursal only when they refer to the current text, the current writer, and/or the current reader. Broad approaches involve less stringent criteria and recognise metadiscourse as linguistic aspects that are used to signal textual structures and maintain writer-reader relations (e.g. Hyland, 2019). Ädel (2006) argued that broad approaches are conceptually unfocused. Accordingly, there ought to be a clear distinction between metadiscourse, which refers to organisational elements, and stance, which refers to interactional elements. Fu and Hyland (2014) maintained, on the other hand, that conceptualising metadiscourse in a way that does not include stance would be to ignore the inherently interpersonal nature of language. In response to this debate, Ädel and Mauranen (2010, p. 2) observed that these approaches represent different research traditions and are not simply products of "terminological confusion".

Ädel and Mauranen (2010) also distinguished between so-called "thick" and "thin" approaches: the narrow approaches (Ädel, 2006) are usually associated with the former, and the broad approaches (Hyland, 2019) with the latter. "Thick" approaches involve searching for a smaller number of terms that function as metadiscourse in specific contexts. This approach is more qualitative as it aims to reveal how individual terms are utilised in a given context. "Thin" approaches aim to quantify a greater number of search terms to reveal the metadiscoursal qualities of larger

corpora. Additionally, although the "thick" and "thin" approaches can be equated with the narrow and broad approaches, respectively, there are instances of "thick", broad approaches and "thin", narrow approaches. For example, Ädel (2006) "thinly" quantified metadiscourse using a narrow approach to compare its use in English essays written by Swedish, British English and American English-speaking university students. Another example is Hyland (2007), who used a broad approach, but also drew on a "thick" textual analysis to illustrate various means by which academic writers tend to present examples and reformulations.

Building on Ädel and Mauranen's narrow versus broad dichotomy, Hyland (2017) suggested that conceptualisations of metadiscourse form a continuum with narrow approaches towards one end and broad approaches towards the other, as shown in Figure 2:
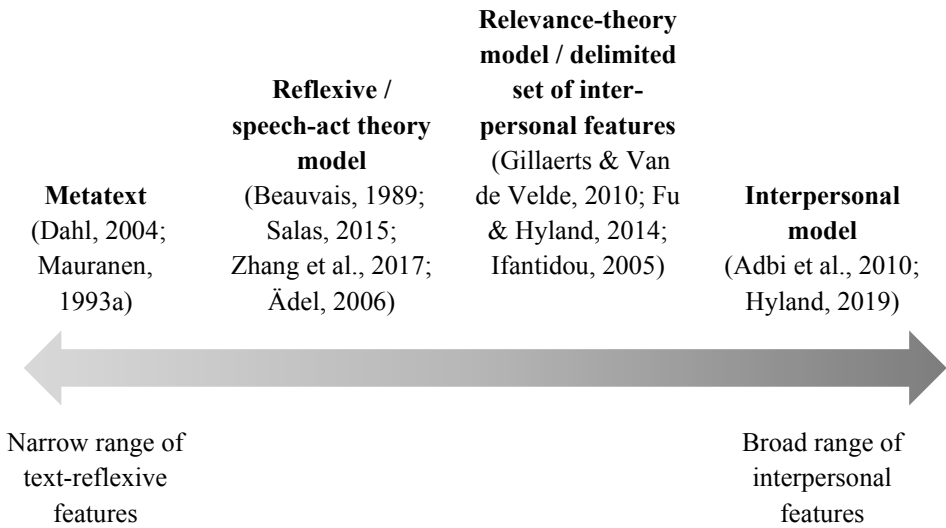
Figure 2. A continuum of metadiscourse models and example studies (adapted from Hyland, 2017)

Towards one end are narrow models that focus on features that refer to the current text (e.g. Mauranen, 1993a). Towards the other end are broad models that include both organisational and interactional elements (e.g. Hyland, 2019). It should be noted, however, that the overlap across these models is more complex than is possible to convey in a two-dimensional visualisation. For example, the speech-act theory model (Beauvais, 1989) includes linguistic elements that can be associated with stance but is placed towards the narrow end of the continuum since it accounts for a limited range of linguistic features.

The remainder of this section presents several of these models in more detail, including the speech-act theory model (Beauvais, 1989), the relevance theory model (Ifantidou, 2004), the reflexive model (Ädel, 2006, 2010), and the interpersonal model (e.g. Hyland, 2019). These models are presented and discussed here for two main reasons. Firstly, they illustrate the development of the metadiscourse concept over the past decades. Secondly, although an adapted version of the interpersonal model was ultimately chosen, these models offer certain strengths and were considered for the purposes of the present study.

The speech act theory model

Beauvais' (1989) speech-act model of metadiscourse focuses mainly on verbs that explicitly identify the kind of speech-act a speaker or writer is performing (Austin, 1975). This approach is considered to fall roughly in the middle of the narrow-broad continuum (Hyland, 2017, p. 19). Beauvais (1989, p. 15) defined metadiscourse as "illocutionary force indicators that identify expositive illocutionary acts". Beauvais acknowledged that metadiscourse use is determined by the pragmatic context and that a taxonomy therefore should incorporate functional, rather than formal, categories. A condensed version of this model is shown in Table 1:

Table 1. A taxonomy of metadiscourse based on the speech-act model (adapted from Beauvais, 1989)

		Explicit	Partially explicit
Primary:			
1st person			
Simple		*I state*	*it is notable*
Complex	Relational	*I first state*	*First*
	Evaluative	*I believe*	*it is certain*
	Commissive	*I will state*	*the next subject will be*
	Reiterative	*I stated*	*having considered (reformulated)*
Secondary:			
2nd person			
Simple		*you may note*	*note that*
Complex	Relational	*you first noted*	*(uncommon)*
	Evaluative	*you may believe*	*note again*
	Commissive	*you will note*	
	Reiterative	*you noted*	
3rd person			
Simple		*she states*	*(uncommon)*
Complex	Relational	*she will first state*	
	Evaluative	*she believes*	
	Commissive	*she will state*	
	Reiterative	*she stated*	

This taxonomy distinguishes between primary and secondary metadiscourse. Primary metadiscourse refers to items that are expressed in the first person, while secondary metadiscourse refers to those expressed in the second or third person. Instances of metadiscourse may also be explicit or partially explicit. Explicit metadiscourse refers to instances where the actor is identified. Partially explicit metadiscourse refers to instances where the actor is omitted. Finally, instances of metadiscourse may be considered to be simple, where the act is stated in a basic form, or complex, where the act can perform one of four functions. These four functions are the relational expositive act, which indicates sequential links; the evaluative expositive act, which expresses the writer's opinion; the commissive expositive act, which commits the writer to performing a specific act later in the text; and the reiterative expositive act, which repeats material from a preceding act in the text.

This taxonomy accounts for the ways in which a writer navigates their own views, their readers' views, and views cited from other sources. Furthermore, it accounts for how views are organised and for when they are expressed passively. However, while these distinctions are useful for understanding how speech-acts can carry metadiscoursal meaning, this taxonomy is mainly focused on verbs and does not account for other relevant grammatical units. Although none of the reviewed studies have exclusively utilised this model, its influence is still arguably seen in more recent models, such as the reflexive model (e.g. Ädel, 2010).

The relevance theory model

Ifantidou's (2005) relevance theory model draws on Sperber and Wilson's (e.g. 2004) relevance theory. In short, relevance theory postulates that a listener will process an utterance if it relates to their pre-existing knowledge and helps them "yield conclusions that matter to [them]" (2004, p. 609). Since the approach largely accounts for organisational features and only partially for stance features, it is placed roughly in the centre of the narrow-broad continuum. The taxonomy of this model is shown in Table 2:

Table 2. A taxonomy of metadiscourse based on the relevance theory model (Ifantidou, 2005, p. 1331-1332)

Category	Examples
Intra-textual:	
Sequence markers	*below, following, first, second, finally*
Discourse connectives:	
A.	*but, so, after all, therefore, nevertheless*
B.	*in other words, for example, in short*
C.	*because, and, then*
Evidential parenthetical verbs	*I believe, I think, we suggest*
Evidential main clause verbs	*we estimate that…, I suppose that…*
Evidential adverbs	*clearly, obviously, evidently*
Attitudinal adverbials	*frankly, surprisingly, unfortunately*
Likelihood adverbials	*necessarily, possibly, probably*
Prepositional phrases	*by means of…, in comparison with…*
Modals	*might, perhaps, may, could*
Inter-textual:	
Parenthetical verbs	*they claim, X suggests, Z believes*
Main-clause verbs	*they claim that…, X suggests that…*
Evidential adverbials	*apparently, supposedly, clearly*
Impersonal verb constructions	*it is estimated/recommended/seems that…*
Prepositional phrases	*according to…, owing to…, away from…*
Hearsay adverbials	*reportedly, allegedly*

Ifantidou (2005) argued that metadiscourse functions both semantically and pragmatically. Semantically, metadiscourse can have propositional qualities (see section 2.2.2) and pragmatically, the role of metadiscourse is to aid the reader's interpretation of the unfolding text (2005, p. 1325). Regarding semantics, Ifantidou proposed three distinctions and used examples that illustrate how metadiscourse carries propositional qualities. The first distinction is between truth conditional and non-truth conditional meaning. For example, hearsay adverbials can alter the truth-value of an utterance, such as the use of "allegedly" in the following sentence: "Allegedly, weapons of mass destruction are held by Saddam Hussein" (Ifantidou, 2005, p. 1334). The second distinction is between

explicit and implicit meaning, which refers to whether an utterance should be taken at face-value or whether it refers to something beyond its literal meaning. This acknowledges that certain metadiscourse markers can be used to make explicit the discourse act that a writer is performing, such as when presenting evidence by using the phrase "for example" (Ifantidou, 2005, p. 1340). The third and final distinction is between conceptual meaning, referring to "logical forms", and procedural meaning, referring to "utterance interpretation" (Ifantidou, 2005, p. 1341). Ifantidou (2005, p. 1341) used examples showing how seemingly similar utterances can be affected by conceptual and procedural meaning. In the following, "I know" exemplifies conceptual meaning and "after all" procedural: "Ben needs an aspirin. *I know/After all*, he has a headache". The former ("I know") is conceptual in that the speaker is expressing their personal perception, or conceptualisation, of the situation. The latter ("After all") is procedural in that it marks that the sentences are related, in this case expressing a cause-effect relationship.

Regarding pragmatics, the relevance theory model recognises two aspects that determine whether or not an utterance is relevant to a listener: positive cognitive effects and processing effort (Ifantidou, 2005). An utterance has positive cognitive effects when it makes a difference to the listener's view of the world by, for example, supporting their assumptions. An utterance's processing effort is determined by how difficult it is for a listener to interpret. Based on a small test where participants read one text written with and without metadiscourse markers, Ifantidou (2005, p. 1349) concluded that:

> Writers are interested in producing an optimally attractive text, one that will communicate the intended meanings and intended interpretations with the minimum mental effort required. Readers are interested in productive and economical readings of texts, i.e., texts that yield as many

cognitive effects as possible with the minimum possible mental effort required to achieve those effects.

The relevance theory model taxonomy consists of fifteen categories that are grouped as either inter-textual or intra-textual metadiscourse. Intertextual markers are used to signal relationships between the current text and other texts. Intra-textual markers are used to signal relationships between elements within the current text. The sub-categories combine functional and grammatical characteristics, where some functions and some grammatical patterns are applied to both inter- and intra-textual metadiscourse. Sequence, discourse connective, evidential, likelihood, impersonal and hearsay markers are all used as functional labels. These are, where appropriate, sub-divided by grammatical class, including verbs, adverbs, adverbials, prepositional phrases, and modals.

The strength of this classification is that it recognises the semantic and pragmatic value of metadiscourse features in communicating a message. However, the mixing of formal and functional categories is potentially problematic when put into practice, which can be exemplified by considering certain markers. For example, "in other words" contains a preposition, but is listed as a discourse connective rather than as a prepositional phrase. At the same time, "in comparison with" is listed as a prepositional phrase, but it could also be classified as a discourse connective. A further pitfall concerns the three categories of discourse connectives (labelled A., B., and C.), which do not use grammatical categorisations. Instead, according to Ifantidou (2005, p. 1131), the categories "are formed by superimposing the relevance-theoretic tripartite distinctions between truth-conditional versus non-truth conditional meaning, conceptual versus procedural meaning and [.] explicit versus implicit meaning". Not only might these distinctions seem confusing, especially if one of the goals of metadiscourse-related research is to inform writing instructors, they also seem superfluous. For example, "so" and "then", despite both being adverbs, are assigned to

different categories. In contrast, other models (e.g. the interpersonal and reflective models) group them together.

The reflexive model

The reflexive model (Ädel, 2006; 2010) sees metadiscourse as linguistic features that refer to the text, writer and reader in question. This model is situated towards the narrow end of the narrow-broad spectrum (Hyland, 2017, p. 19). Ädel (2006, p. 16), like Hyland (2019), recognised the problems inherent in using Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) textual and interpersonal functions as a basis for classifying metadiscourse. However, while Hyland simply relabelled the textual and interpersonal categories as interactive and interactional, respectively, Ädel (2006) based her operationalisation of metadiscourse on Jakobson's (1990) functional linguistic theory. Jakobson identified six functions of language, of which Ädel recognised three as functioning as metadiscourse: the metalinguistic, the expressive, and the directive.

The metalinguistic function denotes linguistic aspects that refer to the text or language itself. The expressive function denotes aspects of language that refer to the writer in the role of the writer. The directive function denotes linguistic aspects that refer to the reader in the role of the reader. Based on these three metafunctions, Ädel (2006, p. 20) defined metadiscourse as:

> …text about the evolving text, or the writer's explicit commentary on her ongoing discourse. It displays an awareness of the current text or its language use *per se* and of the current writer and reader *qua* writer and reader. (original emphasis)

Following this, Ädel (2006) split metadiscourse into two broad categories: personal and impersonal. The impersonal label is assigned to metadiscourse markers that do not occur alongside personal pronouns, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3. A reflexive model: impersonal metadiscourse (Ädel, 2006, p. 100-121)

Category	Function and *examples*
Phorics:	
Previews	What is going to happen in the text *below, following*
Reviews	Remind reader about previous chunks *above, again*
Enumerators	Order specific parts of discourse *first, second, third*
Deictic expressions	Draw attention to "current text" *here, now*
Introducing topic	*begin, introduce, start*
Closing topic	*end, finally, last*
References to:	
Text	Refer to whole text *essay, paragraph, text*
Code	Refer to part of text *phrase, sentence, word*
Code Glosses	Cues for proper interpretation of elements *brief, i.e.*
Discourse labels:	
Saying/defining	*as it were, call*
Exemplification	*example, instance*
Concluding	*conclude, sum*
Introducing	*aim, intend*
Argumentation	*emphasise, stress, underline*
Addition	*add*

While other models tend to focus on the use of individual markers, the reflexive model uses single words or phrases as tools to identify longer units that have metadiscoursal functions. Furthermore, instances of impersonal metadiscourse search-terms are disregarded if they occur alongside personal pronouns or if the text, writer or reader are explicitly manifested in the text.

Regarding the personal category, Ädel primarily looks for units containing "I", "we", or "you". Ädel's (2006) original taxonomy of personal metadiscourse is not included here, but a later iteration of this taxonomy is shown in Table 4:

Table 4. A reflexive model: personal metadiscourse (Ädel, 2010, p. 83)

	Category	Examples
Metatext	**Metalinguistic comments**	
	Repairing	*I should've said*
	Reformulating	*I'll rephrase it*
	Commenting on the linguistic form	*if you will*
	Clarifying	*I'm not saying*
	Managing terminology	*by this we mean*
	Discourse organisation	
	Introducing topic ⎤	*in this paper, I explore*
	Delimiting topic ⎟	*I will focus on*
	Adding to topic ⎬ Manage topic	*I should add*
	Concluding topic ⎟	*we've now covered*
	Marking asides ⎦	*I want to do an aside*
	Enumerating ⎤	*first, we're going to*
	Endophoric marking ⎟	*look at question one*
	Previewing ⎬ Manage	*we'll be coming to that*
	Reviewing ⎟ phorics	*as I discussed above*
	Contextualising ⎦	*we're doing well on time*
	Speech act labels	
	Arguing	*I am postulating that*
	Exemplifying	*we're talking Helen…*
	Other speech act labelling	*I am suggesting that*
Audience interaction	**References to the audience**	
	Managing comprehension/channel	*you know what I mean*
	managing audience discipline	
	Anticipating the audience's response	*you might still think that*
	Managing the message	*I want you to remember*
	Imagining scenarios	*suppose I say that*

This iteration of the taxonomy was designed to compare metadiscourse use in academic speech with academic writing (Ädel, 2010), demonstrating how metadiscourse taxonomies can be data-driven rather than theory-driven. Ädel (2010) incorporates two terms to group the personal metadiscourse categories: *metatext* and *audience interaction*. Metatext, which relates to the metalinguistic function, refers to words

and phrases that refer to the text itself. There are three categories of metatext: metalinguistic comments, discourse organisation, and speech act labels. Metalinguistic comments are used by a speaker to comment on their own language use. For example, repairing involves explicitly mentioning that they have said something wrong and wish to restate it. Discourse organisation explicitly allows an audience to know about the stage the current discourse has reached by, for example, introducing the topic, enumerating points, or commenting on the communicative context. Speech act labels are used to explicitly denote the intended discourse function: the arguing and exemplifying functions were included in this taxonomy due to their frequency in the corpus of academic speech and writing (Ädel, 2010, p. 88). Treated separately from the metatext categories, audience interaction refers to words and phrases that involve the writer and/or the reader, linking to the expressive and directive functions.

Although the reflexive model has been adopted by a number of researchers (Toumi, 2009; Zhang et al., 2017), it faces certain limitations. Ädel (2006, p. 123) concedes that the personal metadiscourse categories involve using time-consuming methods: the search terms produce large numbers of hits that consequently yield a large number of redundant results needing to be filtered manually. As stated, this taxonomy has also received criticism because it excludes features of stance and engagement that are considered by other scholars to be central in their operationalisations of metadiscourse (Hyland, 2014, p. 5). However, this argument against the reflexive model seems unfounded since even studies that focus on a single metadiscoursal aspect can still produce insightful results (e.g. Hyland, 2007a; Peterlin, 2005).

The interpersonal model

The interpersonal model is probably the most widely adopted approach in metadiscourse research. This model incorporates elements of both signposting and stance and is therefore considered to be prototypical of

broad approaches (Ädel & Mauranen, 2010). Hyland's (2019, p. 43-44) definition is often used in studies that incorporate this model: "Metadiscourse is 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". This definition has its roots in Bakhtin's (1986) view that, contrary to the notion that textual messages are communicated in one direction, all utterances are dialogic. In other words, texts are not conceived in an epistemic vacuum and writers cannot assume that their readers will be willing to unpack densely encoded messages. Instead, texts are written by referring and responding to other texts, and writers need to anticipate the prior knowledge and processing needs of their target audience.

Vande Kopple (1985) proposed the interpersonal model by drawing on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) three metafunctions of language (see section 2.2.2). Hyland's (2019) re-conceptualisation of this model (as discussed in 2.2.1) is possibly the most commonly used in recent metadiscourse research. This is shown in Table 5:

Table 5. The interpersonal model (Cao & Hu, 2014; Hyland, 2019)

Category	Function and *examples*
Interactive	**Help to guide the reader through the text**
Transitions:	Express relations between main clauses
Addition	Add activities/add arguments: *in addition, and*
Comparison	Compare and contrast: *but, although, alternatively*
Consequence	Explain cause-effect relations: *thus, as a result*
Frame markers:	
Sequencing	Order discourse-internal stages: *first, then*
Label stages	Label text stages: *thus far, in sum*
Announce goals	Announce discourse goals: *the paper proposes*
Shift topic	Indicate topic shifts: *now, regarding, moving on*
Endophoric markers	Refer to other parts of the text: *noted above, see X*
Evidentials	Refer to other texts: *according to X, Z states*
Code Glosses	Elaborate on meaning: *e.g., in other words*
Interactional	**Involve the reader in the texts**
Hedges	Withhold commitment: *may, perhaps*
Boosters	Emphasise certainty: *in fact, definitely*
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude: *unfortunately, I agree*
Self-mentions	Explicit reference to author(s): *I, we, my, me, our*
Engagement markers	Explicitly interact with reader: *consider, you*

Hyland (2019) rejected Vande Kopple's (1985) original distinction between textual and interpersonal metadiscourse, claiming that all metadiscourse functions interpersonally. Consequently, Hyland adopted Thompson and Theleta's[6] (1995) distinction between interactive and interactional dimensions, both of which are situated as subordinate to the interpersonal linguistic function, hence the "interpersonal model". According to Hyland (2019, p. 57), the interactive dimension "addresses ways of organising discourse […] and reveals the extent to which the text is constructed with the readers' needs in mind". The interactional dimension "concerns the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message".

---

[6] Note that Hyland (2019) modifies the way in which Thompson and Theleta (1995) used these terms.

The interactive and interactional dimensions each consist of five sub-categories. The interactive categories include transitions, which are used to link ideas in an unfolding argument, adding information, comparing information, and identifying the consequences of the arguments outlined. Frame markers are used to explicitly mark the textual act taking place. Acts can include sequencing arguments, labelling which stage the text has reached, announcing what an author intends to accomplish in the text, and shifting the focus from one topic to another. Endophoric markers can be used either cataphorically, referring to content that will be discussed later in the text, or anaphorically, referring to content that has already been discussed. Evidentials are used to refer to text-external sources of information. Code glosses are used to mark examples and to offer reformulations.

The interactional categories include hedges, which express some degree of uncertainty, and boosters, which express certainty. Attitude markers express the author's affective view of the content. Self-mentions include pronouns identifying an author or authors. Engagement markers are used to directly interact with the reader, for example by using the imperative mood or by using inclusive pronouns such as "we".

While this taxonomy is probably the most widely used, it has received criticism from, for example, Ädel (2010, p. 70), who argued that the inclusion of so many categories, particularly the interactional categories, makes metadiscourse too broad a term to be useful. Moreover, Ifantidou (2005, p. 1330) stated that "classifying metadiscourse […] under labels such as 'frame', 'endophoric', 'relational', 'attitude markers', etc. […] is theoretically inadequate because of the hazy distinctions and overlapping categories involved".

Nonetheless, many researchers (e.g. Aull & Lancaster, 2013; Dobbs, 2013; Hu & Cao, 2015) continue to choose this model to analyse text corpora, perhaps due to its relative approachability, especially for scholars within applied linguistics whose research aims are to inform

EAP (English for Academic Purposes) writing instructors. Furthermore, a host of studies have modified the categories in this taxonomy in different ways, often based on specific research interests. One example is Cao and Hu (2014, p. 18) who, in a study of interactive metadiscourse in academic articles, split each of the five categories of interactive metadiscourse into sub-categories. For example, they distinguish code glosses as either functioning to mark examples or to mark reformulations (see also Hyland, 2007a). Another example is Hinkel (2005) who, in an analysis of L1 and L2 student essays, recognised several sub-categories of hedges and boosters. These were split according to whether they moderated epistemic claims, lexical meaning, judgements, or intensity. On the one hand, these examples illustrate how the interpersonal model provides researchers with a certain amount of flexibility. On the other hand, they illustrate that researchers need to consider the material being analysed before applying the otherwise "hazy" overarching categories (Ifantidou, 2005, p. 1330).

Summary

These models represent how the metadiscourse concept has been used to pursue various research interests that stem from different theories of language. For the present study, the problem remains that choosing a single model and applying it to an analysis of texts written at the pre-tertiary level may lead to overlooking certain features that typify the kinds of writing that pupils engage with at this educational level. The speech act model (Beauvais, 1989) accounts mainly for verbs, but not for other relevant grammatical features, which have been accounted for in more recent studies. The relevance theory model (Ifantidou, 2005) accounts for the pragmatic and semantic value of metadiscourse features, but the categorisations seem to be complex and are consequently impractical for the purposes of the current study. The reflexive model (Ädel, 2006) offers a more practically feasible approach, but given that pre-tertiary writing is largely under-researched and given the exploratory nature of the present study, using a model that largely omits features of

stance may lead to overlooking important rhetorical aspects that characterise writing at this level.

The interpersonal model (Vande Kopple, 1985), probably the most widely used in metadiscourse-related research, was seemingly conceived for the purposes of analysing professional writing, as is illustrated by Hyland's (2019, p. 43-44) definition, which states that metadiscourse is used to "engage with readers as members of a particular community". The focus on identifying the features that typify writing among particular communities is arguably a step beyond what can be expected of writers at pre-tertiary levels, who do not yet belong to a specialised discourse community. On the other hand, one of the goals of pre-tertiary writing instruction should be to engage pupils with writing for a range of purposes and audiences in order to prepare them for the potential demands they may face upon entering their chosen profession (e.g. Tribble, 2010). Nevertheless, by offering an operationalisation of metadiscourse that is both practically feasible and includes aspects of stance, the interpersonal model was deemed most suited for the purposes of the present study. However, in order to address the types of writing that were collected for the present study, a metadiscourse taxonomy, based on the interpersonal model, was adapted both by drawing on those used in previous studies and by closely reading a sample of essays from the present corpus. The resulting taxonomy is presented in more detail in Chapter 3.

2.3   Previous research

A large body of research has investigated metadiscourse in professional and tertiary-level English writing with a variety of foci, such as comparing metadiscourse across various discourse communities (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Hempel & Degand, 2008), across languages (Dahl, 2004; Hasselgård, 2016), and in tertiary educational settings (Ho & Li, 2018; Hyland & Milton, 1997). This section briefly refers to previous corpus-based studies (Baker, 2010), before outlining findings

from studies that have drawn on corpus-assisted methods in order to investigate metadiscourse-related phenomena.

2.3.1 Using corpora to investigate learner writing

A great deal of metadiscourse-related research can be considered as belonging to a sub-field of corpus linguistics, which is briefly introduced here. Corpus linguistic studies usually investigate real-world language phenomena by identifying and analysing linguistic patterns in large textual data sets (Baker, 2010). Although using a corpus of texts for research purposes is not a modern phenomenon (Dash & Arulmozi, 2018), computers have made electronic corpora more freely available (Ebeling, 2016). One of the largest web-based corpora is the 4.5-billion-word Collins Corpus (Collins, 2019), which includes texts from, for example, newspapers and radio material, and is primarily used as a tool for compiling dictionaries.

Smaller, specialised corpora have been compiled and made available to researchers for more specific research purposes, such as the Cultural Identity in Academic Prose corpus (KIAP; Dahl, 2008), the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE; Granger, 1998), and the Corpus of Young Learner Language (CORYL; Hasselgreen & Sundet, 2018). The KIAP corpus (Dahl, 2008) was compiled to investigate features of academic writing and contains 450 professionally authored research articles in three languages. The ICLE corpus (Granger, 1998) is a 3.7-million-word corpus of essays written by tertiary-level students representing 16 L1 backgrounds. The CORYL corpus (Hasselgreen & Sundet, 2018) contains 272 English essays written by Norwegian school pupils in the 7th to 10th grade. There are also many studies that have used a corpus that was exclusively collected for the purposes of a single study (e.g. Ho & Li, 2018; Sawaki et al., 2013; Siyanova-Chanturia, 2015).

While studies have previously been limited to investigating the writing competencies of just a few learners at a time (Gass et al., 2020),

electronic corpora grant researchers access to a larger set of authentic written data, which increases the generalisability of findings (Granger, 2009). One common method for analysing a corpus, often used to investigate metadiscourse-related phenomena, is to use a program with a concordancing function, such as #Lancsbox (Brezina et al., 2020), WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2020), or Antconc (Anthony, 2019). Concordancers facilitate searching for punctuation marks, words or phrases in a corpus, the results of which show each hit preceded and succeeded by several words from the running text, providing contextual information. This allows the user both to inductively investigate language use and to quantify the given search terms.

Investigations of how academic writing varies across languages, e.g. using the KIAP corpus (Dahl, 2008), are often considered to fall into the field of contrastive rhetoric (Ebeling, 2016), or intercultural rhetoric (Connor, 2004). Studies within this field have found that languages have distinctive features that differentiate their argumentative patterns from one another (e.g. Hinds, 2011; Holliday, 1999; Mauranen, 1993a; Valero-Garces, 1996). Corpus studies that compare lexis and grammar across languages have shown, for example, that although similar forms may be used in two languages, these may convey different meanings (e.g. Aijmer & Hasselgård, 2015; Hasselgård, 2012; Johansson, 2007). Other studies have found that the use of specific features can vary across languages, such as personal pronouns (Fløttum et al., 2013), resultative connectors (Altenberg, 2007), and evaluative features (Shaw, 2003).

One of the important implications of this body of research is that, by reflecting on the rhetorical patterns that typify their L1, language learners can recognise and adapt to the rhetorical traditions of the target language (e.g. Enkvist, 1997; Kubota, 1998). However, the idea that rhetorical patterns are bound to so-called "big" cultures has been criticised for being too reductive (Atkinson & Sohn, 2013; see section 2.1.3). Supporting this criticism are studies that have found rhetorical patterns to differ across "small" cultures, such as genres (e.g. Taylor & Goodall,

2019; Virtanen & Halmari, 2005) and academic fields (e.g. Fløttum et al., 2006; Samraj, 2002). These findings imply the importance of considering to which "small culture" a language learner may be aiming to claim membership (Dahl, 2008; Hyland, 2003; Moreno, 2021).

Learner corpora, such as the ICLE (Granger, 1998) and the CORYL (Hasselgreen & Sundet, 2018) have been used to investigate a variety of linguistic phenomena in texts written in educational settings (e.g. Biber et al., 2020; Chandler, 2003; Farrokhi & Sattarpour, 2012; Malmström et al., 2018). One of the main goals of this research is to map out how written proficiency develops among language learners. This kind of investigation has been approached in several ways, for example, by comparing L1 and L2 speakers (e.g. Friginal et al., 2014; Herriman, 2009; Tåkvist, 2016), by comparing less proficient with more proficient L2 speakers (e.g. Jiang et al., 2019; Maxwell-Reid & Kartika-Ningsih, 2020; Vo, 2019), and by tracking the progress of a group of language learners over time (e.g. Vyatkina et al., 2015). These studies have tended to report that the perceived quality of a piece of writing is associated with measures of, for example, fluency (Reynolds, 2005), grammatical accuracy (Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998), syntactic complexity (Crossley & McNamara, 2014), and lexical richness (Lemmouh, 2008).

Findings from studies that have used learner corpora hold a number of pedagogical implications for writing instructors. Firstly, although native speakers also face certain challenges when learning to write (e.g. Cortes, 2002), language learners face a distinctive set of challenges (Gilquin et al., 2007). These challenges can be related to, for example, semantics (Altenberg & Granger, 2001; Kaneko, 2005), sequences of words (De Cock, 2004), and grammatical structures (Liu & Xu). Thus, these findings can help to pinpoint which features L2 writing instructors need to address in their feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Gaskell & Cobb, 2004; Kang & Hang, 2015). Furthermore, based on these kinds of findings, there have been calls to formulate standards for writing in English as a Lingua Franca (e.g. Simensen, 2013), and even that

standards should be created for specific groups of language learners, e.g. learners with a Romance-language background (Granger, 2009; Jenkins, 2005).

Metadiscourse-related studies do not usually use standardised measures, such as those used to measure syntactic complexity and grammatical accuracy (e.g. Thomson, 2018). Instead, these studies usually quantify metadiscourse features per 1,000 words in order to compare how these features are used across various communicative contexts (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014; Ädel, 2017). The present study follows the same approach, by which metadiscourse features are quantified in order to explore how upper secondary pupils signal textual relations and express their authorial stance. The intention behind this relatively small-scale study is to produce results that are of value, especially to applied linguists and English teachers.

2.3.2 Metadiscourse across languages

Studies have sought to investigate metadiscoursal features across different languages (Mauranen, 1993b; Mur-Dueñas, 2011), usually focusing on academic writing. Metadiscourse practices have been investigated in a number of languages besides English, including Chinese (Mu et al., 2015), Spanish (Mur-Duenãs, 2011), and Finnish (Mauranen, 1993a). Findings have generally indicated that metadiscourse demands vary across languages, which may be attributed to cultural values and practices.

One distinction that can be made between languages is whether they are writer-responsible or reader-responsible (Hinds, 2011). In a writer-responsible language, the writer is expected to explicitly guide the reader through the content of the text. In a reader-responsible language, readers are expected to decode the writer's message with minimal guidance. Mu et al. (2015), for example, found that articles written in English contained more stance markers than articles written in Chinese, suggesting that the

latter is more reader-responsible, as readers are left to interpret the writer's views for themselves. Investigating signposting, Dahl (2004) found that articles written in French relied on fewer organisational devices than English and Norwegian. This indicates that French is a reader-responsible language since readers are expected to navigate the unfolding text with minimal guidance from the writer.

A handful of studies have compared the use of metadiscourse in Scandinavian languages with English (e.g. Blagojevic, 2004; Dahl, 2004; Hasselgård, 2016; Herriman, 2014; Ädel, 2006). The findings suggest that Scandinavian writers tend to use metadiscourse at similar frequencies to British authors, both when writing in their first language and when writing in English (Blagojevic, 2004; Dahl, 2004). One exception was Herriman (2014), who found a greater reliance on stance features in Swedish texts. This was considered to indicate that Swedish tends to be of a more informal register than English, as the Swedish writers tended to boost claims and use personal pronouns more frequently. Nevertheless, Herriman (2014, p. 29) concluded that "Swedish is similar to English in being a writer-responsible writing culture".

However, the writer- and reader-oriented distinction is based on the assumption that features of writing are determined by "big" cultures (Connor, 2004). Consequently, claiming that certain metadiscourse features typify the written practices of a particular language seems overly reductive when considering that, within a single language, metadiscoursal demands vary depending on given contexts, purposes and audiences (Bazerman, 2014). Instead of teaching pupils about written conventions that may be connected to "big" cultures, raising consciousness of the conventions that characterise written communication across "small" cultures (or discourse communities) might be more conducive to cultivating intercultural competence (Udir., 2006; Bennett, 2013).

2.3.3 Metadiscourse in professional communities

Previous studies have investigated the use of metadiscourse in a wide range of professional communities. The term *professional* is used here to denote that the texts being studied were either published or used in professional work settings. The communities represented in these studies include academia (Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015; Cao & Hu, 2014; Hu & Cao, 2015; Rahman, 2004; Triki, 2019; Yavari & Kashani, 2013), journalism (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Khabbazi-Oskouei, 2013; Tarrayo, 2014), law (e.g. Ángeles Orts, 2016), and business (e.g. Fuertes-Olivera, 2001; Hyland, 1998; Mocanu, 2015). These studies demonstrate that metadiscourse plays an integral role in written communication among all of these communities. However, in order to become accepted members of a given community, writers have to adhere to idiosyncratic metadiscoursal demands that reflect the purposes and values of the types of writing on which those communities rely.

Of the types of writing that have been investigated in metadiscourse-related studies, it is probably published, professional genres, particularly academic ones, that have received the most research attention (Ädel, 2018). Studies have investigated the metadiscoursal features of writing in a range of academic fields, for example pure mathematics (McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012), medicine (Salager-Meyer, 1994), linguistics (Dahl, 2004), and philosophy (Hyland, 2019). Certain features seem to be shared by writing in all academic disciplines, such as frequent use of code glosses to explicitly mark examples (Cao & Hu, 2014). However, disciplines are each characterised by their own metadiscourse features. For example, the interpretative nature of soft sciences, like applied linguistics, means that authors more frequently use hedges to mark tentativeness when making knowledge claims, compared with more evidence-based argumentation in hard sciences, such as engineering (e.g. Keshvarz & Kheirieh, 2012; Hyland, 2019).

Besides those that focus on academic writing, a number of studies have aimed to investigate metadiscourse use across genres. Ho (2018) found workplace e-mails to contain significantly more stance markers than signposts, indicating that e-mail writing requires less explicit organisational guidance than, for example, academic discourse in which these features are usually more balanced (Gholami & Ilghami, 2016). Hempel and Degand (2008) found that academic articles used higher frequencies of sequencing markers than journalistic writing and fiction writing, the latter containing the fewest sequencers. This suggests that explicitly guiding readers is an important objective for writers of informational, non-fiction genres. Fu and Hyland (2014) compared stance markers in popular science articles and in opinion pieces, finding that authors of popular science articles carefully persuaded their audience by hedging scientific claims while avoiding questions and first-person pronouns, thus allowing scientific findings to speak for themselves. Authors of opinion pieces, on the other hand, addressed their audience directly, asked questions, and boosted claims to argue for the relevance of their views (Fu & Hyland, 2014, p. 24-25). These studies illustrate how metadiscourse can vary according to the pragmatic demands of a particular communicative context, which can, among other benefits, provide useful insight for teachers looking to train students in adapting to a given communicative context.

2.3.4   Metadiscourse in tertiary and pre-tertiary writing

A considerable body of research has investigated metadiscourse in tertiary-level writing (Çandarlı et al., 2015; Hasselgård, 2016; Ho & Li, 2018; Ädel, 2006). Comparing professional and student academic writing, Hasselgård (2016, p. 127) found the former to contain lower frequencies of organisational metadiscourse, suggesting that it was more reader-responsible than student writing. This may reflect that professional academic writers assume that their target readers are members of the same discourse community and therefore enter the text

with a certain level of shared knowledge. Tertiary level writing, on the other hand, requires students to demonstrate their subject knowledge to teachers and examiners. Nevertheless, like professional writing, student writing has been found to vary based on the communicative context. Qin and Uccelli (2019), for example, found that novice writers more frequently used devices to directly engage their audience in colloquial than in academic writing.

Studies that have investigated the metadiscoursal features in high and low-rated tertiary-level essays have tended to find that certain practices are related to more successful writing (e.g. Ho & Li, 2018; Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1996; Lee & Deakin, 2016). For example, Ho and Li (2018) found that higher-rated argumentative essays contained greater frequencies of hedges than did lower rated essays. This illustrates the rhetorical importance of mitigating claims in order to recognise the possibility of alternative interpretations. Not only does this recognise the potential for other perspectives, it establishes a more convincing author persona (Hyland, 1998b). This probably stems from Socratic traditions, which emphasise the value of doubt and inquiry (Tweed & Lehman, 2002).

Research on academic writing at the tertiary level has also found that metadiscourse is used differently by learners of English compared with native speakers. Scandinavian-based studies of tertiary-level writing report that students who speak English as an additional language are found to use more organisational metadiscourse than native speakers (Hasselgård, 2016; Ädel, 2006). This contrasts with the aforementioned studies that found metadiscourse to feature similarly in professional writing. In order to account for these findings, Ädel (2006, p. 154) proposed several explanations that might account for these differences, four of which are outlined here. Firstly, the Swedish writers may have been more heavily influenced by spoken conventions. Secondly, they may have been more metalinguistically aware, which in turn stimulated a greater reliance on metadiscoursal features. Thirdly, the learners may

have used metadiscourse markers that explicitly signal textual relations in order to increase their word counts. Finally, students from each context may have been engaging with different writing tasks, which represented different communicative purposes and writing conditions.

Previous research has also investigated the effects of explicit metadiscourse instruction on written quality at tertiary levels. By implementing peer-review and problem-solving activities in relation to a series of essay writing tasks, Cheng and Steffensen (1996) found that tertiary level students gained both better control of metadiscourse features and greater awareness of their audience. Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010) investigated the effects of explicit metadiscourse instruction on groups of elementary, intermediate and advanced groups of learners of English, reporting that all three groups responded positively to the instruction.

Of the literature reviewed, only a handful of studies (e.g. Dobbs, 2014; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Sanford, 2012) have analysed metadiscourse-related features in essays written at pre-tertiary levels. Qin and Uccelli (2019) compared metadiscourse used by high school, undergraduate and graduate students, finding, for example, that the youngest group used fewer hedges. Uccelli et al. (2013) investigated how textual quality correlates with metadiscoursal features in upper secondary persuasive essays. They found that higher frequencies of signposting devices and hedges correlated with higher quality, alluding to the teachers' values, such as good organisation and an acknowledgement of other perspectives. Since pedagogical courses often focus on training teachers to write academically, they argued that "it is not surprising that the features they would value in their students' writing are in fact core markers of organisation and stance in skilled academic writing" (Uccelli et al. 2013, p. 53). With the exception of Thomson (2018), none of the reviewed studies analysed metadiscourse in pre-tertiary English writing in a Scandinavian context.

2.3.5 Metadiscourse-related studies incorporating interviews

A handful of previous metadiscourse-related studies have incorporated interview methods in order to supplement textual analyses (Çandarlı et al., 2015; Hyland, 2004; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Tavakoli et al., 2012). These studies have provided useful perspectives on the decision-making processes that underlie text composition. For example, McGrath and Kuteeva (2012) interviewed authors in connection with an investigation of stance in pure mathematics research articles. The findings from the textual data indicated that writers within the pure mathematics discourse community employ a relatively specific set of stance and engagement conventions. The interview data supported these findings and demonstrated that the authors recognised the importance of following specific writing conventions in order to appeal to their readers and to have their work accepted by their community.

In educational contexts, interviewing speakers of English as a foreign language about their compositional decisions has proven useful for corroborating findings from textual analyses (Çandarlı et al., 2015; Hyland, 2004; Tavakoli et al., 2012). By interviewing tertiary level learners of English, Çandarlı et al. (2015) found, for example, that students used boosters for rhetorical effect, and that they used attitude markers to capture their readers' attention, which explained the high frequencies of these features in their corpus. By complementing a textual analysis with data from interviews held with expert informants representing the disciplines included in his study, Hyland (2004) demonstrated how L2 post-graduate students were in the process of being socialised into their respective discourse communities. While these students were conscious of some of the metadiscourse features that typify written genres within their respective disciplines, there were certain metadiscourse features that the students were less confident of using. For example, they were unsure of the extent to which they should use self-mentions, which were often considered by the students to be

inappropriate in academic writing, where writers were expected to be formal and objective.

None of the reviewed metadiscourse-related studies have incorporated teacher interviews, focusing instead on the perspectives of authors. However, teacher interviews have been incorporated into studies that take broader approaches to essay writing (Beck et al., 2018; Lea & Street, 1998; Mahalski, 1992; Monte-Sano, 2015; Wingate, 2012). Such studies have uncovered features that teachers value in essay writing. For example, Mahalski (1992) found that teachers require that, in order to achieve high grades, students establish a logical line of reasoning. In contrast, Lea and Street (1998, p. 162) reported that, although teachers valued essay structure, they were unable to identify how an essay "lacked" structure. These studies indicate that interviewing teachers holds potential for obtaining a more complete understanding of metadiscourse use in essays written at upper secondary schools. Consequently, the present study incorporated teacher interviews into the methodological design to supplement the textual analysis.

3   Methods

This chapter describes the methods for collecting and analysing the data. This study mainly involved collecting and analysing essays written by upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian, Swedish and British schools. The textual analysis was supplemented by data collected from interviews held with the pupils' English teachers. The four articles draw on the same data sets to varying degrees, but each article offers a different perspective on the role of metadiscourse in the pupils' upper secondary essay writing. This chapter provides a detailed account of the procedures for collecting and analysing the data, as well as the measures that were taken regarding ethics, validity and reliability.

3.1   Research design

The following methodology was devised in order to address the overarching research question and the second, subordinate question:

- What types, frequencies and functions of metadiscourse are present in upper secondary English essays written in L1 (UK) and L2 (Norway and Sweden) educational contexts?
- What connections can be drawn between the pupils' use of metadiscourse and teachers' reported instructional practices?

In order to investigate metadiscourse in upper secondary essay writing, the study incorporated a partially mixed sequential dominant status design (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). Partially mixed refers to the textual and interview data being collected and analysed separately and then mixed at the stage of data interpretation. Sequential refers to the textual and interview data being generated at different times. Although the textual data were usually collected at roughly the same time as the interviews were held, the essays were usually written several weeks prior. Dominant status means, in this case, that the results from the

textual analysis were ascribed more weight than those from the teacher interviews.

For the textual analysis, types and sub-categories of metadiscourse were identified and quantified in a corpus of upper secondary pupil essays which was collected from schools in Norway, Sweden and the UK. The frequencies were used to identify trends in the data. These trends hold implications for understanding how upper secondary pupils in the three educational contexts used metadiscourse markers and for how these reflected the purposes of the genres represented in the data.

The textual analysis was supplemented by data from interviews held with 19 English teachers based at the participating schools. These teachers were responsible for teaching and evaluating the participating pupils. Despite researchers advocating the use of interviews to support metadiscourse-based textual analyses (Hyland, 2019; Mur Dueñas, 2010), few of the reviewed studies incorporated interviews in their designs (with exceptions, such as Hyland, 2004; Thomson, 2016), relying instead on quantitative analyses (e.g. Dahl, 2004; Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Hryniuk, 2018; Hu & Cao, 2014; Qin & Uccelli, 2019). The studies that have incorporated interview data have mainly focused on investigating the perceptions of professional authors who represent the discourse community under study (e.g. Harwood, 2005; Jaroenkitboworn, 2014; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012). For the purposes of this study, teachers were interviewed about the kinds of metadiscourse-related advice they offered their pupils for writing essays. Of the studies of tertiary and pre-tertiary writing that were reviewed, this is the first to interview teachers about their metadiscourse-related instructional practices.

The purpose of collecting these two data sets was to achieve completeness. This refers to the researcher's intent on bringing "together a more comprehensive account of the area of inquiry" (Bryman, 2006, p. 106). Since the essays were collected from an educational setting which

has previously received little research attention, it was considered important to explore both the pupils' use of metadiscourse markers and the teachers' approaches to instruction about these features. The pupils' use of metadiscourse and the teachers' practices are two distinctly different facets in these educational contexts. The former provides insight into the metadiscourse features upon which pupils rely at this educational level. The latter provides insight into the metadiscourse-related advice that teachers provide their pupils and the degree to which these textual features are prioritised. Supplementing the textual data with the interview data was considered conducive to identifying the connections between the pupils' use of metadiscourse and their teachers' instructional practices.

Certain outcomes could be predicted based on previous research findings, which have generally found metadiscourse to vary across educational contexts and genres (Blagojevic, 2004; Çandarlı et al., 2015; Dahl, 2004; Dobbs, 2014; Fu & Hyland, 2014; Hempel & Degand, 2008; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Qin & Uccelli, 2019; Uccelli et al., 2013). For example, based on Ädel's (2006) findings, it could be predicted that the pupils based at Norwegian and Swedish schools would rely to a greater extent on signposts (see section 2.3.4). However, although similarities can be drawn between the present study and previous studies, this is the first to collect and analyse essays written specifically by upper secondary pupils attending British and Scandinavian schools. Furthermore, the use of inferential statistics is limited due to the number of confounding variables in the data (only article 4 relied on inferential statistics). Thus, this project focused instead on exploring the pupils' use of stance and signposting markers and on exploring the teachers' general advice regarding these features. The articles tentatively suggest connections between the use of metadiscourse and certain variables, such as educational context, genre, and the teachers' reported practices, which can offer useful insights for writing instructors and open avenues for future inquiries. The exploratory orientation of this project means that

the primary aim was not to test a particular hypothesis (Johnson & Christiansen, 2017).

3.2   The sampling process

The research involved visiting upper secondary schools in order to collect a corpus of pupil texts and to hold interviews with English teachers. Over 90 schools in Norway, Sweden and the UK were contacted via e-mail. Some schools were randomly selected while others were contacted via the affiliated university's pre-existing network. In order to be selected, schools had to offer final year upper-secondary courses in an English-related subject. Overall, 14 schools (six in Norway, three in Sweden, and five in the UK) agreed to contribute to the data collection. Most of these were schools that were contacted via the university's affiliated network. Of the schools that declined to participate, many responded that, due to busy schedules, teachers could not dedicate time to the data collection. This sample can therefore be described as a non-random convenience sample (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

The pupils involved were all completing their final year of upper-secondary school and had opted to take subjects in English. Since the Norwegian, Swedish and British education systems offer different courses, pupils from a range of courses were involved in the study. Pupils in Norway were taking courses in either "Social Studies English" or "English Literature and Culture" (Udir., 2006). Both courses are taught exclusively in the final year of upper secondary education. Social Studies English focuses on political and historical issues, particularly in English-speaking countries, such as Great Britain and the United States of America. On the English literature and culture course, pupils are required to read and interpret literary works from the Renaissance period to the present day. Both courses require that pupils develop their text analytical and essay writing skills, whereby pupils have to demonstrate their ability to outline, elaborate on, and discuss relevant issues across a range of text

types, demonstrating a command of appropriate, specialised language use.

The Swedish system only offers one upper secondary course in English, which is called "English 7" (Skolverket, 2019). While the courses in Norway focus on either social studies or literature, English 7 encompasses both. The course also aims to teach English related to the pupils' chosen lines of study.[1] For essays, pupils are required to formulate balanced discussions of the issues at hand while adapting their style to the target genre and exhibiting a fluent and accurate command of the language (Skolverket, 2020, p. 14).

Since schools in the UK subscribe to different exam boards, pupils are potentially able to choose from a wide range of English-related subjects. Two of these subjects were represented in this project: English language (AQA, 2019), and creative writing (AQA, 2013). As with other A-level subjects, these subjects were split into two levels: the first is referred to as the AS-level and the second as the A2-level. The pupils involved in this project were all completing their final year of upper secondary education, which means they were at the A2-level. In the A2 English language subject, there is a focus on linguistics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis. The learning aims related to writing in the AQA specification include "writing discursively about language issues in an academic essay" and "writing about language issues in a variety of forms" (AQA, 2019, p. 18). In the A2 creative writing subject, the focus is on learning to write and to share creative works across a range of genres (AQA, 2013, p. 9). Pupils are also required to write a "commentary" in which they discuss their personal experiences and inspirations in composing their creative pieces (AQA, 2013, p. 2). Since

---

[1] Whereas pupils in the UK choose each of their subjects (usually four subjects), pupils in both Norway and Sweden choose specialised programs within, for example, humanities or economics. Besides studying their specialised subjects, they are obliged to take several other compulsory courses, such as English and mathematics.

this project focuses on non-fiction writing, these commentaries were the essays from this course that were collected.

The Norwegian, Swedish and British educational systems have different ways of grouping pupils by age. In Norway and Sweden, final year upper secondary pupils are aged 18-19 years. In the UK, final year pupils are aged 17-18 years. Rather than grouping pupils by age, the pupils involved in the study were all completing their final year of upper secondary school. Since many previous studies have addressed tertiary level writing (e.g. Çandarlı et al., 2015; Hasselgård, 2016; Ho & Li, 2018; Ädel, 2006), it was considered that investigating essay writing at the educational level directly preceding the tertiary level could provide valuable insight for both upper secondary-level and tertiary-level teachers.

In order to supplement the textual analysis, interviews were held with 19 English teachers based at the 14 participating schools: eight in Norway, four in Sweden, and seven in the UK. These teachers were teaching English to the participating pupils. They all had tertiary-level degrees in either English language, English literature, or both, and were qualified teachers. The number of years of teaching experience among them ranged from four to 37 years. All teachers gave written consent before partaking in the interviews.

3.3 Collecting and analysing the text corpus

This section outlines the data collection, the adapted taxonomy, the text analysis methods, and ethical considerations concerning the corpus of essays.

3.3.1 Building the corpus

In order to collect data, I visited each of the participating schools in order to collect essays and hold interviews with the English teachers. In total,

282 non-fiction essays written by 214 pupils were collected. These essays were written using Microsoft Word for school evaluations set by teachers and written by pupils who had opted to take English subjects. Although some pupils chose not to share metadata, and some pupils had different L1 backgrounds and home languages, the majority reported having Norwegian, Swedish or English as their L1, respectively. All of the pupils were considered proficient enough in English to attend the mainstream English classes in their respective educational contexts.

In order to build a corpus, one should consider whether the collected data accurately represents the groups that are of interest and ensure that the amount of data across those groups is balanced (Ädel, 2021). For this study, the data are intended to represent upper secondary pupils of English from each of the educational contexts. Furthermore, the collected essays represent the kinds of assignments that the pupils would usually write, and the different L1 backgrounds among the pupils somewhat represent the linguistic diversity in the classes that English teachers tend to work with in these educational contexts. These parameters were prioritised over having essays written under conditions controlled by the researcher for several reasons. Firstly, the aim was to explore the types of metadiscourse on which upper secondary pupils rely. Thus, the writing assignments and writing conditions set by the teachers were considered an authentic representation of the kinds of writing with which upper secondary pupils usually engage. Additionally, it is likely that fewer schools would have agreed to participate had I asked teachers across all three educational contexts to devote class time to writing essays under predetermined conditions for a single assignment set by the researcher. Secondly, although it may have been more manageable to collect essays from a homogeneous group of pupils in each of the educational contexts, there is some scholarly disagreement regarding whether native speakers of English have an advantage, particularly regarding academic writing (Hyland, 2016; Ortega, 2019; Politzer-Ahles et al., 2016). For this study, it was considered that a pupil's mother

tongue would not necessarily predict their written competence. Instead, it was assumed that upper secondary pupils who opt to take English courses for the final year of their upper secondary schooling, including those for whom English was an L2, would be proficient enough to contribute essays to the present study.

Instead of requesting that essays be written for a preconceived prompt under preconceived conditions, teachers at the participating schools were asked to provide pupil essays that belonged to non-fiction genres. This follows the majority of previous studies, which have aimed to identify metadiscourse features in non-fiction texts (Arrese, 2015; Herriman, 2014; Hyland, 2019; Orts, 2019; Qin & Uccelli, 2019; Salas, 2015; Ädel, 2006), with a few exceptions (Hempel & Degand, 2008; Sadeghi & Esmaili, 2012). Thus, the essays were written in connection with various English courses that pupils could opt to take in each of the educational contexts.

Within the data collected, five main genres were identified: political essays, literary essays, commentaries, linguistic investigations, and opinion pieces. Flowerdew (2011, p. 140) defines genre as "staged, structural communicative events, motivated by various communicative purposes, and performed by members of specific discourse communities" (see section 2.1.4). Although the pupils participating in this study were unlikely to be fully-fledged members of specific discourse communities, it can be argued that they were in the process of being socialised into them according to the aims of the courses that they had opted to take (Duff, 2010). Furthermore, the five genres could be grouped according to their communicative purposes, which was informed both by the prompts that pupils were given and by the content of the essays. The political essays (Norway and Sweden) were discussions of various perspectives on political events, such as the US election in 2016, and historical events, such as British colonialism. In the literary essays (Sweden), pupils aimed to discuss canonical literary works, such as "Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" by Robert Louis Stevenson, and

"1984" by George Orwell, and modern television shows, such as "Game of Thrones". The opinion pieces and linguistic investigations were written for the A-level course in English language (UK). The opinion pieces were written as either newspaper articles or political speeches, with the aim of convincing an audience of a particular viewpoint. In the linguistic investigations, pupils reported linguistic studies they had carried out. The commentary essays were written for the A-level course in creative writing (UK). In these essays, pupils reflected on their processes when writing a series of other pieces of creative coursework.

It should be noted that the essays were written under different conditions: in Norway and Sweden, pupils wrote under timed conditions, whereas in the UK, pupils wrote the essays under process-oriented conditions. The process-oriented conditions involved longer time periods (usually several weeks), during which pupils were given the opportunity to submit a draft and edit this based on teacher feedback.

In total, 282 essays were collected, which represented a broad range of communicative purposes, topics, quality, and writing conditions. Accounting for all of these variables in the analysis proved to be too complicated, so a selection of essays was chosen for each of the articles in order to maintain a balanced representation of each of the educational contexts and genres (Ädel, 2021). Article 1 reports an exploratory study, the purpose of which was to identify the categories and types of metadiscourse used at this educational level. This was carried out using a smaller preliminary sample of 56 essays prior to collecting the main sample. For articles 2 and 3, which respectively aimed to investigate signposting features, and epistemic stance and engagement features across the educational contexts and genres, the sample of 282 essays was narrowed down to 115 essays, amounting to 146,956 words. This corpus is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Total number and word counts of essays across educational contexts and genres.

	Norway	Sweden	UK	Word count
Political essay	20	20	-	31,843
Literary analysis	-	20	-	27,588
Opinion piece	-	-	20	15,148
Linguistic investigation	-	-	15	29,530
Commentary	-	-	20	42,847
Word count	18,431	41,000	87,525	146,956

Several criteria were applied in order to narrow down the corpus for each of the articles. Firstly, only essays belonging to the political essay, literary analysis essay, opinion piece, commentary and linguistic investigation genres were selected. There were eight essays belonging to the blog genre that were omitted; these were considered too few for conducting a meaningful analysis. Similarly, although literary essays were also collected from Norway (11 essays) and the UK (two essays), these were, again, too few for the purposes of this analysis.

After applying the above criteria, 261 essays written by 204 pupils remained. In other words, some pupils contributed two or more essays, but only one essay per pupil was required. In order to select one essay per pupil, each essay's genre and grade were considered. Firstly, certain genres were prioritised. For example, only 20 opinion pieces were collected from the UK, so other essays written by these pupils were omitted. From some schools, pupils submitted several essays belonging to one genre (e.g. two pupils attending Norwegian schools wrote five political essays each). In these cases, the essays that received lower grades were omitted. If a pupil had submitted two or more essays that had received the same grade, one essay was randomly selected.

After applying these selection criteria, the corpus contained 204 essays: 57 political essays (Norway), 53 political essays (Sweden), 31 literary essays (Sweden), 21 opinion pieces (UK), 15 linguistic investigations (UK), and 27 commentaries (UK). Of the commentaries, 22 were written

for a creative writing course and five were written for English language courses. Since the topics in the latter five were not about creative writing, these were omitted. Thereafter, essays were randomly selected: 20 political essays were selected from Norway, 40 from Sweden (20 political essays and 20 literary essays) and 55 from the UK (20 opinion pieces, 20 commentaries and 15 linguistic investigations). Of the essays written in Norway, 10 were split into two parts (one short answer and one long answer), which is a common format for state-issued upper secondary exams. These were treated as a single essay for the analysis.

For article 4, which aimed to investigate the use of attitude markers across contexts and genres, a slightly larger corpus (135 essays) was used. The procedures for selecting essays were similar to those described above, but statistical procedures were used that required 40 essays (instead of 20) from the Norwegian context.

3.3.2 An adapted taxonomy

The taxonomy used for the textual analysis was devised specifically to analyse this corpus of upper secondary English essays. Only a handful of previous studies have analysed texts written at this level for metadiscourse-related features (e.g. Hyland & Milton, 1998; Uccelli et al., 2013) and none of the taxonomies reviewed incorporated all of the metadiscoursal elements in the present data set. Since Ädel (2018, p. 55) argues that most metadiscourse-related research focuses on "highly visible and high-prestige genres", merely applying a model from, for example, a study of academic writing to a genre of lower visibility and lower prestige may overlook certain linguistic elements present in that material. Although adjusting taxonomies can complicate the process of comparing results from different studies, taking account of the textual data in question was considered to be essential for the purposes of this study. The process of adapting the taxonomy involved closely reading 50 essays from the present corpus, used to determine which categories from previous studies to include. The adaptation proposed here can be

considered as encompassing a broad, thin approach (Ädel & Mauranen, 2010), since its focus is on quantitatively capturing a wide a range of metadiscoursal features.

The taxonomy is split similarly to the interpersonal model (see section 2.2.3), but instead of Hyland's (2019) interactive versus interactional distinction, this taxonomy uses the labels "signposting" (e.g. Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015) and "stance" (e.g. Biber & Finegan, 2014; Hyland, 2005). The categories and sub-categories presented here are those used in articles 2, 3 and 4. The taxonomy was slightly modified after publishing article 1, based on the observed metadiscoursal content of the larger corpora.

Firstly, signposting refers to the punctuation marks, words and phrases that an author uses to explicitly guide their readers through their unfolding text (see section 2.2.1). The signposting categories and sub-categories are outlined in Table 7.

Table 7. Signposting taxonomy (adapted from Cao & Hu, 2014; Hyland, 2007a; 2019; Ädel, 2006; 2010).

(Sub-)categories	Description and *examples*
Transitions:	
Addition	Signal relations of addition: *as well, moreover*
Comparison	Signal relations of comparison/contrast: *or, although*
Inference	Signal relations of cause and effect: *in order to, therefore*
Code glosses:	
Exemplification	Signal an example is being given: *illustrate, highlight*
Reformulation	Signal a discourse unit is being reworded: *in other words*
Phoric markers:	
Pre- and review	Refer to non-proximal parts of the current text: *I will*
Enumerate	Signal how points in the text are ordered: *first, finally*
Topic markers:	
Introduction	Introduce the content of the text: *this paper aims to*
Reference to text	Reflexively refer to the current text: *this essay, project*
Topic shift	Signal a shift in topic: *in terms of, moving on*
Conclusion	Signal that conclusions are being drawn: *overall*

The signposting categories chosen are largely similar to those used by Cao and Hu (2014), but categories from Hyland (2007; 2019) and Ädel (2010) are also incorporated. The four overarching categories are transitions, code glosses, phoric markers, and topic markers. Transitions are used to signal inter-clausal relations. They were split into sub-categories based on whether they signal relations of addition, comparison, or inference (Cao & Hu, 2014).

Code glosses were split into two categories: exemplifiers and reformulators (Hyland, 2007a). Exemplifiers are used when an author is explicitly presenting an example. Reformulators are used to signal when an author rewords a prior discourse unit for explanatory value.

Phoric markers (Ädel, 2010) mark non-textual, sequential, or repetitional features. Ädel (2010) split this category into four sub-categories. One sub-category includes words that refer to textual displays, such as images, figures and tables. However, since these features were infrequent in the corpus, this sub-category was omitted. Ädel (2010) also recognised markers that refer to other parts of the current text according to whether they preview (anaphora), or review (cataphora) information. These features were relatively infrequent in the present corpus and were therefore grouped into a single pre- and review sub-category. Finally, features that explicitly mark how information is sequenced fall into the enumerator sub-category.

Finally, topic markers (Ädel, 2010) are used to reflexively refer to the unfolding text in order to identify the author's aims and to navigate through the unfolding subject matter. Introduction and conclusion markers are used to announce the writer's overall aim and indicate when they are summing up their main points, respectively. Reference to text markers (Ädel, 2006) are used to reflexively refer to the current text. Topic shift markers (Hyland, 2019) are used to explicitly mark when a writer is changing the subject. Although other sub-categories, such as "discourse labels" (Cao & Hu, 2014) and "delimiting topic" (Ädel,

2010), were considered, these were found to be infrequent in the present corpus and were thus omitted.

Turning to stance, this involves "adopting a point of view in relation to both the issues discussed in the text and to others who hold points of view on those issues" (Hyland, 2005, p. 175). It should be noted that, because a wide range of frequently used types were used to express author attitudes in the present corpus, article 4 focuses solely on these features. As a consequence, article 3 does not address features related to expressing affective reactions and is therefore conceptualised as analysing epistemic stance and engagement features (see section 4.3). For the purposes of this extended abstract, all of the stance sub-categories are presented together, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Stance taxonomy (adapted from Hinkel, 2005; Hyland, 2001; 2005; 2019; Martin, 1999; Martin & White, 2005; Mur-Dueñas, 2010; Prince et al., 1980; Salager-Meyer, 1994; Ädel, 2010)

(Sub-)category	Description and *examples*
Hedges	
Downtoners	Scale down intensity: *quite, relatively*
Rounders	Indicate exact figures are unavailable: *roughly, around*
Plausibility shields	Indicate a statement may not be true: *potential, tend*
First person hedges	Mark author tentativeness: *my opinion, I guess*
Boosters	
Amplifiers	Heighten scalar lexical intensity: *extremely, too, very*
Universals	Mark extremes of a continuum: *all, everybody, never*
Plausibility boosters	Mark author certainty: *clear, indeed, sure*
Evidentials	Mark information is externally sourced: *state, portray*
Self-mentions	Mark author involvement: *I, my, we*
Engagement markers	
Reader reference	Address the reader directly: *you, we*
Diverse strategies	Engage readers using imperative mood/asides/questions
Attitude markers	
Complexity	Describe author's perception of difficulty: *basic, hard*
Emotion	Express author's emotional response: *desperate, tense*
Morality	Attribute a social value: *dangerous, misleading*
Quality	Offer author's general assessment: *funny, important*

Hedges are features used to mark tentativeness. While some previous studies recognise different types of hedge (e.g. Hinkel, 2005; Prince et al., 1980), studies of metadiscourse tend to treat hedges as a single category (with exceptions, such as Ho & Li, 2018). For this study, four sub-categories are incorporated from Hinkel (2005), Prince et al. (1980) and Salager-Meyer (1994). Downtoners (Hinkel, 2005) are used to mitigate the force of a statement. Rounders (Prince et al., 1980) are used to mark when the exact amount or range of something is uncertain. Plausibility shields (Salager-Meyer, 1994) are used to mark epistemic uncertainty. Finally, first person hedges (originally labelled "Expressions […] which express the author's personal doubt and direct involvement"; Salager Meyer, 1994, p. 154), are used to signal an

author's active uncertainty. These occurred together with first-person pronouns (e.g. "I think"), which were classed as self-mentions.

Boosters are features used to explicitly close dialogic space, marking that a writer is strongly committed to their statements and wishes to restrict alternative interpretations (Hyland, 2019). None of the reviewed studies that analysed metadiscourse split boosters into sub-categories; this has only been done in studies that focus on boosting (Hinkel, 2005). For this taxonomy, Hinkel's (2005, p. 39) three categories (originally labelled "amplifiers", "universal and negative pronouns" and "emphatics") were adapted and modified. The labels for these three sub-categories were changed to mirror the labels used for the hedging sub-categories. Amplifiers, contrary to downtoners, are used to strengthen the intensity of an evaluation. Universals, contrary to rounders, mark the extremes of a continuum. Plausibility boosters, contrary to plausibility shields, show an author is certain of their knowledge claims. A separate "first person booster" (e.g. "I know"; akin to first person hedges) category was considered, but these features were rare in the corpus and were therefore quantified as plausibility boosters. Additionally, it could be argued that unmarked statements also close dialogic space when they tacitly assume the phenomenon in question to be fact. Although this could be an interesting research avenue (e.g. Ukagba & Idemudia Odia, 2014), operationalising and investigating the epistemic status of unmarked statements (i.e. those that contain neither boosters nor hedges) has rarely, if ever, been a goal of metadiscourse-related studies and was beyond the scope of this study.

The taxonomy also accounts for how negation can switch a booster to a hedge and vice versa (see article 3). For example, the word "sure" would usually be classed as a plausibility booster, but it becomes a plausibility hedge when preceded by "not":

1) I wanted to cut it out, but was*n't sure* if the script would be too confusing without it. (Commentary, UK)

Another example is the word "so", which would usually function as an amplifier, but functions as a downtoner when it is negated:

2) In the USA the popular vote is *not so* important. (Political essay, Norway)

Evidentials mark when an author is drawing on extra-textual sources. It should be noted that evidentials have been classed as signposts in previous studies (Cao & Hu, 2014; Hyland, 2019), which view evidentials as useful for orienting the reader as to when a writer is drawing on extra-textual voices. However, evidentials do not otherwise serve an overtly organisational role. In other words, they do not provide readers with information about where they are in the unfolding text. On the other hand, by bringing other voices into the text, evidentials function persuasively not only by proving the writer's knowledge of anterior writings, but also by aligning with or opposing others' views with the goal of promoting the writer's own. In this study, evidentials were therefore considered to function primarily as stance markers following, for example, Dafouz-Milne (2008) and Ifantidou (2005).

Self-mentions are features used to refer to the writer. In this study, the words recognised as self-mentions are first and third person pronouns. Previous studies have also split self-mentions into sub-categories (e.g. Hyland, 2001), but these are not included here as such categorisations seem to be devised for analysing academic writing, and sub-categories such as "self-citation" and "procedural explanations" were not prominent in the corpus of upper secondary essays.

Engagement markers are features used by writers to explicitly interact with readers (Hyland, 2005). Previous studies have tended to treat questions, directives and asides as separate sub-categories (e.g. Hyland, 2008; Jiang & Ma, 2019; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012). However, these features were infrequent in the present corpus and were therefore grouped as a single sub-category of diverse strategies. Questions were identified by searching for the question mark. Directives and asides each

had a set of types that functioned either to instruct readers or to offer extra information. Reader references are used by writers to directly refer to their readers using second or third person pronouns. These features occurred relatively frequently and were therefore treated as a separate sub-category.

Attitude markers express an author's personal, affective reaction to the material in question (Mur-Dueñas, 2010). Previous studies have tended to recognise roughly 70 attitude marker types (e.g. Ho & Li, 2018) that are treated as a single category. However, 218 attitude marker types were recognised in the present corpus. Based on Martin and White (2005) and Mur-Dueñas (2010), these types were grouped into one of four attitude marker sub-categories: complexity, emotion, morality and quality. Complexity markers mark an author's perceived difficulty of a given activity or situation (e.g. understandable, challenging). Emotion markers express an author's emotional response (e.g. loved, shocking). Morality markers express an author's perception of social value (e.g. moral, racist). Quality markers encompass a wide range of markers that are used to offer an author's assessment (e.g. entertaining, serious). Since there were such a wide range and high frequency of attitude markers, a separate article (article 4) was devoted to reporting results pertaining to this category (see Chapter 4).

3.3.3 Textual analysis

The textual analysis involved four steps: adapting the taxonomy, scanning the corpus (first electronically and then manually), calculating frequencies of each sub-category, and then identifying trends of how markers were used in the essays by analysing the concordance lines. In order to adapt the taxonomy, 50 essays were closely read in order to identify the categories and types that would likely be prominent in the full corpus. For the close reading, at least one essay belonging to each genre written at each school was randomly selected. Thereafter, further essays were added to this sample where required. For example, in order

to confirm that the commentary genre encompassed an overtly personal style of writing, further commentaries were closely read. The trial-and-error process of adapting the taxonomy involved several iterations of compiling search terms and scanning the corpus. In order to cast a wide net, search terms from previous studies were included, despite not being found during the close reading, as well as conjugations of each search term. The list of search terms was adjusted for the purposes of each article, based on the results that were retrieved. In total, over 1,000 types of metadiscourse were used to conduct the analyses in all four articles. Only those terms found to function as metadiscourse were reported. For example, although 668 search terms were initially compiled for the analysis of epistemic stance and engagement (see article 3), only 543 of these were found to fulfil stance functions in the data material. It should be noted that, while some previous studies have used search terms to identify larger metadiscoursal units (e.g. Ädel, 2006), the search terms themselves (the punctuation marks, words and phrases) are considered to be the metadiscoursal units in this project.

The corpus was electronically scanned using the concordancing function in the corpus analysis tool, #Lancsbox (Brezina et al., 2015). Although other tools were considered (e.g. Wordsmith Tools, Scott, 2020; Antconc, Anthony, 2019), #Lancsbox was chosen. #Lancsbox is freeware that allows users to upload corpora that can quickly be retrieved. To scan the corpus, search terms were sorted by sub-category and used to scan the essays. The resulting concordance lines were copied into Microsoft Excel and the hits were manually analysed. If hits were part of a quote, or did not function as metadiscourse, they were discounted from the analysis. To illustrate, extract 3 contains a number of markers that were discounted due to their being part of a quote. Extract 4 contains an instance of "could", which can function as a plausibility hedge, but functioned as a modal verb of ability.

3) Dorian says to Lord Henry […] "*You* are *certainly my best* friend. *No one* has *ever* understood *me as you* have" (Literary essay, Sweden)

4) One thing I liked in his work was how he *could* ask questions and immediately offer an answer for them. (Commentary, UK)

None of the markers were counted as belonging to more than one sub-category. For example, in extract 5, "I" was counted as a self-mention and "believe" was counted as a first-person hedge:

5) *I believe* this is what drives people to be sexist (Opinion piece, UK)

The polysemic types "just" and "only" were found to function as amplifiers (6), universals (7), and downtoners (8). These two types were analysed separately to ensure that they were categorised correctly.

6) The statistics found on www.opensecrets.org/industries illustrates *just* how big the sums of money are. (Political essay, Norway)

7) It is clear that technology in modern society, isn't going anywhere. In fact, it will *only* keep on advancing. (Opinion piece, UK)

8) This is nothing more than *just* a common phrase used to tease people that are acting selfish. (Political essay, Sweden)

Once the manual analysis was complete, the frequencies of each sub-category in each text were calculated. Initially, I counted metadiscourse features per 100 words (see articles 1 and 4), but later counted markers per 1,000 words (see articles 2 and 3). This change was made because low frequencies were easier to interpret when calculated per 1,000 words than when calculated per 100 words. For each individual essay, the frequencies of each sub-category were entered into SPSS (IBM corp. 2017), which was used to calculate the means and standard deviations of each sub-category.

Using the frequencies and the concordance lines, trends in how upper secondary pupils use metadiscourse markers were identified. In some cases, these trends suggest how certain sub-categories may vary across educational contexts and genres. However, a number of confounding variables (e.g. writing conditions, L1 backgrounds) restricted the use of inferential statistics, so the findings are mainly used to offer preliminary insights and suggest avenues for future research.

Statistical tests were used for investigating the pupils' use of attitude markers across educational contexts and genres in article 4. Descriptive tests were conducted to check whether the data met assumptions of normality. Several categories were identified that did not meet these assumptions. This was due to high levels of skewness and/or kurtosis. The data still did not meet assumptions of normality when it was transformed (using both the log10 and reciprocal transformations; Field, 2018). Thus, non-parametric tests (the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal Wallis test) were used to compare metadiscourse features across the educational contexts and genres. Although some sub-categories met assumptions of normality, non-parametric tests were used for all sub-categories in order to ensure that the analysis was manageable. In dealing with data that do not meet assumptions of normality, non-parametric tests rank the scores of a target variable and compare whether the given groups within these rankings are significantly different. In order to report results from these tests, the median and median absolute deviation were used. The alpha value, which is the probability of drawing false conclusions, was set at $p < .05$. P-values[2] of $p < .01$ were considered to be highly significant. When running the Kruskal Wallis test, which compares scores across three or more groups, there is a risk of Type I error. This is when the null hypothesis is incorrectly rejected, often as a consequence of comparing scores across several small groups. In order

---

[2] P-values represent the probability that significant results were randomly produced. A p-value of $p < .05$ indicates that there is a 5% chance that the null hypothesis has been falsely rejected.

to avoid Type I error, the Bonferroni correction was applied (Field, 2018), which involves adjusting the p-value according to the number of hypotheses being tested.

3.3.4 Corpus compilation ethics

Since some of the participants were under 18 years of age, and since interviews were audio recorded, this project was registered with the Norwegian centre for research data (NSD, 2020; see appendix E). In connection with the collection of essays, each pupil (regardless of their age) filled out and signed a consent form. This contained information about the project and about how their data would be handled (see Appendix B). The pupils were informed that data would be stored on a password-protected hard drive that would not be connected to the internet, and that their contributions would be reported anonymously. They were able to choose whether or not they wanted to share information about their gender, their mother tongue, the number of years they had attended schools in the country in question and the grade they received for their work. The consent form listed my e-mail address and pupils were informed that they could request their data to be deleted at any time.

One part of the school visit procedure was to transfer pupil essays to a password-protected pen drive, following NSD guidelines. However, various issues arose in completing this step. One issue was that the password-protected pen drive was not compatible with Mac computers, so an ordinary pen drive was temporarily used. Another issue arose when teachers had not collected the essays prior to my arrival, so they could not be transferred to the pen drive. As a solution, some teachers sent the essays by post and some sent them via e-mail. In the latter situation, teachers were informed that the essays should not be available on the internet, but if e-mail was the easiest solution, we agreed that I could download the essays, transfer them to the pen drive, and immediately delete the e-mail. Since the pupils' work was usually uploaded to online

platforms (e.g. itslearning), teachers did not perceive this to be an ethical issue.

A final issue with collecting and handling data of this nature is that pupils may write sensitive information in their essays. For example, one pupil conducted a linguistic investigation that investigated their younger siblings' language use. In cases like these, sensitive data were anonymised prior to conducting any analysis in order to protect the privacy of persons that were not participants in the study.

3.4 Collecting and analysing the interview data

In order to interview teachers about their metadiscourse-related practices, a semi-structured interview guide was designed for the project (Mackey & Gass, 2016; see Appendix D). Previous metadiscourse-related studies that drew on interview data (Alyousef & Picard, 2011; Hyland, 2004; Tavakoli et al., 2012) were consulted in the process of compiling the interview guide. However, previous studies have focused on interviewing authors about their metadiscourse-related writing strategies. In contrast, this study used interviews with upper secondary English teachers regarding their metadiscourse-related instructional practices, so the interview guide had to be adjusted accordingly.

Interviews were held in English with the teachers at their respective schools on the same day as the essay data were collected. This was time-efficient, and it was considered that the teachers' schools would be ideal environments for the purposes of these interviews. Prior to arriving, the teachers were informed that the interviews would take roughly one hour and that they should take place in a private room.

A handheld audio recorder was used to record the interviews. This was a dedicated audio recorder that was not connected to the internet. I did not take notes during the interviews, as it was thought this would interrupt the flow of the conversation. The interviews were semi-

structured so that digressions from the interview guide could be made to ask follow-up questions, or to reformulate questions that the participants interpreted in ways that were not anticipated. For the purposes of avoiding confusion, specialised terminology was kept to a minimum. For example, since signposting and stance are not widely recognised terms, the words "organisation" and "argumentation" were used, respectively. Questions were also asked about the teachers' backgrounds and about their general assessment practices regarding essay writing.

Overall, roughly 19 hours of interview data were collected. Since the main focus of the study was on the textual analysis, it was not feasible to transcribe the interviews in full. Instead, the participants' answers to each question were summarised and quotes that illustrated their answers were transcribed. For some questions, it was possible to summarise the answers as encompassing simply "yes", "no" or "unclear". These answers were also supplemented with direct quotes from the interviews.

The interview data were compared with the results from the textual analysis. This was done in order to identify connections between the textual results and the teachers' reported practices. Interview results were reported in connection with the analyses of signposting and of epistemic stance and engagement in articles 2 and 3. Since these articles each focus on different aspects of metadiscourse, data obtained from sub-sections of the interview guide were utilised. In article 2, which focused on signposting, answers to the following questions were reported:

- Do you teach your pupils about text organisation? If yes, what?
- Do you teach pupils about how to organise a paragraph/overall text structure? If yes, what?
- Can you comment on how your pupils organise their texts in general? What are they good at and what problems do they face?
- Do you teach pupils about linking words? If so, how?
- Do you teach pupils about words and phrases to introduce or conclude their essays? If so, how?

In article 3, which focused on epistemic stance and engagement, answers from the following questions were reported:

- Do you teach pupils about words, such as "definitely", "everybody", "always", to make arguments assertively? If so, how?
- Do you teach pupils about words, such as "perhaps", "maybe", "roughly", to make arguments carefully? If so, how?
- Do you teach pupils about citing sources? If yes, what?
- Do you teach about using personal pronouns (e.g. "I", "my")? If so, what?
- Do you teach pupils about directly engaging their audience (e.g. by using questions or 2nd/3rd person pronouns)? If so, what?

3.4.1 Interview ethics

Before holding the interviews, the teachers were asked to sign a consent form, which contained information about the topic of discussion and about the ethical considerations (see Appendix B). The teachers were informed both orally and in writing that the interviews would be audio recorded and that only those involved in the project would have access to the audio recordings. They were informed that they would remain anonymous in the published articles. Based on NSD's guidelines, the interview data were stored on a password-protected hard drive which was to be deleted at the end of the project. Furthermore, the interviewees were informed that they could contact me at any time to request their data be deleted.

At most schools, the interviews took place in a quiet, private room. However, at some schools, private rooms were not available, so the interviews took place in a staff room. Although these conditions did not meet the prearranged requirements, they did not seem to affect the teachers' answers. Additionally, although the teachers were informed not to speak about individual pupils, one teacher mentioned a pupil's first

name. Since the pupil's last name was not mentioned and since the data were coded and stored on a password protected device, it was considered that this teacher's comments did not breach the pupil's privacy. The data from this interview were kept for the remainder of the project.

3.5 Validity and reliability

Several considerations were made to ensure that the present study produced results that were both valid and reliable (Dörnyei, 2007). Validity concerns whether a study's research methods accurately measure the phenomenon in question and whether the ensuing results can be generalised beyond the confines of the given research context. Reliability refers to whether the research methods produce consistent results that can be replicated in future studies. By combining text analysis and interview methods, this partially mixed methods design aims to offer a more complete understanding of metadiscourse in upper secondary essay writing in the educational contexts (Bryman, 2006).

Validity is often divided into two main types: internal and external. Internal validity is considered to be realised when "the outcome is a function of the variables that are measured, controlled or manipulated in the study" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 52). In order to obtain internal validity, the taxonomy of metadiscourse was adapted to the content of the essays. In order to test the taxonomy, two second raters and I analysed a sub-set of 10 essays and interrater reliability was calculated (Burke Johnsen & Christensen, 2017). Each genre and each country was represented in the sub-sample, but essays were otherwise randomly selected. Prior to analysing the sub-set of essays, a preliminary sub-set of three essays was analysed to pilot the methods. This was done to ensure that both parties agreed upon the criteria for identifying metadiscourse features belonging to each (sub-)category. For some sub-categories, a low level of agreement was retrieved. In those cases, we discussed our coding practices in order to identify the criteria or search terms that were the source of these disagreements.

One second rater was employed to analyse the majority of the sub-categories. However, after completing the analysis, several editions were made to the taxonomy. More specifically, five sub-categories were added to account for features that were observed during the analysis of the full corpus. These were the four attitude sub-categories and the topic shift sub-category (see section 3.3.2). For practical reasons, the second rater was unavailable to test these sub-categories, so another second rater was hired. These sub-categories were tested using the same 10 essays. The comparisons between the second raters' analyses and my own were used to calculate Cohen's kappa statistic (Hallgren, 2012). The relevant statistics, alongside the main considerations that were devised during the discussions, are reported in each article.

In order to ensure that the interview data were internally valid, the interview guide was created by consulting previous metadiscourse-related studies that used interview methods (Aloyousef & Picard, 2011; Tavakoli et al., 2012). Of those reviewed, Hyland (2004) was the only study that reported the interview guide, which provided a useful starting point. However, since this project involved interviewing English teachers instead of authors, the interview guide had to be modified to suit this purpose. Specialised terminology was avoided in order to prevent misconceptions, and the semi-structured nature of the interviews ensured that possible misunderstandings could be clarified.

External validity refers to the extent to which findings can be generalised to "a larger group, to other contexts or to different times" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 52). As opposed to creating a single assignment prompt for all pupils, the essays collected were written for prompts and under conditions set by English teachers, or by exam boards (e.g. AQA, 2019), which is considered to increase the generalisability of data. Although this approach may have somewhat compromised the comparability of the essays across educational contexts and genres, the collected data represent the typical assignments and writing conditions with which pupils would usually work. While the conditions under which pupils

write may vary considerably from school to school, the results of this study are thus more likely to reflect the role of metadiscourse in upper secondary essay writing beyond the present corpus. Furthermore, the teacher interviews provided insight that benefitted the interpretation of the textual data. For example, several teachers encouraged the use of boosters, which indicates that the pupils' reliance on these features may be related to teacher advice (see section 4.3).

Dörnyei (2007, p. 50) describes reliability as "the extent to which our measurement instruments and procedures produce consistent results in a given population in different circumstances". Although the taxonomy was adapted for the specific purposes of the present study and no other study has used a taxonomy identical to this one, the categories and sub-categories were amalgamated and adapted from previous studies. Furthermore, the list of search terms was compiled based on previous studies and based on the content of the present corpus. While reliability refers to the degree to which analytical tools can produce similar results among similar populations (Dörnyei, 2007), the present approach illustrates how a metadiscourse taxonomy can be adapted to the content of the target corpus. Although similar populations writing texts belonging to a single genre are likely to use similar metadiscourse features, directly applying a taxonomy and a list of search terms used for a previous study may lead to overlooking certain metadiscourse features.

Maintaining reliability in interviews can be challenging, considering that meaning is situationally co-created between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). I endeavoured to maintain reliability by entering each interview with an unbiased view and by trying to create a situation in which the participants felt they could speak candidly about their teaching practices. The interviews were held at their respective schools, which are spaces in which they are familiar and represent the contexts in which they teach. It is believed that these factors are conducive to achieving more accurate recall (Mackay & Gass, 2016). Due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews, participants were

able to digress from the interview guide as they saw fit. These measures were taken in aiming to collect results that accurately represented the teachers' practices and generate findings that could potentially be transferable to similar contexts.

4   Summary of articles

For this research project, four articles were written, each focusing on different aspects of the investigation of metadiscourse. Figure 3 illustrates the main focus of each article and the connections between them.
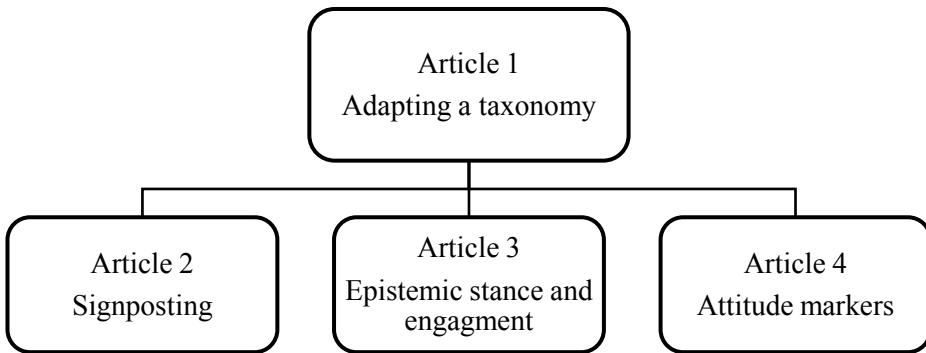
Figure 3. The main focus in each of the four articles and the connections between them.

By exploring a small corpus in order to adapt a metadiscourse taxonomy, article 1 is considered to lay the foundation for articles 2, 3 and 4, which each focus on analysing different overarching categories of metadiscourse in the corpus. The following sections offer a brief overview of each of the articles. These overviews include the main aims, research questions and findings, as well as publication details. All four articles have been through several revision cycles and are considered to be finalised, but articles 2 and 3 have not yet been submitted to journals.

4.1 Article 1: Metadiscourse in upper secondary pupil essays: Adapting a taxonomy

Thomson, J. J. (2020). Metadiscourse in upper secondary pupil essays: Adapting a taxonomy. *Nordic Journal of Literacy Research*, *6*(1), 26-48. https://doi.org/10.23865/njlr.v6.1720

While a number of previous studies have investigated metadiscourse in professional and tertiary-level writing (e.g. Ädel, 2010), few studies have investigated metadiscourse in essays written at pre-tertiary levels (e.g. Dobbs, 2014). Thus, applying a taxonomy (e.g. Hyland, 2019) from a single previous study may have overlooked features that characterise writing at the upper secondary level. In order to explore the kinds of categories and types that upper secondary pupils rely on, this article aimed to answer the following questions:

1) Which metadiscourse features are present in five genres of non-fiction English essays written by upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian and British schools?
2) How are metadiscourse features used in each of the five genres in the corpus?

This exploratory study drew on a small sample of 56 essays collected from Norwegian and British schools. A taxonomy of both stance and signposting features was adapted based on previous studies and based on the content of the essays in question. Using #Lancsbox (Brezina et al., 2020), types belonging to each of the sub-categories were used to scan the corpus. Subsequently, the frequencies of each sub-category found in each genre were calculated. The article drew on extracts from the corpus, which were used to illustrate the main trends that were observed.

The results highlighted that the upper secondary pupils relied on a wide range of categories and types of metadiscourse in order to establish their stance and signal textual relations. Furthermore, the results indicated that each genre was characterised by varying frequencies of the sub-

categories. For example, the opinion pieces contained the highest frequencies of boosters and engagement markers.

Considering the wide range of sub-categories and types of metadiscourse that were identified, this study highlights the importance of adapting a taxonomy for the purpose of analysing a corpus of pre-tertiary English essays. The taxonomy offers a comprehensive starting point for future studies aiming to investigate metadiscourse in essays written at this educational level.

4.2 Article 2: "They just waffle about the topic"? Exploring signposting in upper secondary essays in different educational contexts and genres

Manuscript to be submitted to Acta Didactica Norge

The second article focused on investigating the use of signposts in a larger sample of 115 essays. To supplement the textual analysis, the article reported results from the teacher interviews. The aim was to explore the organisational features upon which upper secondary pupils rely and to investigate whether these features were connected to the teachers' general views. The research questions were:

1) What are the (sub-)categories and types of signposts used in upper secondary level essays written in the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts?
2) How frequent are signposts and how are they used by pupils in each of the educational contexts and genres?
3) What connections can be drawn between the pupils' use of signposting and teachers' reported instructional practices?

For the study, signposting sub-categories and types were compiled by closely reading a sample of essays. Using these, the full corpus was

analysed using #Lancsbox and the mean frequencies and standard deviations of each signposting sub-category were calculated. Descriptive statistics and extracts from the corpus were used to identify the main signposting trends. The teachers' interview answers were summarised and used to report their general views about essay structure and to draw connections with the pupils' signposting practices.

The findings showed that the pupils used a wide range of signposting types belonging to 11 sub-categories in order to signal textual relations. Some of the types that were identified were informal (e.g. *down to*) or archaic spellings (e.g. *therefor*). The results indicated that pupils used signposts at similar frequencies in each of the three educational contexts. While transitions and exemplifiers tended to be highly frequent, reformulators, topic markers and phoric markers tended to be infrequent. Certain signposting sub-categories seemed to reflect the purpose of each of the genres. For example, while transitions of addition were often used in most genres to accumulate evidence to support their claims, pupils often used them in the commentaries to list their inspirations. While comparison transitions were used to align with, or counter, different viewpoints (Cao & Hu, 2014) and to appeal to readers using analogies (Aragones et al., 2014), they were also used in the literary essays as an integral part of retelling events from the literary works under discussion.

Although signposts occurred at similar frequencies across the educational contexts, teacher practices seemed to differ. In Norway and Sweden, there seemed to be a greater reliance on providing pupils with lists of linking words and on advising pupils to follow a five-paragraph essay structure. In the UK, teachers tended to report that they did not focus on teaching their pupils about organisational features, since they expected upper secondary pupils to have learned about them at an earlier stage.

Overall, the findings suggested that, on the one hand, signposting at the sentential level is a fundamental part of essay writing. On the other hand,

signposting at the structural level, especially when writing relatively short essays, may vary according to individual teacher and pupil preferences. Furthermore, although signposts appeared to occur at relatively similar frequencies across the three educational contexts, their usage reflected, to a certain extent, the purposes of each of the genres. These findings suggest that pupils at the upper secondary level in these L1 and L2 contexts could be prepared for higher level writing by learning to adapt their use of signposts to a range of genres (Tribble, 2010).

4.3 Article 3: Exploring epistemic stance and engagement in upper secondary pupil English essays

Manuscript to be submitted to Journal of Pragmatics

Article 3 reported results from an analysis of epistemic stance and engagement markers in the corpus of 115 essays. Data from the teacher interviews were used to supplement this analysis and to tentatively draw connections between the pupils' compositional decisions and the teachers' advice. The research questions were:

1) Which categories, types and frequencies of epistemic stance and engagement markers are used in a corpus of upper secondary essays collected from the Norwegian, Swedish and British educational contexts?
2) To what extent do epistemic stance and engagement markers reflect the purposes of different essay genres?
3) To what extent is the pupils' use of epistemic stance and engagement markers connected to their teachers' reported practices?

Epistemic stance and engagement sub-categories and types were compiled based on previous studies and based on a close reading of a sample of essays. #Lancsbox was used to scan the corpus with the sub-

categories and types. The frequencies and standard deviations of each sub-category were calculated for each genre. These descriptive statistics were used to identify trends regarding the use of epistemic stance and engagement markers in the corpus. These trends were exemplified using extracts from the corpus. The teachers' general views towards epistemic stance and engagement markers were reported, and connections were tentatively drawn between the interview and the textual data.

A wide range of epistemic stance and engagement features belonging to 11 sub-categories were used by the pupils in order to navigate the status of knowledge claims and anticipate reader interests and reactions. The usage of epistemic stance and engagement markers seemed to vary according to several factors. Firstly, it seemed that these features reflected somewhat the purposes of each of the genres. It also seemed that these features reflected the idiosyncratic styles of individual pupils. However, other factors seemed to affect the use of these features, such as teacher advice, essay prompts and curricula requirements.

Hedges and boosters featured prominently in the corpus and, overall, occurred at relatively similar frequencies. Their usage seemed to reflect the purposes of each of the genres. For example, plausibility hedges featured more heavily in the academic-like linguistic investigations, where pupils tentatively discussed their results. Downtoners were prominent features of the commentaries in which pupils modestly described their creative choices and abilities. These features proved to be controversial among teachers: while some reported that they encouraged the use of hedges, others reported that they encouraged the use of boosters.

While previous studies have tended to focus on analysing the use of evidentials used to cite secondary sources, this corpus contained a number of evidentials used to cite primary sources (see also Docherty, 2019), such as literary works (e.g. in the literary essays), textual data (e.g. in the linguistic investigations) and personal communications (e.g.

in the commentaries). In the interviews, teachers tended to report that they offered advice regarding the technical aspects of citing sources, but none of the teachers mentioned the difference between primary and secondary sources, the use of reporting verbs, and the importance of critically evaluating information. Of the engagement marker sub-categories, pupils seemed to rely mostly on reader references. Other strategies, such as rhetorical questions and directives, were generally infrequent. While high frequencies of self-mentions and first-person hedges were found in the commentary essays, these features were otherwise infrequent in the remaining genres. In connection with this finding, most of the teachers discouraged the use of self-mentions.

Overall, this study found that the corpus of English essays contained a wide range of sub-categories and types of epistemic stance and engagement markers. These features seemed to vary according to several factors, such as the target genre, individual preferences, and teacher advice. The findings suggest that pupils at this level would benefit from receiving explicit instruction in the appropriate use of hedges and boosters, in particular. Future research could offer futher insight into the use of epistemic stance and engagement markers in upper secondary English essays by operationalising these features in terms of accuracy and appropriacy (Fetzer, 2004).

4.4   Article 4: Attitude markers in upper secondary pupil essays across educational contexts and genres

Thomson, J. J. (2020). Attitude markers in upper secondary pupil essays across educational contexts and genres. *CERLIS Series, 9*, 31-57.

While many previous studies have analysed attitude markers together with features of stance (e.g. Ho & Li, 2018; Qin & Uccelli, 2019), the range of sub-categories and types of attitude markers in the present corpus was too broad to be addressed in article 3. Subsequently, using

inferential statistics in connection with an analysis of a selection of 135 essays[1], article 4 aimed solely to investigate the use of attitude markers in upper secondary essay writing across the three educational contexts and the five genres. The research questions for this study were:

1) Which attitude marker types are used in a corpus of upper secondary pupil essays?
2) How do attitude markers in upper secondary essays vary across educational contexts and genres?

By analysing attitude markers together with other features of stance, previous studies have arguably undervalued the importance of offering affective reactions to the material in question. These studies have rarely recognised more than 70 types to function as attitude markers (Hyland, 2019; Lee & Deakin, 2016) and have paid greater attention to other linguistic features. One exception to this is Mur Dueñas (2010), who used corpus-driven approaches (Baker, 2010) to analyse a corpus of business articles, reporting the use of 118 attitude marker types belonging to three sub-categories.

By both drawing on previous taxonomies of "attitude" (e.g. Mur Dueñas, 2010) and "evaluation" (Martin & White, 2005), and by closely reading a sub-set of the present essays, 218 attitude marker types belonging to four sub-categories were identified (complexity, emotion, morality, and quality) in the corpus. Across educational the contexts, the pupils used a wider range of types and greater frequencies of attitude markers than perhaps would be expected in academic writing.

The UK pupils were found to use a greater range and higher frequencies of attitude markers than the pupils in Norway and Sweden. Nevertheless, comparing attitude across the genres indicated that pupils in each of the educational contexts were able to adapt their expression of attitude to the given communicative purposes. For example, in the commentaries,

---

[1] Note that this study did not draw on interview data.

which aimed to offer personal accounts of compositional writing, greater frequencies of emotion markers were found. In the political essays, which aimed to discuss political issues, greater frequencies of morality markers were found. This suggests that the pupils' use of attitude markers reflected the purposes of the target genres.

Overall, this study identified a wide range of attitude types that were used by the pupils. The results indicate that attitude markers varied across upper secondary essay genres. This suggests that exposing pupils to writing for a range of purposes and audiences may be beneficial in preparing them to recognise the communicative practices among the various discourse communities that they may enter upon leaving school.

5   Discussion

This chapter offers a discussion of the overall findings from the four articles. As a whole, the project grants valuable insight into the use of metadiscourse in pre-tertiary essay writing and has implications for future studies of metadiscourse and for teaching English writing at the upper secondary level.

5.1   Metadiscourse in upper secondary essay writing and connections with teacher views

This project aimed to investigate the types, frequencies and functions of metadiscourse that were present in upper secondary English essays written in L1 and L2 educational contexts. Furthermore, articles 2 and 3 aimed to investigate whether connections can be drawn between the pupils' use of metadiscourse and teachers' reported instructional practices. This section discusses some of the main findings regarding each of the metadiscourse categories and considers the interview data where relevant.

Overall, the results demonstrate that metadiscourse plays a central role in English essay writing at the upper secondary level. This supports the growing body of metadiscourse-related studies that highlight the importance for writers to interact with readers by establishing their stance and by signposting textual relations (e.g. Dobbs, 2014; Hyland, 2019; Kuhi, 2017; McCabe & Belmonte, 2019; Ädel, 2006). These findings contrast with archaic notions that writing, particularly academic writing, should be monologic, faceless and objective. Instead, writers establish their individual voices, strive to accommodate readers' processing needs and anticipate their reactions, also at the upper secondary level (Bazerman, 1998; Qin & Uccelli, 2019).

The results suggest that pupils in Norway, Sweden and the UK used many of the metadiscourse categories at similar frequencies and in similar ways, which may be explained by various factors. One possibility is that the pupils in Norway and Sweden, even though English was not their L1, were proficient enough in English to be able to draw on a relatively broad metadiscoursal vocabulary in order to negotiate their knowledge claims and guide their readers through the unfolding text. This perhaps reflects that English is a highly prioritised school subject and is compulsory from year 1 (Skolverket, 2018; Udir., 2019). Furthermore, it is likely that they have engaged extramurally with audio-visual media, which are widely consumed in English in these contexts (Sundqvist, & Sylvén, 2016).

Another explanation is that the shared Germanic roots of Norwegian, Swedish and English (Haugen & Markey, 1973) mean that metadiscourse features may be transferrable from Norwegian and Swedish to English to a greater extent than other languages, such as French (e.g. Blagojevic, 2004; Dahl, 2004; Herriman, 2014). Although this study did not control the participants' L1 competences, this possible explanation may be linked to the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis, which posits that an L2 learner's proficiency is connected to their L1 competence (Cummins, 1979). These findings would thus suggest that this hypothesis might extend to rhetorical features used to establish one's stance and signal textual relations (e.g. Connor, 2004).

In a similar vein, a final explanation may be that the pupils in the Norwegian and Swedish contexts were able to transfer rhetorical strategies that they learn to use when writing essays in their respective L1 subjects to the present genres (Gentil, 2011; Kuteeva, 2013; Uysal, 2012). For example, in Norway, the final year exam for the Norwegian subject is similar to the exam for the social studies English subject[1]. Both

---

[1] Previous exam tasks set by the Norwegian board of education can be downloaded and compared here: https://sokeresultat.udir.no/eksamensoppgaver.html (Udir., 2021)

exams follow a similar format and both exams require pupils to write essays about social studies-related topics. Thus, it seems likely that teachers prepare their pupils for these exams in similar ways, and that pupils can effectively employ similar strategies for navigating knowledge claims, engaging readers, expressing attitudes and guiding readers in both exams.

However, as is the case with most studies of metadiscourse, this study did not operationalise the accuracy and appropriateness of these features (e.g. Thomson, 2018). Thus, while the pupils in each of the educational contexts used many of the metadiscourse categories at similar frequencies and to perform similar functions, some features may have been overlooked that were inaccurately and inappropriately used. Conceptualising and investigating the accuracy and appropriateness of metadiscourse could offer further insight into the compositional processes of pre-tertiary writers.

The overall findings related to signposting demonstrated that the pupils used a wide range of types to signal textual relations. Of the signposting categories, transitions were the most frequent. It seems that signalling relations of addition, contrast and inference are ubiquitous features of English essay writing (Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Uccelli et al., 2013). Furthermore, these markers were used in ways that seemed somewhat to reflect the purposes of each of the genres. For example, while inferential transitions were often used either to describe pre-existing cause-effect relations, or to propose novel cause-effect relations (Bruce, 2010), they were often used in the commentary essays to describe the pupils' decision-making processes when writing creative pieces. These findings support previous studies, such as Cao and Hu (2014), which have found that transition sub-categories can serve different pragmatic roles in English writing. However, studies of metadiscourse (Bax et al., 2019; Dobbs, 2014; Gholami & Ilghami, 2016; Tan & Eng, 2014) have tended to treat transitions as one overarching category, which may lead to overlooking the functions that these features perform. Future studies of

signposting might more readily capture the pragmatic nuances of transitions by incorporating sub-categories.

Exemplifiers were also found to feature frequently in the corpus. This indicates the value placed on explicitly offering examples as a strategy for supporting arguments (Alyousef, 2015; Liu & Buckingham, 2018; Qin & Uccelli, 2019). This may also be linked to practices reported by five teachers, who promoted the use of paragraph-structuring acronyms (e.g. point, evidence, explanation, link; Monte-Sano, 2015), which promote exemplification. Of the genres, it was found that the literary essays contained some examples that were not marked with exemplifiers. This may have been because the pupils assumed that their readers would be familiar with the literary works and therefore required less explicit guidance. Alternatively, it may be that the pupils omitted exemplifiers in a bid to establish a more aesthetically pleasing style, as literary scholars have been found to do (Andresen and Zinsmeister, 2018). While exemplifiers were frequently used, reformulators were infrequent, occurring only a minority of the essays. On the one hand, this may have been because the pupils rarely used specialist terminology. On the other hand, they may have assumed that teachers and examiners would be familiar with specialist terminology and would therefore not benefit from reformulations.

The remaining categories, phoric and topic markers, were not prominent features of the corpus. While transitions and exemplifiers create links at the sentential and clausal level, phoric and topic markers usually signal relations at the structural level. The pupils may have considered such structural signposting to be unnecessary in relatively short essays (Ho & Li, 2018; Ädel, 2006). Of the genres, the linguistic investigations contained the highest frequencies of topic and phoric markers. Some of these essays were divided into sub-sections and some pupils explicitly referred to, for example, their "studies". However, these findings did not apply to all of the linguistic investigations, which suggests that while some teachers required their pupils to use sub-headings, other did not. It

may also suggest that the use of these features varies according to pupils' preferences (Bruce, 2010; Yoon, 2017).

One of the features that teachers expressed strong feelings about was whether pupils should explicitly mark introductions. While Ädel (2008) found introduction markers to occur frequently in tertiary-level writing, the majority of the teachers in the present study discouraged the use of these features, either because they were considered to be "clunky" or "unsophisticated", or because they were simply not useful for gaining marks (Mahalski, 1992). Although conclusion markers were generally considered to be acceptable, only one of the opinion pieces contained a conclusion marker. Accordingly, one of the teachers commented that conclusion markers are inappropriate in journalistic writing.

Although signposting features were found to be used similarly across the three educational contexts, teacher practices seemed to differ. In Norway and Sweden, teachers tended to advise their pupils to follow a five-paragraph essay structure and provided pupils with lists of linking words. In contrast, the UK teachers tended to report that they did not address signposting features as they expected pupils to have learned about these at earlier educational levels. These differences may be related to English being taught as an L2 in Norway and Sweden, which means that teachers may focus more on lexical and grammatical competence (Ellis, 2008a; Silva, 1993). However, while the five-paragraph structure and lists of linking words seemed to be popular among these teachers, these approaches are controversial (Brannon et al., 2008; Gardner and Han, 2018; Smith, 2006). This raises questions about whether teachers could opt for alternative approaches, such as identifying and raising consciousness about the use of signposts in authentic texts (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996; Tribble, 2010). This could be done through a plenary session, whereby the teacher and pupils identify signposts in a text together, with subsequent training involving the teacher giving pupils the task of identifying signposts in another text individually or in groups. Furthermore, beyond the five-paragraph essay structure and lists of

linking words, teachers in the three contexts reported idiosyncratic practices (Blomqvist, 2018), which indicates that the respective educational systems did not prescribe standardised approaches for how teachers should instruct pupils regarding essay structure.

Regarding stance, the pupils used a wide range of types to navigate knowledge claims, engage readers and express their attitudes. Overall, hedges and boosters featured prominently in the corpus. Rounders and universals were the most frequent hedging and boosting sub-categories overall, which suggests that the pupils considered quantifications to be an important part of establishing a convincing argument. Otherwise, the hedging sub-categories seemed to reflect the purposes in each of the genres. For example, the linguistic investigations contained the highest frequencies of plausibility hedges, which perhaps indicates the more academic style of these essays (Keshavarz & Kheirieh, 2012; Hu & Cao, 2015). Downtoners were used in the commentaries as the pupils modestly described their creative processes (Hinkel, 2005).

Previous studies (Hu & Cao, 2012; Khedri & Kritsis, 2018; Salager-Meyer, 1994) have found that hedges tend to be more frequent than boosters in, for example, academic and journalistic writing. This underscores the value placed on expressing tentativeness in English writing. However, hedges and boosters were used at similar frequencies in the present corpus. Furthermore, although the study did not analyse the appropriateness of metadiscourse features, it seemed that boosters were sometimes used in making claims that were inappropriately assertive (see article 3 for example extracts). These findings may be linked to the teachers' reported practices: some teachers reported that they encouraged pupils to express tentativeness in their essays, while other teachers advised their pupils to avoid tentativeness. This not only illustrates that there is some disparity between individual teachers' practices, but also that some teachers may be doing their pupils a disservice by offering categorical advice (Li & Wharton, 2012). In other words, by consistently advising pupils to be either tentative or assertive,

teachers may be overlooking how a given context might affect how a writer presents knowledge claims. These results, alongside findings from other studies of novice writing (e.g. Dobbs, 2014; MacIntyre, 2017; Qin & Uccelli, 2019), support the notion that explicitly teaching appropriate hedging and boosting practices may help pupils at this level to assess whether they are expected to be assertive or tentative in a given context.

When investigating the use of evidentials, previous studies have tended to focus on words and phrases used to cite secondary sources, particularly academic sources (e.g. Du, 2019; Neumann et al., 2019). Evidentials were often used to cite secondary sources in the political essays, linguistic investigations and opinion pieces, which suggests that the pupils recognised their importance for establishing credible arguments. However, the corpus also contained evidential types that were used to cite primary sources. For example, the literary essays contained evidentials that were used to cite and describe the events in the target literary work (e.g. "portray"; see also Docherty, 2019). The commentaries contained evidentials that were used to cite oral sources, such as teachers and friends (e.g. "mentioned"). This insight may be useful for upper secondary English teachers and tertiary-level writing instructors who aim to engage pupils and freshman students in citing a wide range of secondary sources when writing academic texts. Furthermore, future studies of pre-tertiary writing may reveal more about pupils' citation practices by distinguishing between secondary source and primary source evidentials. In the interviews, the teachers tended to report that they focused on teaching pupils the technical aspects of citing sources, such as using particular referencing styles. However, it was notable that, when asked whether they taught pupils about citing sources, none of the teachers discussed distinguishing primary and secondary sources, using reporting verbs, or checking a source's credibility (Connor-Greene & Greene, 2002; Du, 2019), which warrants further investigation.

While self-mentions were relatively infrequent across most of the genres, they were highly frequent in the commentary genre. Accordingly, the teacher who oversaw the writing of these essays commented that the commentary genre is unlike other types of writing as pupils are required to describe their personal experiences. Otherwise, a majority of teachers advised pupils to avoid self-mentions. This contrasts with studies that have found self-mentions to serve several purposes in professional academic writing (Harwood, 2005; Vassileva, 1998). For example, although impartiality is valued in scientific reporting, self-mentions have been found to mark authors' subjective evaluations when interpreting the implications of their findings (e.g. Vassileva, 1998). Consequently, this suggests that some of the teachers based their views of self-mentions on more traditional academic writing practices, which maintain that facts should be prioritised over personal viewpoints (Harwood, 2005).

In order to engage readers, pupils relied more frequently on reader references, which were often used to appeal directly to readers. However, while reader references were frequently used in political essays from Sweden, they were less frequent in the political essays from Norway. This may have been linked with the essay prompts: in Sweden, pupils were instructed to write an "argumentative essay"; in Norway, pupils were instructed to "discuss" the given topic, which may imply that they should establish a more impartial stance. Other strategies, such as rhetorical questions and directives, were comparatively infrequent. This may be connected to comments made by two of the UK teachers, who advised pupils to avoid rhetorical questions. Alternatively, certain engagement strategies may be seen by pupils as being too audacious or unnecessary. For example, while directives are used in academic writing to explain research procedures or to direct readers' attention to tables and figures (Hyland, 2002), the power relations between pupils and their teachers may discourage the use of these features (e.g. Culpeper et al., 2018), or the purposes of the present genres may not require pupils to overtly direct their readers.

Attitude markers were found to be realised by a wide range of types that were used more frequently than expected. Overall, 218 attitude marker types belonging to 4 sub-categories were identified in the corpus, which contrasts with previous studies (e.g. Hyland & Jiang, 2016) that usually account for roughly 70 markers treated as a single category. The wide range of attitude markers in the present corpus might reflect the types of writing, which are perhaps more likely to elicit personal opinions. However, previous studies of metadiscourse may have prioritised other features and overlooked some attitude marker types, which requires further investigation.

While other stance categories seemed to be used at similar frequencies across the three contexts, attitude markers were used more frequently by the UK pupils. On the one hand, this may reflect that these pupils are learning English in an L1 context and therefore may have a broader attitudinal vocabulary (Webb & Nation, 2017). Accordingly, compared with many other metadiscoursal functions that are often realised by highly frequent function words (e.g. "but", "as", "I", "some"), many of the attitude markers are lower frequency lexical words (e.g. "mundane", "taboo"). On the other hand, since the pupils in the UK wrote under process-oriented conditions, they probably had more time to write and revise their essays. The pupils in Norway and Sweden wrote under timed conditions, which may have pressured them to prioritise other aspects of their essays over expressing their attitudes. Furthermore, the UK genres, particularly the opinion pieces and commentaries, may have prompted these pupils to offer their affective evaluations more frequently and using a wider range of types.

Regarding the difference in usage across the genres, emotion markers were most frequent in the commentaries, in which pupils described their personal opinions in connection with their creative writing. Morality markers, particularly related to deontic modality, were frequently used in the political essays and opinion pieces, in which the pupils were expressing their attitudes towards issues pertaining to global politics. The

functions of certain categories also seemed to differ across the genres. For example, while complexity markers were used when describing compositional challenges in the commentaries, they were used when describing methodological challenges in the linguistic investigations.

5.2 Adapting a taxonomy

While previous studies have offered a range of approaches to operationalising metadiscourse (Beauvais, 1989; Ifantidou, 2005; Vande Kopple, 1985; Ädel, 2006; see Chapter 2), it was deemed necessary to adapt a taxonomy for the purposes of analysing the content of this corpus of upper secondary essays. Most previous taxonomies have been devised according to features in professional and tertiary level writing (Hu & Cao, 2015; Mauranen, 1993a; Ädel, 2006) and thus would not have fully accounted for the features in this corpus of pre-tertiary essays. Thus, this study adjusted and combined elements from previous taxonomies following a close reading of a sample of essays.

Although article 1 reported the process of devising the taxonomy, changes were made for articles 2, 3 and 4. Most notably, attitude markers in article 1 were treated as a single category and, based on previous studies, only 36 attitude marker types were recognised. Recognising that these types did not fully account for the variety of emotional reactions in the corpus, I argued that "a broader range of search terms […] could be used to reveal more about how upper secondary pupils express their attitudes" (Thomson, 2020, p. 42). Since the attitude marker types used in article 1 proved insufficient for analysing essay writing, the attitude marker sub-categories were reconceptualised. Based on this close reading and on previous studies (Martin & White, 2005; Mur Dueñas, 2010), attitude marker sub-categories were devised and 218 search terms were recognised, which is at least 100 more than have been recognised in the reviewed studies (e.g. Hyland, 2019; Mur Dueñas, 2010). Since many previous studies of metadiscourse tend to treat attitude markers as a single category comprising of relatively few types (e.g. Bax et al.,

2019; Çandarlı et al., 2015; Khedri & Kritsis, 2018; Lee & Deakin 2016; Qin & Uccelli, 2019), it was considered necessary to devote a separate article to these findings in order to highlight the wide range of emotional reactions that these pupils expressed (see section 4.4).

Additionally, in article 2, which focuses on signposting, the topic shift sub-category (Hyland, 2019) was added. Although topic markers were absent in a number of essays and were infrequent when they were present, topic shifts were found to be the most frequent topic marker sub-category. Although pupils did not always recognise topic markers to be necessary in their essays, it seems that explicitly marking the shift from one topic to another was a favoured strategy.

When adding search terms from the four articles together, the resulting taxonomy accounts for over 1,000 types belonging to 26 metadiscourse sub-categories. Since pre-tertiary writing has previously received little research attention, the sub-categories (e.g. plausibility boosters; reader references; transitions of comparison) were incorporated to perform as detailed an analysis as possible.

The inclusion of the sub-categories proved useful in order to investigate the various functions that the types performed in the corpus and how these seemed to reflect the communicative purposes of the genres. For example, hedges were divided into four sub-categories. Rounders were found to be more prominent in the political essays and opinion pieces, in which pupils drew on statistics and made broad generalisations. Downtoners and first-person hedges were prominent in the commentaries, where pupils modestly described their processes in composing a series of creative pieces. These nuances may have been overlooked had these sub-categories been omitted. Although other hedging sub-categories were considered, such as fillers (Holmes, 1986; Thomson, 2018), these were excluded since these were not found to be a pronounced feature of this corpus.

By using different taxonomies, researchers may be limited in the extent to which their results are comparable with results from previous studies. However, the present findings illustrate the potential shortcomings of applying a single metadiscourse taxonomy to corpora containing different types of writing. Although it may be possible to devise a single taxonomy that accounts for all metadiscourse types, it does not seem that such a taxonomy has yet been devised. Furthermore, such a taxonomy may prove to be too all-encompassing or prescriptive for analysing specific features or certain kinds of writing. Nevertheless, devising a taxonomy can be a time-consuming process that involves searching for a wide range of linguistic features, so the present taxonomy offers a useful starting point for future studies aiming to investigate metadiscourse in pre-tertiary writing. Future studies may expand on this taxonomy by considering multimodality, which featured in some of the present essays (e.g. some pupils used images) but was beyond the scope of this analysis. In other words, considering how linguistic metadiscourse and visual metadiscourse (see Kumpf, 2000) complement one another in pre-tertiary writing could offer further insight into how upper secondary pupils negotiate knowledge claims, engage readers, and signal textual-visual relations.

5.3   *Implications for English writing instruction*

The findings reported in the articles hold useful information for writing instructors in L1 and L2 contexts looking to anticipate the metadiscoursal competence of pre-tertiary pupils and freshman university students. Of note is the overall finding that this corpus of pre-tertiary writing is characterised by a broader range of metadiscourse features than would be expected in academic writing. For example, the pupils in this study relied on a wide range of features to express their attitudinal reactions. Furthermore, some of the markers were of a more informal style. For instance, "down to" was found to function as an inferential transition, "*ish" was used as a downtoner, and "stupid" was used as an attitude

marker. While this project did not account for the appropriateness of these markers, the wide range of markers indicates that pupils at this level may benefit from further instruction in distinguishing formal from informal styles, but this requires further investigation.

Previous studies have investigated the effects of proactively[2] teaching metadiscourse features to tertiary level novice writers (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Dastjerdi & Shirzad, 2012). These studies have found that explicit instruction in the use of metadiscourse is related to improvements in written quality. However, there are two caveats in considering these teaching practices for the upper secondary level. Firstly, since metadiscourse has been operationalised in so many ways, it may be difficult to choose the most appropriate taxonomy on which teachers should focus. Furthermore, although the taxonomy used for this study offers a comprehensive categorisation of the features present in the upper secondary essays, it would be challenging and time-consuming to proactively instruct pupils in the use of 26 sub-categories pertaining to signposting and stance. This may be particularly impractical in the UK, where teachers reported that they expected pupils to have learned about signposting at earlier educational levels and therefore do not address these features at the upper secondary level. A further complication is that some of these features may be referred to using other terms, such as "linking words" instead of signposts. Additionally, it may be more useful for pupils to think about textual relations at the sentential level, rather than at the word level. For example, instead of thinking about individual inferential transitions, it may be more effective to think about the larger cause-effect relations. A more manageable solution could be for English teachers to take a more reactive approach to teaching metadiscourse, which would involve providing metadiscourse-related feedback on pupil essays according to individual needs. Individual feedback may be particularly useful for the

---

[2] According to Doughty and Williams (1998), proactive writing instruction requires that teachers anticipate which forms pupils should learn.

pupils in Norway and Sweden, who are learning English as an L2. However, studies that have compared proactive and reactive approaches to grammar teaching have tended to report that proactive ones are more successful (Bakshiri & Mohammadi, 2014). Further research could also investigate whether proactive approaches are more effective for teaching metadiscourse.

The second caveat is that while proactively teaching the technical aspects of metadiscourse may hold potential for writing development, such teaching methods may not be readily adopted in the present educational contexts, particularly Norway and Sweden. Firstly, English teachers may already devote a considerable amount of classroom time to teaching formal grammar, since this has strong roots in language teaching (e.g. Dypedal & Hasselgård, 2018) and is typically prescribed by English curricula[3]. Secondly, there is a tendency in these contexts to prioritise more holistic, communicative approaches to language teaching (Kim-Rivera, 1999; Krashen, 1993; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Skulstad, 2018). Even though studies of metadiscourse are concerned with the markers that writers use to communicate with their readers, the idea of introducing pupils to the communicative functions of numerous sub-categories may seem unfeasible.

A potential solution to both of these caveats could be for upper secondary teachers to utilise genre pedagogies (e.g. Ellis & Johnson, 1998; Hyland, 2007b; Kuteeva, 2013). This involves engaging students in identifying genre-specific features in texts that represent the purposes and discourse communities for which they are required to write. In addition to analysing texts, pupils could practise writing for various purposes and audiences, which may improve their ability to vary stance and signposting features according to a given communicative context (Krashen, 2013). These approaches can be related to theories of reading,

---

[3] For example, the latest English subject curriculum in Norway requires that pupils are able to "use knowledge about grammar and text structure when producing […] texts" (Udir, 2020, p. 11; my translation).

which have posited that reading extensively across a range of genres can both motivate language learners and help them to develop vocabulary, fluency and contextual awareness (Hirvela, 2004; Grabe, 2008). By applying principles from reading instruction to writing instruction, teachers can prepare their pupils for the variety of styles that they may be expected to write upon entering academic and professional discourse communities.

If teachers are to offer either proactive or reactive metadiscourse instruction when exposing their pupils to writing in a range of genres, it seems necessary for teacher training courses to introduce student teachers both to the metadiscourse concept and to how these features can vary across communicative contexts. The results from the teacher interviews suggest that, although the teachers demonstrated some awareness of metadiscourse features, a majority did not teach their pupils to recognise how signposting and stance may vary according to a given written context. Instead, they tended to offer categorical advice pertaining to what pupils should or should not do when writing English essays. For example, 18 teachers reported that they encouraged using either hedges or boosters when making claims. Only one teacher commented that appropriate hedging and boosting can vary according to the communicative context. Thus, by acknowledging, for example, that plausibility hedges can open dialogic space when making knowledge claims, downtoners can mark modesty when discussing creative choices, amplifiers can enhance the persuasive effect of an argument, and so on, teachers can offer contextually informed compositional advice to their pupils.

5.4   Limitations

While this study offers insight into the compositional workings of upper secondary essay writing, several limitations ought to be acknowledged. Firstly, although the content of the corpus represents the kinds of writing that upper secondary pupils would usually engage with, the relatively

low number of essays written in each educational context and belonging to each genre precluded the use of inferential statistics (except in article 4), which limits the overall generalisability of the findings. The size of the corpus was hampered by the underwhelming response from schools in each educational context. Although over 90 schools were contacted across the three educational contexts, only 14 schools agreed to participate. The majority of the schools that participated were those that were contacted via the university's pre-existing network. Of the schools that did not wish to participate, it seems that their reservations were often connected to practical considerations, as they were concerned the research project would take too much of their classroom time, which illustrates the challenges that researchers may face when attempting to establish new collaborations. Furthermore, some teachers did not provide all the metadata required (such as the pupils' L1s), even though pupils had consented to participating and even though I attempted to contact them several times. Thus, future studies that aim to collaborate with schools should perhaps either try to incorporate less time-consuming data collection methods (this concerns the present interview methods, in particular), or apply for external funding in order to compensate teachers for their contributions.

Although the data represent the essay writing practices at the participating schools, this study was limited by the number of variables that might have affected the pupils' compositional decisions. For example, each of the educational contexts had different approaches to dealing with the practical aspects of essay writing. Of particular note were the writing conditions in the UK compared with Norway and Sweden. The majority of the essays written in the UK were written under process-oriented conditions, while the essays written in Norway and Sweden were written under timed conditions. Additionally, the pupils wrote in different genres with different instructions, received different teacher advice, represented different L1s and were likely to have different writing experiences from other subjects and previous

educational levels. Although future studies could address some of these issues by asking pupils in each context to write for a single prompt under the same conditions, such an approach may not be practically feasible for teachers. Furthermore, by collecting essays written for prompts and under conditions set by the teachers themselves, the data more accurately represent the kinds of writing with which upper secondary pupils engage. This approach to collecting data may still be favoured in future studies of pre-tertiary writing, especially if researchers are able to collaborate with a larger number of schools in order to collect a larger, more representative sample.

Regarding the taxonomy, although it offers a comprehensive operationalisation of metadiscourse features in upper secondary essay writing, two main issues ought to be recognised. Firstly, although the taxonomy was adapted using trial-and-error methods in order to account for the idiosyncratic features of the present corpus, there were features that were deprioritised due to their infrequency, such as non-integral evidentials. Despite attempting to offer a thorough, detailed account of the metadiscourse features present in the corpus, some features may have been overlooked. Furthermore, rather than taking a narrow, thick approach, this study took a broad, thin approach (Ädel & Mauranen, 2010). This involves considering that metadiscourse encompasses both stance and signposting features and using a wide range of features to identify general patterns (see section 2.2.3). Thus, although the taxonomy recognises a wide range of metadiscourse sub-categories, this approach may nevertheless have overlooked some of the more nuanced functions that specific markers carry out.

Secondly, using the present taxonomy to scan the full corpus was a time-consuming process. In order to complete the process, every hit needed to be read manually in order to check whether it carried metadiscoursal meaning. Overall, using the 1,000 metadiscourse types, roughly 70,000 hits were retrieved. These were then narrowed down to about 4,000 that were found to function as metadiscourse markers. Alternative methods

121

for analysing metadiscourse in text-linguistic corpora may help to streamline this process in future studies but would likely involve more advanced and costly programming techniques. For example, Text Inspector (Weblingua Ltd., 2020) is an online text analysis program that captures metadiscourse features that have been pre-tagged. However, while Text Inspector demonstrates methodological possibilities for future corpus-assisted studies, its features are not readily customisable, meaning that its functionality is limited when applying an adapted taxonomy, such as the one used for this study. Furthermore, although it shows how the scanning process can be streamlined, it does not bypass the need to manually check whether each individual search term functions as metadiscourse.

The interview methods also face certain limitations. Since the interviews could not be complemented with classroom observations, it is not possible to confirm whether the teachers' self-reported practices reflected their actual practices. Furthermore, the interview guide was formulated prior to conducting the full analysis. Considering that attitude markers have generally been found to be infrequent in previous studies of metadiscourse (Ho & Li, 2018; Hyland, 2004), these features were not prioritised when compiling the questions. However, asking teachers how they advised pupils regarding their expressions of affective reactions would have provided valuable information considering that attitude markers proved to be such prominent features in this corpus. Finally, as well as teacher interviews, 61 individual pupil interviews were also carried out with pupils who contributed essays from each of the schools. As with previous metadiscourse-related studies that have interviewed the participating authors (Hyland, 2004; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Tavakoli et al., 2012), the data collected in these interviews revealed interesting insights that could have further supplemented the textual analysis. Unfortunately, these data were omitted for practical reasons: both because the data analysis would have been too time-consuming and because of the limited amount of space in articles 1-4. The guidelines for

article-based Ph.Ds. in Norway do not allow for additional results to be reported in the extended abstract. A separate article for reporting this data has been planned, but this has not been included as a part of this Ph.D.

6   Conclusion

This exploratory research project aimed to investigate how upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian, Swedish and British schools use metadiscourse in English essays. By analysing the types, frequencies and functions of markers used to interact with readers in essays written at this level, this project sought to offer insight into the metadiscourse features of less visible and less priviledged types of writing (Ädel, 2008). Furthermore, this project aimed to investigate the general metadiscourse-related views of English teachers and to consider the extent to which their advice may affect their pupils' compositional decisions.

The present corpus contained a wide range of signposting and stance types that belonged to 26 sub-categories, which demonstrates that the pupils had a broad linguistic repertoire for signalling textual relations, negotiating knowledge claims, engaging readers, and expressing attitudes. These findings support the notion that, instead of being distanced and objective, writing is a dialogic phenomenon in which writers interact with readers both by guiding them through the unfolding text and by moderating their position towards the material in question (Bakhtin, 1986; Hyland, 2019; Kuhi, 2017; Ädel, 2006). The pupils seemed to modify their use of metadiscourse according to various factors, such as curricula demands, teacher advice, essay writing prompts and personal preferences. The findings also strongly suggest that the pupils adjusted their use of these features according to the target genre, as they often, for example, hedged claims, expressed opinions and connected ideas in ways that reflected the given communicative purpose.

The interviews revealed that teachers hold idiosyncratic views towards the instruction of metadiscourse-related features and that some of their advice seemed to be contradictory and disconnected from professional writing practices. Regarding signposting, teachers in Norway and Sweden tended to rely on teaching methods that were either prescriptive

or decontextualised. In the UK, teachers reported that they do not teach pupils about signposting at the upper secondary level, despite also reporting that pupils lack signposting competence. These findings raise questions about the effectiveness of teachers' metadiscourse-related advice in these L1 and L2 contexts.

This project contributes to the existing body of metadiscourse-related research by revealing how metadiscourse markers feature in English essays written by upper secondary pupils attending schools in Norway, Sweden and the UK. Although a handful of previous studies have investigated metadiscourse in pre-tertiary writing (Dobbs, 2014; Qin & Uccelli, 2019; Uccelli et al., 2013), this is the first to investigate metadiscourse in essays written during the final school year in these L1 and L2 educational contexts. Furthermore, the taxonomy that was devised for this project offers a comprehensive starting point for future studies of pre-tertiary writing. This project also contributes by supplementing the textual analysis with teacher interviews about their general views towards metadiscourse-related instruction. By investigating the use of metadiscourse written at this transitionary phase between secondary and tertiary level education, the findings offer important implications for writing instructors in L1 and L2 contexts and for future research.

By devising an adapted taxonomy for the purposes of analysing pre-tertiary writing, this project demonstrates the advantages of considering a corpus' content in selecting analytical tools. Although the trial-and-error process of devising this taxonomy was time-consuming, this approach proved useful for consolidating a detailed account of the types and categories of metadiscourse that characterised the present corpus. In particular, this project is among a minority of previous studies that have recognised sub-categories of hedges, boosters and attitude markers (Hinkel, 2005; Martin & White, 2005; Mur Dueñas, 2010). These sub-categories not only accounted more accurately for the diverse functions that markers within these metadiscourse categories can fulfil, they also

proved to be useful in distinguishing the linguistic features that typified each of the present genres. Furthermore, while previous studies have recognised no more than 118 types of attitude marker (Mur Dueñas, 2010), this project recognised 218 attitude marker types, which indicates that the extent of this category may have been underestimated in previous studies. Future studies may produce more nuanced findings by amalgamating various operationalisations of metadiscourse in order to adapt a taxonomy to the corpus in question. Furthermore, the present study may offer a comprehensive starting point for studies of pre-tertiary writing.

For English teachers and writing instructors, these findings offer useful insight for anticipating the kinds of metadiscourse features that upper secondary pupils and freshman students from these L1 and L2 contexts may or may not be familiar with. However, further research could be done to identify which teaching methods are both effective and manageable. Although the proactive teaching of formal grammar has been found to be effective (Bakshiri & Mohammadi, 2014), proactively teaching the technical aspects of metadiscourse may seem time-consuming and intimidating to practicing English teachers. Considering that the present results suggest that upper secondary pupils seem capable of adjusting their use of metadiscourse to suit the target genre, engaging pupils in analysing textual features and writing across a range of genres may be a more viable option in order to prepare them for the various tertiary and professional discourse communities that await them (Hirvela, 2004; Hyland, 2007b; Kuteeva, 2013; Tribble, 2010). Alternatively, it may be more manageable for teachers to take a more reactive approach to metadiscourse instruction, which could involve providing metadiscourse-related feedback on individual essays where relevant. In order to incorporate metadiscourse to the English classroom, university courses would likely have to introduce the metadiscourse concept to student teachers. Considering that the participating teachers sometimes reported that they offered pupils seemingly inconsequential,

categorical or archaic advice regarding certain metadiscourse features (e.g. hedges, boosters and self-mentions), introducing student teachers to the metadiscourse concept could contribute to counteracting potential misconceptions. If English teachers are to offer metadiscourse instruction, they may need to be trained to recognise the contextual constraints that determine the use of metadiscourse markers in written communication.

The findings from the present study suggest several avenues for future research besides those already mentioned in Chapter 5. For example, since the Norwegian and Swedish pupils may be drawing on rhetorical strategies that they use when writing essays for their L1 subjects, future research could compare how Scandinavian pupils use metadiscourse features in essays written in their L1 with essays written in English. It may also be useful to investigate how metadiscourse competence develops by comparing metadiscourse in essay written at earlier and later school levels. Finally, following previous studies that have found that the explicit teaching of metadiscourse is effective at the tertiary level (e.g. Cheng & Steffensen, 1996), studies could investigate the effects of explicitly teaching metadiscourse features, particularly those related to negotiating knowledge claims, to upper secondary pupils. Considering that essays are such an important mode of communication in educational settings, the field would benefit from further studies of metadiscourse in pre-tertiary writing, also among children younger than those in this study.

References

Abdi, R. & Ahmadi, P. (2015). Signposting propositions: A study of interactive metadiscourse marking in the composition of research articles across sciences. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics, 5,* 5-17. https://doi.org/10.22055/rals.2015.11264

Abdi, R., Rizi, M. T. & Tavakoli, M. (2010). The cooperative principle in discourse communities and genres: A framework for the use of metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 42,* 1669-1679. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2009.11.001

Ahn, K. (2011). Conceptualization of American English native speaker norms: A case study of an English language classroom in South Korea. *Asia Pacific Educational Review, 12*, 691–702. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-011-9169-6

Aijmer, K. & Hasselgård, H. (2015). Cross-linguistic studies at the interface between lexis and grammar. *Nordic Journal of English Studies,* 14(1), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.337

Alyousef, H. (2015). An investigation of metadiscourse features in international postgraduate business students' texts: The use of interactive and interactional markers in tertiary multimodal finance texts. *SAGE Open, 5*(4), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015610796

Altenberg, B. (2007). The correspondence of resultative connectors in English and Swedish. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 6*(1), 1-26. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.2

Altenberg, B. & Granger, S. (2001). The grammatical and lexical patterning of make in native and non-native student writing. *Applied Linguistics, 22*(2), 173-194. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/22.2.173

Amiryousefi, M. & Rasekh, A. E. (2010). Metadiscourse: Definitions, issues and its implications for English teachers. *English*

Language Teaching, 3, 159-167.
https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v3n4p159

Anthony, L. (2019). AntConc (Version 3.5.8) [Computer software].
Waseda University.

AQA Education (AQA). (2013). *A-level creative writing*. AQA.

AQA Education (AQA). (2019). *AS and A-level English language*.
AQA.

Aragones, E., Gilboa, I., Postlewaite, A. & Schmeidler, D. (2001).
Rhetoric and analogies. *Research in Economics, 68*(1), 1-10.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rie.2013.09.002

Askehave, I. & Swales, J. M. (2001). Genre identification and
communicative purpose: A problem and a possible solution.
Applied Linguistics, *22*(2), 195-212.
https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/22.2.195

Atkinson, D. & Sohn, J. (2013). Culture from the bottom up. *TESOL
Quarterly, 47*(4), 669-693. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.104

Aull, L. & Lancaster, Z. (2014). Linguistic markers of stance in early
and advanced academic writing: A corpus-based comparison.
Written Communication, 31(2), 151-183.
https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088314527055

Austin, J. L. (1975). *How to do things with words* (2nd ed.). Harvard
University Press.

Baker, P. (2010). Corpus methods in linguistics. In L. Litosseliti, (Ed.),
Research methods in linguistics (p. 93-113). Continuum.

Bakhtin, M. (1986). *Speech genres and other late essays*. University of
Texas Press.

Bakshiri, N. & Mohammadi, M. (2014). Proactive/reactive focus on
form and immediate/delayed writing production. *Procedia -
Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *98*, 334-342.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.424

Balboni, P. E. & Caon, F. (2014). A performance-oriented model of
intercultural communicative competence. *Journal of*

Intercultural Communication, 35.
https://immi.se/intercultural/nr35/balboni.html

Bax, S., Nakatsuhara, F. & Waller, D. (2019). Researching L2 writers' use of metadiscourse markers at intermediate and advanced levels. *System*, *83*, 79-95.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.010

Bazerman, C. (2014). Speech acts, genres, and activity systems: How texts organize activity and people. In C. Bazerman & P. Prior (Eds.), *Writing about writing: A college reader* (2nd ed.) (p. 309-39). Bedford/St Martin's.

Beauvais, P. J. (1989). A speech act theory of metadiscourse. *Written Communication, 6,* 11-30.
https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088389006001002

Beck, S. W., Llosa, L., Black, K. & Anderson, A. T. G. (2018). From assessing to teaching writing: What teachers prioritize. *Assessing Writing*, *37*, 68-77.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2018.03.003

Belcher, D. (2014). What we need and don't need intercultural rhetoric for: A retrospective and prospective look at an evolving research area. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 25*(1), 59-67. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2014.06.003

Bennett, M. J. (2013). *Basic concepts of intercultural communication: Paradigms, principles & practices* (2nd ed.)*.* Intercultural Press.

Berggren, J. (2019). *Writing, reviewing, and revising: Peer feedback in lower secondary EFL classrooms* [Ph.D. thesis]. Stockholm University.

Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings*. Longman.

Bialystok, E. & Hakuta, K. (1994). *In other words: The science and psychology of second language acquisition.* Basic Books.

Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S. & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Pearson Education Limited.

Biber, D., Reppen, R., Staples, S. & Egbert, J. (2020). Exploring the longitudinal development of grammatical complexity in the disciplinary writing of L2-English university students *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research, 6*(1), 38-71. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijlcr.18007.bib

Blagojevic, S. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic prose: A contrastive study of academic articles written in English by English and Norwegian native speakers. *Studies about Languages, 5,* 60-67.

Brannon, L., Courtney, J. P., Urbanski, C. P., Woodward, S. V., Reynolds, J. M., Iannone, A. E., Haag, K. D., Mach, K., Manship, L. A. & Kendrick, M. (2008). The five-paragraph essay and the deficit model of education. *English Journal, 98*(2), 16-21.

Brezina, V., Weill-Tessier, P. & McEnery, A. (2020). #LancsBox (Version 5.1.1) [Computer software]. http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/lancsbox.

Bruce, I. (2010). Textual and discoursal resources used in the essay genre in sociology and English. *Journal for Academic Purposes, 9*(3), 153-166. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.011

Bruthiaux, P. (2003). Squaring the circles: Issues in modeling English worldwide. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 13*(2), 159-178. https://doi.org/10.1111/1473-4192.00042

Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: How is it done? *Qualitative Research*, *6,* 97-113. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106058877

Burt, C. (2005). What is international English? *Working Papers in TESOL and Applied Linguistics, 5*(1), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.7916/D8F47NPX

Canagarajah, A. (2013). The end of second language writing? *Journal of Second Language Writing 22*(4), 440-441. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2013.08.007

Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 1-47. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/I.1.1

Çandarlı, D., Bayyurt, Y. & Marti, L. (2015). Authorial presence in L1 and L2 novice academic writing: Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspectives. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *20*, 192-202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2015.10.001

Cao, F. & Hu, G. (2014). Interactive metadiscourse in research articles: A comparative study of paradigmatic and disciplinary influences. *Journal of Pragmatics, 66,* 15-31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2014.02.007

Chandler, J. (2003). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 12*(3), 267-196. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(03)00038-9

Cheng, X. & Steffensen, M. S. (1996). Metadiscourse: A technique for improving student writing. *Research in the Teaching of English, 30*(2), 149-181.

Collins. (2019). *The collins corpus*. Collins Learning. https://collins.co.uk/pages/elt-cobuild-reference-the-collins-corpus.

Connor, U. (2004). Intercultural rhetoric research: Beyond texts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *3*(4), 291-304. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2004.07.003

Connor-Greene, P. A. & Greene, D. J. (2002). Science or snake oil? Teaching critical evaluation of "research" reports on the internet. *Teaching of Psychology, 29*(4), 321-324. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328023TOP2904_14

Cook, V. J. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*(2), 185-209. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587717

Cortes, V. (2002). Lexical bundles in freshman composition. In R. Reppen, S. M. Fitzmaurice, & D. Biber (Eds.), *Using corpora to explore linguistic variation* (p. 131-145). Benjamins.

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.

Crossley, S. & McNamara, D. (2014). Does writing development equal writing quality? A computational investigation of syntactic complexity in L2 learners. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 26*, 66-79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2014.09.006

Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a global language.* Cambridge University Press.

Culpeper, J., Mackey, A., & Taguchi, N. (2018). *Second language pragmatics: From theory to research*. Routledge.

Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children. *Review of Educational Research, 49*(2), 222-251. https://doi.org/10.2307/1169960

Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40,* 95-113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.10.003

Dahl, T. (2004). Textual metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discipline? *Journal of Pragmatics, 36*(10), 1807-1825. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.05.004

Dahl, T. (2008). The KIAP project: Academic voices in harmony and contrast. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 7*(3), 203-204. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.109

Dash, N. S. & Arulmozi, S. (2018). *History, features, and typology of language corpora*. Springer.

Dastjerdi, H. V. & Shirzad, M. (2012). The impact of explicit instruction of metadiscourse markers on EFL learners' writing

performance. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills, 2*(2), 155-174. https://doi.org/10.22099/jtls.2012.412

De Cock, S. (2004). Preferred sequences of words in NS and NNS speech. *Belgian Journal of English Language and Literatures (BELL), 2*, 225-246.

Defazio, J., Jones, J., Tennant, F. & Hook, S. A. (2010). Academic literacy: The importance and impact of writing across the curriculum - a case study. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 10*(2), 34-47.

Department for Education (DfE). (2014). *The national curriculum in England*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381344/Master_final_national_curriculum_28_Nov.pdf

Dobbs, C. L. (2014). Signaling organization and stance: Academic language use in middle grade persuasive writing. *Reading and Writing, 27*(8)*,* 1327-1352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9489-5

Docherty, P. (2019). An exploratory study in the use of direct quotation by L2 entry level Bachelor students. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *40*, 26–40. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.05.002

Doughty, C. & Williams, J. (1998). *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition.* Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007)*. Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.

Duff, P. A. (2010). Language socialization into academic discourse communities. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *30*, 169-192. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190510000048

Dypedal, M. & Hasselgård, H. (2018). *Introducing English grammar* (3rd ed.). Fagbokforlaget.

Ebeling, J. (2016). Contrastive linguistics in a new key. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 15*(3), 7-14.

Education First. (2020). *English proficiency index*. https://www.ef.no/epi/regions/europe/norway/

Ellis, R. (2008a). Investigating grammatical difficulty in second language learning: Implications for second language acquisition research and language testing. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 18,* 4-22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2008.00184.x

Ellis, R. (2008b). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. & Johson, K. E. (1998). An evaluation of a genre-based approach to the teaching of EAP/ESP writing. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(1), 147-156. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587913

Enkvist, N. E. (1997). Why we need contrastive rhetoric. *Alternation, 4*, 188-206.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. Longman.

Farahani, M. V. (2019). Metadiscourse in academic English texts: A corpus-based probe into British academic written English corpus. *Studies about Languages, 34*, 56-73. https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.sal.0.34.21816

Farrokhi, F. & Ashrafi, S. (2009). Textual metadiscourse resources in research articles. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning, 52*(212), 39-75.

Farrokhi, F. & Sattarpour, S. (2012). The effects of direct written corrective feedback on improvement of grammatical accuracy of high-proficient L2 learners. *World Journal of Education, 2*(2), 49-57. http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/wje.v2n2p49

Fetzer, A. (2004). *Recontextualizing context: Grammaticality meets appropriateness*. John Benjamins.

Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

Flowerdew, J. (2011). Some dichotomies in genre analysis for
       languages for specific purposes. In V. Bhatia, P. S. Hernández
       & P. Pérez-Parades (Eds.), *Researching specialized languages*.
       (p. 139-154). John Benjamins.

Flowerdew, J. (2015). Revisiting metadiscourse: Conceptual and
       methodological issues concerning signalling nouns. *Ibérica*, 29,
       15-34.

Flowerdew, J. & Wan, A. (2006). Genre analysis of tax computation
       letters: How and why tax accountants write the way they do.
       English for Specific Purposes, 25(2), 133-153.
       https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2005.03.005

Fløttum, K., Dahl, T., Didriksen, A. A. & Gjesdal, A. M. (2013). KIAP
       - reflections on a complex corpus. *Bergen Language and
       Linguistic Studies, 3*(1), 137-150.
       https://doi.org/10.15845/bells.v3i1.367

Fløttum, K., Dahl, T. & Torodd K. (2006). *Academic voices*. John
       Benjamins.

Freedman, S. W., Hull, G. A., Higgs, J. M., & Booten, K. P. (2016).
       Teaching writing in a digital and global age: Toward access,
       learning, and development for all. In D. H. Gitomer & C. A.
       Bell (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (5th ed., p. 1389-
       1450). American Educational Research Association.

Friginal, E., Li, M. & Weigle, S. C. (2014). Revisiting multiple profiles
       of learner compositions: A comparison of highly rated NS and
       NNS essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 23*, 1-16.
       https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2013.10.001

Fu, X. & Hyland, K. (2014). Interaction in two journalistic genres: A
       study of interactional metadiscourse. *English Text Construction,
       7*(1), 122-144. https://doi.org/10.1075/etc.7.1.05fu

Fuertes-Olivera, P. A., Velasco-Sacristán, M., Arribas-Baño, A. &
       Samaniego-Fernández, E. (2001). Persuasion and advertising
       English: Metadiscourse in slogans and headlines. *Journal of*

Pragmatics, 33, 1291-1307. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(01)80026-6

Gardner, S. & Han. C. (2018). Transitions of contrast in Chinese and English university student writing. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 18*(4), 861-882. https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2018.4.0067

Gaskell, D. & Cobb, T. (2004). Can learners use concordance feedback for writing errors? *System, 32*(3), 301-319. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2004.04.001

Gass, S. M. Behney, J. & Plonsky L. (2020). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Gentil, G. (2011). A biliteracy agenda for genre research. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *20*, 6–23. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2010.12.006

Gholami, J. & Ilghami, R. (2016). Metadiscourse markers in biological research articles and journal impact factor: Non-native writers vs. native writers. *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education, 44*(4), 349-360. https://doi.org/10.1002/bmb.20961

Gillaerts, P. & Van de Velde, F. (2010). Interactional metadiscourse in research article abstracts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 9*(2), 128-139. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.004

Gnutzmann, C. & Rabe, F. (2014). 'Theoretical subtleties' or 'text modules'? German researchers' language demands and attitudes across disciplinary cultures. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 13*(1), 31-40. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2013.10.003

Grabe, W. (2008). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice.* Cambridge University Press.

Graddol, D. (1997). *The future of English. A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21st century.* The British Council.

Graham, S. (2019). Changing how writing is taught. *Review of Research in Education, 43*, 277-303. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X18821125

Granger, S. (1998). The computer learner corpus: A versatile new source of data for SLA research. In S. Granger (Ed.), *Learner English on computer* (p. 3-18). London.

Granger, S. (2009). The contribution of leaner corpora to second language acquisition and foreign language teaching: A critical evaluation. In K. Aijmer (Ed.), *Corpora and language teaching* (p. 13-32). John Benjamins.

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. Morgan (Eds.), *Speech acts* (p. 45–58). Academic Press.

Griffiths, J. (2001). *Norway and the United Kingdom*. Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Halliday, M. A. K. & Hasan, R. (1989). *Language, context and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. Oxford University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *An introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Hammond, P. (2018). *The UK's shared economic values with Sweden*. Gov.uk. https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-uks-shared-economic-values-with-sweden

Hannon, P. (2007). The history and future of literacy. In T. Grainger (Ed.). *The RoutledgeFalmer reader in language and literacy* (p. 19-32). RoutledgeFalmer.

Hartshorne, J. K., Tenenbaum, J. B. & Pinker, S. (2018). A critical period for second language acquisition: Evidence from 2/3 million English speakers. *Cognition, 177*, 263-277. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2018.04.007

Harwood, N. (2005). "Nowhere has anyone attempted … In this article I aim to do just that" A corpus-based study of self-promotional *I* and *we* in academic writing across four disciplines. *Journal of*

Pragmatics, 37(8), 1207-1231.
https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ami012

Hasselgreen, A. & Sundet, K. T. (2017). Introducing the CORYL corpus: What it is and how we can use it to shed light on learner language. *Bergen Language and Linguistics Studies, 7*, 197-215. http://dx.doi.org/10.15845/bells.v7i

Hasselgård, H. (2016). Discourse-organizing metadiscourse in novice academic English. In M. J. López-Couso, B. Méndez-Naya, P. Núñez-Pertejo & I. M. Palacios-Martínez (Eds.), *Corpus Linguistics on the move: Exploring and understanding English through corpora* (p. 106-131). Brill Rodopi.

Haugen, E. (2009). Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. In B. Comrie (Ed.), *The world's major languages* (2nd ed.)*.* Routledge.

Haugen, E. & Markey, T. L. (1973). *Scandinavian languages: Fifty years of linguistic research (1918 - 1968)*. Walter de Gruyter.

Hellekjær, G. O. (2007). *Fremmedspråk i norsk næringsliv - Engelsk er ikke nok!* Fremmedspråksenteret.

Hempel, S. & Degand, L. (2008). Sequencers in different text genres: Academic writing, journalese and fiction. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40,* 676-693.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.001

Herriman, J. (2009). Don't get me wrong! Negation in argumentative writing by Swedish and British students and professional writers. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 8*(3), 117-140. http://doi.org/10.35360/njes.200

Herriman, J. (2014). Metadiscourse in English and Swedish non-fiction texts and their translations. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *13*(1), 1-32. http://doi.org/10.35360/njes.291

Hinds, J. (2011). Reader versus writer responsibility: A new typology. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark essays on ESL writing* (p. 63-74)*.* Routledge.

Hinkel, E. (2005). Hedging, inflating, and persuading in L2 academic writing. *Applied Linguistic Learning, 15,* 29-53.

Hirvela, A. (2004). *Connecting reading & writing in second language writing instruction*. The University of Michigan Press.

Ho, V. (2018). Using metadiscourse in making persuasive attempts through workplace request emails. *Journal of Pragmatics, 134,* 70-81. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.06.015

Ho, V. & Li, C. (2018). The use of metadiscourse and persuasion: An analysis of first year university students' timed argumentative essays. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 33,* 53-68. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.02.001

Holliday, A. R. (1999). Small cultures. *Applied Linguistics, 20*, 237-264. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.2.237

Holmes, J. (1986). Functions of *you know* in women's and men's speech. *Language in Society, 15*, 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500011623

Hu, G. & Cao, F. (2015). Disciplinary and paradigmatic influences on interactional metadiscourse in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes, 39,* 12-25. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2015.03.002

Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (1998a). Exploring corporate rhetoric: Metadiscourse in the CEO's letter. *Journal of Business Communication 35*(2), p. 224-244. http://doi.org/10.1177/002194369803500203

Hyland, K. (1998b). *Hedging in scientific research*. John Benjamins.

Hyland, K. (2001). Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. *English for Scientific Purposes, 20*(3), 207-226. http://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(00)00012-0

Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*(2), 133-151. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.02.001

Hyland, K. (2005). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies, 7*(2), 173-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605050365

Hyland, K. (2006). *English for academic purposes: An advanced resource book*. Routledge.

Hyland, K. (2007a). Applying a gloss: Exemplifying and reformulating in academic disciplines. *Applied Linguistics, 28*(2), 266-285. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amm011

Hyland, K. (2007b). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 16*(3), 148-164. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.07.005

Hyland, K. (2010). Metadiscourse: Mapping interactions in academic writing. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *9*(2), 125-143. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.220

Hyland, K. (2016). Academic publishing and the myth of linguistic injustice. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 31*, 58-69. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.01.005

Hyland, K. (2017). Metadiscourse: What is it and where is it going? *Journal of Pragmatics, 113,* 16-29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.03.007

Hyland, K. (2019). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.

Hyland, K. & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching, 39*(2), 83-101. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444806003399

Hyland, K. & Milton, J. (1997). Qualification and certainty in L1 and L2 students' writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 6*(2), 183-205. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(97)90033-3

Hyland, K. & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics, 25*(2), 156-177. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/25.2.156

Hyltenstam, K. (2004). Engelskan, skolans språkundervisning och svensk språkpolitik. In Svenska Språknämnden (Ed.), *Engelskan*

i Sverige: Språkval i utbildning, arbete och kulturliv (p. 36–107). Norstedts Akademiska Förlag.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

IBM Corp. (2017). IBM SPSS statistics for Windows (Version 25.0) [Computer software]. IBM Corp.

Ifantidou, E. (2005). The semantics and pragmatics of metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 37*(9), 1325-1353. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.11.006

Institutet för Språk och Folkminnen (ISOF). (2021). *Avdelningen språkrådet*. https://www.isof.se/vart-uppdrag/om-myndigheten/organisation/avdelningar/avdelningen-sprakradet

Intraprawat, P. & Steffensen, M. S. (1995). The use of metadiscourse in good and poor ESL essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 4*(3), 253-272. https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(95)90012-8

Jakobson, R. (1990). *On language*. Harvard University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2005). ELF at the gate: The position of English as a Lingua Franca. *Humanising Language Teaching, 7*(2). http://www.hltmag.co.uk/mar05/idea.htm

Jenkins, J., Cogo, A. & Dewey, M. (2011). Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca. *Language Teaching, 44*(3), 281-315. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000115

Jiang, F. & Hyland, K. (2016). Nouns and academic interactions: A neglected feature of metadiscourse. *Applied Linguistics, 39*(4), 1-25. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw023

Jiang, J., Bi, P., Liu, H. (2019). Syntactic complexity development in the writings of EFL learners: Insights from a dependency syntactically-annotated corpus. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 46*, 100666. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2019.100666

Johansson, S. (2007). *Seeing through multilingual corpora: On the use of corpora in contrastive studies*. Benjamins.

Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2017). *Educational research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

Johnson, J. & Newport, E. (1989). Critical period effects in second language learning: The influence of maturational state on the acquisition of English as a second language. *Cognitive Psychology, 21,* 60-99.

Kachru, B. B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures* (2nd ed.). University of Illinois Press.

Kaneko, T. (2005). Semantic network makes things problematic: Use of vertical axis prepositions by Japanese learners of English. *Proceedings of the NICT JLE corpus symposium,* 7-10.

Kang, E. & Han, Z. (2015). The efficacy of written corrective feedback in improving L2 written accuracy: A meta-analysis. *The Modern Language Journal, 99*(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12189

Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning, 16*, 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1966.tb00804.x

Keshavarz, M. H. & Kheirieh, Z. (2011). Metadiscourse elements in English research articles written by native English and non-native Iranian writers in applied linguistics and civil engineering. *Journal of English Studies, 1*(3), 3-15.

Khabbazi-Oskouei, L. (2013). Propositional or non-propositional, that is the questions: A new approach to analysing "interpersonal metadiscourse" in editorials. *Journal of Pragmatics, 47*(1), 93-107. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2012.12.003

Khedri, M. & Kritsis, K. (2018). Metadiscourse in applied linguistics and chemistry. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics, 9*(2), 47-74. https://doi.org/10.22055/rals.2018.13793

Krashen, S. (1993). The effect of formal grammar teaching: Still peripheral. *TESOL Quarterly, 27*(4), 722-725. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587405

Krashen, S. (2013). *Second language acquisition: Theories, applications and some conjectures.* Cambridge University Press.

Kubota, R. (1998). An investigation of Ll-L2 transfer in writing among Japanese university students: Implications for contrastive rhetoric. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 7*(1), 69-100. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(98)90006-6

Kubota, R. & Lehner, A. (2004). Toward critical contrastive rhetoric. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*, 7-27. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.04.003

Kumpf, E. (2000). Visual metadiscourse: Designing the considerate text. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 9*, 401-424. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572250009364707

Kuteeva, M. (2013). Graduate learners' approaches to genre-analysis tasks: Variations across and within four disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, *32*(2), 84-96. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2012.11.004

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *Det kvalitative forskningsintervju* (3rd ed.). Gyldendal.

Lardiere D. (2009) Some thoughts on the contrastive analysis of features in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research, 25*(2), 173-227. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658308100283

Lea, M. R. & Street, B. V. (1998). Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, *23*(2), 157-172. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079812331380364

Lee, J. J. (2005). Native speaker: An achievable model? *Asian EFL Journal 7*(2), 152-163.

Lee, J. J. & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second*

Language Writing, 33, 21-34.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.004

Leech, N. N. & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2009). A typology of mixed methods research designs. *Quality and Quantity, 43,* 265-275. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-007-9105-3

Lemmouh, Z. (2008). The relationship between grades and the lexical richness of student essays. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 7*(3), 163-180. http://doi.org/10.35360/njes.106

Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. Wiley.

Liu, M. & Xu, Y. (2013). An investigation of syntactic errors in Chinese undergraduate EFL learners' compositions: A cohort study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 2*(4), 182-191. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.2n.4p.182

Ljosland, R. (2008). *Lingua franca, prestisjespråk og forestilt fellesskap: Om engelsk som akademisk språk i Norge* [Ph.D. Thesis]. Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Longo, B. (1994). The role of metadiscourse in persuasion. *Technical Communication, 41*(2)*,* 348-352.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2016). *Second language research: Methodology and design* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Mahalski, P. A. (1992). Essay-writing: Do study manuals give relevant advice? *Higher Education*, *24*(1), 113-132. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00138621

Malmström, H., Pecorari, D. & Shaw, P. (2018). Words for what? Contrasting university students' receptive and productive academic vocabulary needs. *English for Specific Purposes, 50*, 28-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2017.11.002

Mao, L. R. (1993). I conclude not: Toward a pragmatic account of metadiscourse. *Rhetoric Review, 11*(2), 265-289. https://doi.org/10.1080/07350199309389006

Martin, J. R. & White, P. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Mathieu, F. (2017). The failure of state multiculturalism in the UK? An analysis of the UK's multicultural policy for 2000-2015. *Ethnicities, 18*(1), 43-69. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796817713040

Mauranen, A. (1993a). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish-English economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes, 12*(1), 3-22. https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(93)90024-I

Mauranen, A. (1993b). C*ultural differences in academic rhetoric: A textlinguistic study*. Peter Lang.

Mauranen, A. (2012). *Exploring ELF: Academic English shaped by non-native speakers*. Cambridge University Press.

Maxwell-Reid, C. & Kartika-Ningsih, H. (2020). Nominal expansion in L2 adolescent writing: Functions and realizations of clausal embedding in argumentative texts. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 49*, 100751. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2020.100751

McCabe, A. & Belmonte, I. A. (2019). Challenging the concept of pure objectivity in British and Spanish hard news reports: The case of the 2006 Lebanon War. In C. Sancho-Guinda (Ed.), *Engagement in professional genres* (p. 67-86). John Benjamins.

McEnery, T. & Wilson, A. (2003). *Corpus linguistics: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh University Press.

McGrath, L. & Kuteeva, M. (2012). Stance and engagement in pure mathematics research articles: Linking discourse features to disciplinary practices. *English for Specific Purposes, 31*(3), 161-173. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2011.11.002

Mills, K. & Dooley, K. (2014). Teaching persuasive texts: Building a language of evaluation through hedging and moderated intensification. *Literacy Learning: The Middle Years, 22*(3), 33-41.

Ministry of Culture. (2009). *Language act (2009:600)*. https://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/9e56b0c78cb5447b968a29dd14a68358/spraklag-pa-engelska

Mocanu, M. (2015). An empirical analysis of metadiscourse in the abstracts of Romanian accounting research articles. *Accounting and Management Information Systems, 14*(2), 362-377.

Modiano, M. (1999). International English in the global village. *English Today, 15*(2), 22-27. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026607840001083X

Mohamed-Sayidina, A. (2010). Transfer of L1 cohesive devices and transition words into L2 academic texts: The case of arab students. *RELC Journal, 41*(3), 253-266. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688210380569

Monte-Sano, C. (2015). Qualities of historical writing instruction: A comparative case study of two teachers' practices. *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(4), 1045-1079. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831208319733

Moreno, A. I. (2021). Selling research in RA discussion sections through English and Spanish: An intercultural rhetoric approach. *English for Specific Purposes, 63*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2021.02.002

Mu, C., Zhang, L. J., Ehrich, J. & Hong, H. (2015). The use of metadiscourse for knowledge construction in Chinese and English research articles. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 20,* 135-148. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2015.09.003

Muñoz, C. & Singleton, D. (2011). A critical review of age-related research on L2 ultimate attainment. *Language Teaching, 44*(1), 1-35.

Mur Dueñas, Pilar. (2010). Attitude markers in business management research articles: A cross-cultural corpus-driven approach. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 20*(1), 50-72. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00228.x

Nystrand, M. (1996). *Opening diologue: Understanding the dynamics of language and learning in the English classroom*. Teachers College Press.

Office for National Statistics. (2013). *2011 Census: Detailed analysis - English language proficiency in England and Wales, main language and general health characteristics*. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/cultura lidentity/language/articles/detailedanalysisenglishlanguageprofi ciencyinenglandandwales/2013-08-30

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods designs in social science research. *The Qualitative Report, 12*(2), 281-316. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2007.1638

Ortega, L. (2019). SLA and the study of equitable multilingualism. *The Modern Language Journal, 103*, 23-38. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12525

Orts, M. A. (2016). Power distance and persuasion: The tension between imposition and legitimation in international legal genres. *Journal of Pragmatics, 92,* 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2015.11.009

Paikeday, T.M. (1985). *The native speaker is dead!* Lexicography Inc.

Penfield, W. & Robert, L. (1959). *Speech and brain mechanisms*. Atheneum Press.

Peterlin, A. P. (2005). Text-organising metatext in research articles: An English-Slovene contrastive analysis. *English for Specific Purposes, 24*(3), 307-319. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2004.11.001

Politzer-Ahles, S., Holliday, J. J., Girolamo, T., Spychalska, M. & Berkson, K. H. (2016). Is linguistic injustice a myth? A response to Hyland (2016). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *34*(3), 3-8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.09.003

Prince, E. F., Frader, J. & Bosk, C. (1980). *On hedging in physician-physician discourse* [Conference Presentation]. AAAL Symposium on Applied Linguistics in Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.

Proposisjoner til Stortinget. (2019). *Prop. 108 L. (2019–2020).* Regjeringen.no. https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/prop.-108-l-20192020/id2701451/?ch=13

Qin, W. & Ucceli, P. (2019). Metadiscourse: Variation across communicative contexts. *Journal of Pragmatics, 139*, 22-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.10.004

Rahman, M. (2004). Aiding the reader: The use of metalinguistic devices in scientific discourse. *Nottingham Linguistic Circular, 18*, 29-48.

Reynolds, D. (2005). Linguistic correlates of second language literacy development: Evidence from middle-grade learner essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 14*(1), 19-45. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.09.001

Reynolds, J. F., Matalene, C. B., Magnotto, J. N., Samson Jr. D. C., Sadler, L. V. (1995). *Professional writing in context lessons from teaching and consulting in worlds of work.* Routledge.

Richards, J. & Rodgers, T. S. (2019). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Rindal, U. (2014). What is English? *Acta Didactica Norge, 8*(2), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.5617/adno.1137

Sadeghi, K. & Esmaili, S. (2012). Frequency of textual metadiscourse resources (MTRs) in two original and simplified novels. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 3*(4), 647-652. https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.3.4.647-652

Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes, 13*, 149-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(94)90013-2

Salas, M. D. (2015). Reflexive metadiscourse in research articles in Spanish: Variation across three disciplines (linguistics, economics and medicine). *Journal of Pragmatics, 77*, 20-40. https://doi.org/10.4067/s0718-09342015000100005

Samraj, B. (2002). Introductions in research articles: Variations across disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes, 21*(1), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(00)00023-5

Sancho-Guinda, C. (2019). Networking engagement in professional practices. In C. Sancho-Guinda (Ed.), *Engagement in professional genres* (p. 1-28). John Benjamins.

Sanford, S. G. (2012). A comparison of metadiscourse markers and writing quality in adolescent written narratives [Bachelor's thesis]. Montana State University.

Sawaki, Y., Quinlan, T. & Lee, Y. (2013). Understanding learner strengths and weaknesses: Assessing performance on an integrated writing task. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 10*(1), 73-95. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2011.633305

Scott, M. (2020). *WordSmith Tools* (Version 8) [Computer software]. Lexical Analysis Software.

Simensen, A. M. (2013). Skolefaget engelsk: Fra britisk engelsk til mange slags "engelsker"– og veien videre. *Acta Didactica Norge, 8*(2), 1-18.

Shaw, P. (2003). Evaluation and promotion across languages. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 2*(4), 343-357. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1475-1585(03)00050-X

Shaw, P. (2016). Genre analysis. In K. Hyland & P. Shaw (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of English for academic purposes* (p. 243-255). Taylor & Francis.

Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly, 27*(4), 657-677. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587400

Siyanova-Chanturia, A. (2015). Collocation in beginner learner writing: A longitudinal study. *System, 53*, 148-160. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.07.003

Skolverket. (2018). *Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educare 2011*. Skolverket.

https://www.skolverket.se/download/18.31c292d516e7445866a
218f/1576654682907/pdf3984.pdf

Skolverket. (2020). *English*. Skolverket.
https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/gymnasieskolan/laropla
n-program-och-amnen-i-gymnasieskolan/amnesplaner-i-
gymnasieskolan-pa-engelska

Smith, K. (2006). In defense of the five-paragraph essay. *English
Journal, 95*(4), 16-17.

Sperber, D. & Wilson, D. (2004). Relevance theory. In L. R. Horn & G.
Ward (Eds.), *The handbook of pragmatics* (p. 607-632).
Blackwell.

Språkrådet. (2021). *Om oss*. https://www.sprakradet.no/Vi-og-vart/Om-
oss/

Stetsenko, A. & Arievitch, I. (1997). Constructing and deconstructing
the self: Comparing post-Vygotskian and discourse-based
versions of social constructivism. *Mind, Culture, and Activity,
4*(3), 159-172. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca0403_3

Subtirelu, N. (2013). What (do) learners want (?): A re-examination of
the issue of learner preferences regarding the use of 'native'
speaker norms in English language teaching. *Language
Awareness, 22*(3), 270-291.
https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2012.713967

Sundqvist, P. & Sylvén, L. K. (2016). *Extramural English in teaching
and learning.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Swales, J. M. (1990) *Genre analysis: English in academic and research
settings*. Cambridge University Press.

Swales, J. M. (2014). The concept of discourse community. In E.
Wardle & D. Downs (Eds.), *Writing about writing: A college
reader* (2nd ed.) (p. 215-229). Bedford/St. Martin's.

Swales, J. M. (2016). Reflections on the concept of discourse
community. *Concepts and Frameworks in English for Specific
Purposes, 69*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.4774

Tarrayo, V. (2014). Exploring interactions in L2 blogging: Metadiscourse in Philippine investigative journalism blogs. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 2*(3), 35-53. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15951

Tavakoli, M., Bahrami, L. & Amirian, Z. (2012). Improvement of metadiscourse use among Iranian EFL learners through a process-based writing course. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 9(9), 129-164.

Taylor, H. & Goodall, J. (2019). A preliminary investigation into the rhetorical function of 'I' in different genres of successful business student academic writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 38*, 135-145. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.01.009

Thompson, G. & Theleta, P. (1995). The sound of one hand clapping: The management of interaction in written discourse. *Text*, *15*(1), 103-127. https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1995.15.1.103

Thomson, J. J. (2016). Hedging in year nine girls' and boys' written English in Norwegian schools [Master's thesis]. University of Stavanger.

Thomson, J. J. (2018). Hedging in English texts written by lower secondary pupils attending Norwegian schools. *Nordic Journal of Modern Language Methodology, 6*(1), 46-65. https://doi.org/10.46364/njmlm.v6i1.411

Tinsley, T. & Board, K. (2013). *Languages for the future: Which languages the UK needs most and why*. British Council.

Toumi, N. (2009). A model for the investigation of reflexive metadiscourse in research articles. *Language Studies Working Papers, 1*, 64-73.

Tribble, C. (2010). A genre-based approach to developing materials for writing. In J. C. Richards (Ed.), *English language teaching materials* (p. 157-178). Cambridge University Press.

Triki, N. (2019). Revisiting the metadiscursive aspect of definitions in academic writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *37*, 104-116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.11.010

Tåqvist, M. K. (2016). Facts and things: Advanced ESL learners' use of discourse-organising nouns. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 15*(4), 107-134. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.386

Uccelli, P., Dobbs, C. & Scott, J. (2013). Mastering academic language: Organization and stance in the persuasive writing of high school students. *Written Communication, 30*(1)*, 36-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088312469013

Ukagba, G. & Idemudia Odia, S. (2014). The epistemic status of propositions of future events. *Idea Studia Nad Strukturą i Rozwojem Pojęć Filozoficznych, 26*, 393-405. https://doi.org/10.15290/idea.2014.26.24

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2006). *English - programme subject in programmes for specialization in general studies.* Utdanningdirektoratet. https://www.udir.no/kl06/ENG4-01?lplang=http://data.udir.no/kl06/eng.

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2019). *Fag- og timefordeling og tilbudsstruktur for Kunnskapsløftet Udir-1-2019.* Utdanningdirektoratet. https://www.udir.no/regelverkstolkninger/opplaring/Innhold-i-opplaringen/udir-1-2019/vedlegg-1/2.-grunnskolen/#2.2ordinar-fag-og-timefordeling

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2020). *Læreplan i engelsk.* Utdanningsdirektoratet. https://data.udir.no/kl06/v201906/laereplaner-lk20/ENG01-04.pdf?lang=nob

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2021). *Finn eksamensoppgaver.* Utdanningsdirektoratet. https://sokeresultat.udir.no/eksamensoppgaver.html

Valero-Garcés, C. (1996). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Spanish-English economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes, 15*(4), 279-294. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(96)00013-0

Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication, 36*(1), 82-93. https://doi.org/10.2307/357609

Vande Kopple, W. J. (2002). Metadiscourse, discourse and issues in compositions and rhetoric. In E. Barton & G. Stygall (Eds.), *Discourse studies in composition* (p. 91-114). Hampton Press Inc.

Vassileva, I. (1998). Who am I/who are we in academic writing? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 8*(2), 163-190. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.1998.tb00128.x

Virtanen, T. & Halmari, H. (2005). Persuasion across genres: Emerging perspectives. In H. Halmari & T. Virtananen (Eds.), *Persuasion across genres* (p. 3-26). John Benjamins.

Vo, S. (2019). Use of lexical features in non-native academic writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 44*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2018.11.002

Vyatkina, N., Hirschmann, H., Golcher, F. (2015). Syntactic modification at early stages of L2 German writing development: A longitudinal learner corpus study. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 29*, 28-50. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2015.06.006

Webb, S. & Nation, P. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*. Oxford University Press.

Weblingua Ltd. (2020). *Text inspector*. https://textinspector.com/

Wingate, U. (2012). "Argument!" Helping students understand what essay writing is about. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 11*, 145-154. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2011.11.001

Wolfe-Quintero, K., Inagaki, S. & Kim, H. (1998). *Second language development in writing: Measures of fluency, accuracy, and complexity*. University of Hawai'i Press.

Xiaoqiong, B. H. & Xianxing, J. (2011). Kachru's three concentric circles and English teaching fallacies in EFL and ESL Contexts. *Changing English, 18*(2), 219-228. https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2011.575254

Yates, J. & Orlikowski, W. J. (1992). Genres of organizational communication: A structurational approach to studying communication and media. *Academy of Management Review, 17*(2), 299-326. https://doi.org/10.2307/258774

Yavari, M. & Kashani, A. F. (2013). Gender-based study of metadiscourse in research articles' rhetorical sections. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 2*(2), 77-88. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.2n.2p.77

Yoon, H. (2017). Textual voice elements and voice strength in EFL argumentative writing. *Assessing Writing, 32*, 72-84. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2017.02.002

Zhang, M., Sun, W., Peng, H., Gan, Q. & Yu, B. (2017). A multidimensional analysis of metadiscourse markers across spoken registers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *117*, 106-118. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.06.004

Ädel, A. (2005). On the boundaries between evaluation and metadiscourse. In L. C. Tognini-Bonelli & G. Del (Eds.), *Strategies in academic discourse* (p. 153-162). John Benjamins.

Ädel, A. (2006). *Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English*. John Benjamins.

Ädel, A. (2010). Just to give you a kind of map of where we are going: A taxonomy of metadiscourse in spoken and written academic speech. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 9*(2), 69-97. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.218

Ädel, A. (2017). Remember that your reader cannot read your mind: Problem/solution-oriented metadiscourse in teacher feedback on

student writing. *English for Specific Purposes, 45,* 54-68.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2016.09.002

Ädel, A. (2018). Variation in metadiscursive "you" across genres:
From research articles to teacher feedback. *Educational
Sciences: Theory & Practice, 18*(4): 777-796.
https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2018.4.0037

Ädel, A. (2021). Corpus compilation. In M. Paquot, S. & T. Gries
(Eds.), *A practical handbook of corpus linguistics.* Springer.

Ädel, A. & Mauranen, A. (2010). Metadiscourse: Diverse and divided
perspectives. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 9*, 1-11.
https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.215

Appendices

Appendix A: Search terms

Signposting

Code Gloss

Exemplifier (20): as, displayed, e.g., example, examples, highlighted, illustrate, illustrates, illustration, include, included, includes, including, instance, like, say, seen, shown, such,)

Reformulator (16): as, called, defined, i.e., known, meaning, means, meant, namely, or, other words, otherwise, referred, stands, that is,)

Phoric Marker

Enumerator (27): 1, 2, 3, begin, conclude, continuing, final, finally, first, firstly, followed, following, last, lastly, moving, next, one, opening, overall, second, secondly, start, starting, third, thirdly, two, whole

Pre- and review (24): above, again, already, as, back, discuss, discussed, discussing, discussion, earlier, established, following, former, going to, last, latter, look, mentioned, previous, previously, said, stated, suggested, will

Topic marker

Introducing (12): aim, analysis, begin, essay, intend, introduce, introduction, investigate, investigation, paper, task, text

Reference to text (7): analysis, blog, essay, investigation, project, study, writing this

Shift/identify topic (21): anyway, as for, as to, considering, in particular, in terms of, look, looking, moving, namely, notably, now, particular,

regard, regarding, regards, resume, return, thinking, well, when it came, when it comes

Concluding (12): all in all, conclude, concluded, conclusion, conclusively, end, final, finally, last, overall, sum, summary

Transition

Additive (17): addition, additionally, along, alongside, also, another, as, at the same time, following, further, furthermore, moreover, on top, simultaneously, so, too

Comparative (58): all the same, although, another, anyway, as, aside, at the same time, besides, but, compared, comparison, contrary, contrast, contrasting, contrastingly, conversely, correspondingly, despite, equally, even if, even though, even when, except, however, instead, like, likened, likening, likewise, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, no matter, nonetheless, nor, one hand, one side, oppose, opposed, or, other hand, other side, otherwise, rather, regardless, similar, similarly, still, than, then, though, unlike, vs, versus, whereas, while, whilst, yet

Inferential (58): affect, affected, affecting, affects, as, based, because, by doing, cause, caused, causes, causing, consequence, consequences, consequently, considering, down to, due, effect, effected, effects, following, for this purpose, given, hence, if, in order to, in this way, in turn, lead, leading, leads, mean, meaning, means, meant, otherwise, outcome, reason, result, resulted, resulting, results, seeing, since, so, subsequently, thanks to, then, thereafter, thereby, therefor, therefore, through, thus, unless, when, with this in mind

Stance

Attitude markers

Complexity (18): advanced, basic, challenge, challenges, challenging, complex, complicated, difficult, easier, easily, easy, hard, perplexing, struggle, understand, understandable, understanding, understood

Emotion (43): agree, appealing, calm, depressing, disappointed, embarrassing, enjoy, fear, feel, feeling, feelings, feels, felt, frightening, happy, hope, hoped, hopefully, hoping, interest, interested, interesting, interests, like, love, loved, mundane, pleasure, prefer, proud, sad, satisfied, scary, shock, shocking, surprise, surprised, surprising, surprisingly, tense, tension, terrifying, unfortunately

Morality (41): acceptable, appropriate, awful, bad, better, blame, correct, cruel, cruelty, dangerous, democratic, egocentric, evil, fault, forbidden, good, immoral, improve, innocent, misleading, moral, morally, must, nasty, need, needed, needing, needs, ok, okay, racist, right, should, taboo, terrible, unfair, value, well, worse, worst, wrong

Ascribing qualities (115): accurate, attractive, average, bad, beautiful, beauty, beneficial, better bright, capable, comedic, comfortable, confident, confused, conservative, cool, correct, crazy, critical, crucial, dramatic, effective, effectively, engaging, entertaining, essential, exaggerated, exciting, fault, friendly, fun, fundamental, funny, good, great, harsh, helpful, honest, humorous, ideal, importance, important, improve, improved, improvement, improves, influential, intellectual, intense, intimate, key, minor, mistake, mistakes, modern, mundane, natural, naturally, negative, negatively, nice, odd, okay, ordinary, perfect, perfectly, poor, popular, positive, powerful, prime, problem, problematic, prominent, proper, reasonable, relatable, relevant, responsible, right, safe, serious, significant, strange, strong, stronger, stupid, subtle, success, successful, successfully, superior, surprise, surprised, terrible, threatening, traditional, tragedy, tragic, trouble,

unique, unusual, useful, vague, value, vital, vivid, vulnerable, weak, well, wild, wonderful, worse, wrong

Booster

Amplifier (64): a lot, all, alone, and, as, big, considerable, considerably, drastic, drastically, enormous, especially, even, ever, extra, extreme, extremely, far, fundamentally, great, greatly, heavily, heavy, highly, how, huge, if not, incredibly, indeed, just, major, massive, massively, mere, merely, much, only, particularly, perfect, prodigious, pure, purely, really, ridiculously, serious, severe, severely, significant, significantly, so, steadfast, strong, strongly, substantial, such, super, terribly, vast, vastly, very, well, whole, yet, !

Plausibility Booster (47): actually, all, apparent, certain, certainly, clear, clearly, definite, definitely, direct, directly, doubtlessly, evident, fact, glaring, indeed, knew, know, literally, must, naturally, no doubt, not, obvious, obviously, of course, proof, prove, proves, proving, real, reality, really, safe to say, self-evident, show, showed, showing, shown, shows, supports, sure, surely, true, truly, undisputedly, undoubtedly

Universal (63): 100, absolute, all, always, any, anybody, anyone, anything, anywhere, best, biggest, clearest, closest, complete, completely, consistent, constant, constantly, easiest, endless, entire, entirely, eternal, every, everybody, everyone, everything, exact, exactly, for good, forever, full, fully, funniest, greatest, highest, impossible, just, largest, least, most, nearest, never, newest, no, nobody, none, not, nothing, only, perfect, perfectly, purely, sole, solely, strongest, the one, throughout, total, totally, unlimited, whole, yes

Engagement Marker

Engagement strategies (16)**:** believe, break out, by the way, compare, consider, forget, go, listen, look, open, p.s., remember, think, try, ?,)

Reader reference (20): for anyone who, friend, let's, one, ones, oneself, our, ourselves, us, we, we'd, we're, we've, you, you'd, you'll, your, you're, yourself, you've

Evidential (162): according, accused, accuses, accusing, addressed, addresses, agree, agreed, agreeing, appeal, appealing, appeals, argue, argued, argues, as shown, ask, asked, asking, asks, assume, believe, believed, believes, bring up, brought up, call, called, calling, calls, claim, claimed, claims, clarifies, compare, compared, compares, comparing, convey, conveyed, conveys, criticize, criticized, criticizing, denotes, depicted, depicts, describe, described, describes, describing, discussed, discusses, dispute, employ, employing, employs, exaggerates, explain, explained, explaining, explains, explanation, express, expressed, expressing, feel, feels, felt, find, finds, found, in text, include, included, includes, including, judge, judges, likening, mean, means, meant, mention, mentioned, mentioning, mentions, opinion, portray, portrayed, portrays, poses, posted, promote, promoted, promoting, proposal, proposed, published, put, quarrel, quote, quoted, quotes, raps, refer, referred, referring, refers, repeat, repeated, repeats, replies, represent, represented, representing, represents, responded, said, say, says, show, showed, showing, shown, shows, sing, singing, sings, situates, state, stated, stating, suggest, suggested, suggests, sung, support, supported, supports, talk, talked, talking, talks, tell, think, thinking, thinks, thought, told, use, used, uses, using, utilises, utilizes, write, writes, written, wrote,), *'s

Hedge

Rounder (64): almost, along the lines, around, certain, close, common, commonly, fair, few, frequent, frequently, general, generally, great, hours, hundreds, indefinitely, largely, little, loads, lot, lots, mainly, majority, many, most, mostly, much, multiple, near, nearly, normally, not, number, numerous, occasional, occasionally, often, or so, other, others, partially, partly, range, regular, regularly, roughly, several, some,

sometimes, somewhere, tend, tends, thousands, times, towards, typically, uncommon, usual, usually, variety, various, widely, *n't

Downtoner (30): almost, at least, barely, bit, borderline, certain, essentially, fairly, hardly, in a way, just, kind, little, merely, more or less, near, not, only, practically, pretty, quite, rather, relatively, slight, slightly, some, somewhat, sort of, *ish, *n't

Plausibility Shield (50): apparent, apparently, appear, appeared, appears, arguably, argue, assumption, can, could, evidence, implied, implies, imply, implying, indicate, indicated, indicates, indicating, indication, likely, may, maybe, might, necessarily, not, perhaps, possibility, possible, possibly, potential, potentially, probably, seem, seemingly, seems, suggest, suggested, suggesting, suggestion, suggests, support, supported, supporting, supports, suppose, supposed, uncertain, uncertainty, unlikely

First Person Hedge (18): argue, argument, assume, believe, believing, feel, felt, guess, intended, like, not, opinion, personally, think, thought, understand, understanding, *n't

Self Mention (9): I, I'd, I'm, I've, me, mine, my, myself, we, we'd

Total: 1,034 search terms

Appendix B: Consent form for pupils

Please read the information carefully and fill out the details below.

Aim of project: This research project is run by James Jacob Thomson, based at the University of Stavanger, Norway. The aim is to find out how British and Scandinavian pupils use "metadiscourse". Put simply, metadiscourse is a term used for language that organises text and language that shows a writer's opinion. This is the first study to look at British and Scandinavian school writing. The findings of the study will be published in a series of academic articles.

What does the study involve? This study involves analysing pupil texts written for English classes during the school year 2017-2018 to look for metadiscourse. The researcher will collect around 100 school texts from the UK, 100 from Norway and 100 from Sweden. Participation is voluntary and it will not affect relations between pupils and their school.

What happens to the information? This study follows guidelines set by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. All data are password protected and is not accessible via internet. All personal details will be made anonymous in the published articles and when the project ends in 2020, all personal details will be deleted. Anonymized data may be shared with others for research purposes. Participants may also ask for their texts, interviews and personal details to be deleted at any time by sending an e-mail to james.thomson@uis.no.

After reading the information, please fill out the following:

Do you consent for your written work to be used for this research?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

If "yes", please fill out the details below.
1. Name:_____
2. Gender:_____
3. Mother tongue:_____
4. Nationality:_____
5. Number of years attending British schools:_____
6. Do you consent to sharing your grades with the researcher?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
7. Do you consent to your work being anonymously shared?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Date:_____ Sign:_____

Appendix C: Consent form for teachers

This is a consent form for volunteers taking part in a research project based at the University of Stavanger. Please read the information carefully and sign below.

Aim of project:

This research project is run by James Jacob Thomson, based at the University of Stavanger, Norway. The aim of the project is to find out how British and Scandinavian pupils use "metadiscourse". Put simply, metadiscourse is a term used for language that organises text and language that shows a writer's opinion. This is the first study to look at British and Scandinavian school writing. The findings of the study will be published in 3 to 5 academic articles.

What does the study involve?

This study involves analysing pupil texts written for English classes during the school year 2017-2018 to look for metadiscourse. The researcher will collect around 100 school texts from the UK, 100 from Norway and 100 from Sweden. Pupils and teachers may also participate in interviews. The interviews will be about the texts collected for the project. Participation is voluntary and it will not affect relations between pupils and their school.

What happens to the information?

The study is registered with the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. All data are password protected and is not accessible via internet. Only those involved in the project will have access to the material. Participants will be made anonymous in the published articles. When the project ends in 2020, all personal details will be deleted. Participants may also ask for their texts, interviews and personal details to be deleted at any time by sending an e-mail to james.thomson@uis.no.

After reading the information, please sign below:

I consent to participate in an interview and understand that the information divulged may be used for research purposes under the conditions outlined above.

Date:_____ Sign:_____

Appendix D: Interview guide for teachers

Interview guide for Teachers

Biography
1. What qualifications do you have in English?
2. Teaching experience:
   a. How long have you been teaching?
   b. Which subjects do you teach? How many hours a week do you teach English?
   c. Have you taught at other levels?

Marking Texts
3. How often do your pupils write (non-fiction) texts?
4. How do you give feedback on written work?
5. When grading texts, do you use externally set guidelines/rubrics?
   a. If yes, how useful do you find these?
   b. If yes, do you consider anything else in particular that is not specified in the guidelines?
6. Do you use any writing guides to aid your practices of teaching writing? If yes, which ones?

Writer-reader relations
7. Do you teach pupils about writer-reader relations? If so, what?
8. Do you explicitly teach your pupils to consider any specific audience? If yes, who?
9. Do you generally find that their texts are aimed at engaging you or another audience?
10. Do you teach about using personal pronouns (e.g. "I", "my")? If so, what?
11. Do you teach pupils anything about directly engaging their audience (e.g. by using questions or 2nd/3rd person pronouns)? If so, what?

Organisation

12. Do you teach your pupils about text organisation? If yes, what?
13. (Do you teach pupils about how to organise a paragraph/overall text structure?)
14. Can you comment on how your pupils organise their texts in general? What are they good at and what problems do they face?
15. Do you teach pupils about linking words (e.g. "however", "nonetheless", "as I already mentioned")? If so, how?
16. Do you teach pupils about words and phrases to introduce or conclude their essays (e.g. "in this essay", "this paper aims to", "in summary")? If so, how

Argumentation

17. Do you teach pupils on how to make arguments? If yes, what?
18. Can you comment on pupils' strengths and weaknesses when making arguments? Do they make arguments too carefully or too assertively?
19. Do you teach pupils about citing sources? If yes, what?
20. Do you teach pupils about words, such as "perhaps", "maybe", "roughly", to make arguments carefully? If so, how?
21. Do you teach pupils about words, such as "definitely", "everybody", "always", to make arguments assertively? If so, how?

22. Would you like to add anything else?

Thank you for contributing to this research and for taking time to participate in this interview.

Appendix E: Letter of approval from NSD

Vår dato: 01.06.2017 Vår ref: 54197 / 3 / AGH

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 25.04.2017. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

54197 Metadiscourse use in English texts written by upper secondary level pupils attending Scandinavian and British schools

Behandlingsansvarlig Universitetet i Stavanger, ved institusjonens øverste leder

Daglig ansvarlig James Thomson

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meld_endringer.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 15.04.2020, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Kjersti Haugstvedt   Agnete Hessevik

Kontaktperson: Agnete Hessevik tlf: 55 58 27 97

Article 1

Metadiscourse in upper secondary pupil essays: Adapting a taxonomy

Abstract

The concept of metadiscourse, which refers to a range of interactional and organisational linguistic resources, has been increasingly used in studies that analyse professional and tertiary-level writing. Although studies tend to support the teaching of metadiscourse to tertiary-level students and have even promoted its potential value at the pre-tertiary level, the pool of studies that have investigated upper secondary pupil writing is relatively small. This study contributes to this research pool by investigating metadiscourse in 56 English essays belonging to five genres written at Norwegian and British upper secondary schools. By adapting a taxonomy based on several previous studies, the analysis accounts for the particular metadiscourse features in the corpus, and identifies which features characterise each of the five genres. For example, linguistic investigations, which were longer and more academic-like, used more topic and phoric markers to guide readers through the essay's content. Opinion pieces, in contrast, contained more engagement markers and boosters as pupils were tasked with targeting a lay audience. The results have implications for future research that aims to investigate the use of metadiscourse in pre-tertiary writing.

Keywords: signposting, stance, novice writing

1 Introduction

Over the past few decades, metadiscourse, a term that refers to linguistic resources that have interactional and organisational functions, has been the focal point of a growing number of studies investigating the interpersonal features of professional writing (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014; Fu & Hyland, 2014). Although Hyland (2017) has documented the growing range of research directions in which metadiscourse is being taken, such as academic speaking and online-communication, Ädel (2018, p. 55) maintains that it is predominantly "highly visible and high-prestige genres in academia that have been investigated thus far". Although pre-tertiary writing is not far removed from such high-prestige genres, it has received little attention in previous studies (e.g. Dobbs, 2013). This study therefore aims to contribute to the relatively small body of research by analysing English essays written by upper secondary pupils based at Norwegian and British schools. The aim of this study is not to compare how first and second language speakers of English use metadiscourse, but instead to investigate metadiscourse in essays written in the British and Scandinavian contexts, in which pupils in the latter are expected to be of B2-proficiency or higher (Council of Europe 2001). Norway is ranked third of 100 countries in terms of English skills (Education First, 2019), indicating that upper secondary pupils studying English should be highly proficient. Norwegian and British classrooms today often comprise pupils with various linguistic backgrounds so, rather than comparing groups based on their first languages, this study addresses the impact that educational systems have on pupils' literacy skills. It is these educational systems that determine the genres in which pupils write, which may consequently influence teacher advice regarding, for example, metadiscourse features. By combining categories from several previous studies (e.g. Hyland, 2019; Ädel, 2006) and using search terms based on the present corpus (Qin & Uccelli, 2019), this study addresses the following research questions:

1) Which metadiscourse features are present in five genres of non-fiction English essays written by upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian and British schools?
2) How are metadiscourse features used in each of the five genres in the corpus?

This study proposes a taxonomy suited to analysing upper secondary level writing and exemplifies how pupils make use of each of the categories in five genres. Since the models used in the majority of previous studies were based on features of professional writing (e.g. Hyland, 2019), they may not account for all the features of upper secondary pupil writing (e.g. Qin & Uccelli, 2019). While professional writing often serves to communicate with a wider audience, school-based writing is often aimed at teachers and examiners who are testing pupils' subject-based knowledge and writing skills. In order to account for this, a taxonomy was devised based on the content of the current corpus. The corpus consists of essays written for assessments set by teachers at four schools based on exam board criteria (e.g. AQA, 2019), thus providing a basis for investigating the metadiscoursal resources on which upper secondary pupils rely.

2 Metadiscourse-related research

Previous studies have offered various operationalisations of metadiscourse, such as Ädel's (2006) reflexive model, and Abdi, Rizi and Tavakoli's (2010) cooperative model. One of the most widely used is the interpersonal model (e.g. Vande Kopple, 1985), which is based on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) three metafunctions of language: ideational, interpersonal and textual. Ideational aspects of language embody the main message that one wishes to express. Interpersonal aspects function to maintain social relationships. Textual aspects function to organise the unfolding discourse. Linguistic aspects that function either interpersonally or textually are considered to be metadiscourse, which can be defined as "aspects of a text which

explicitly organise a discourse or writer's stance towards either its content or the reader" (Hyland, 2019, p. 16). While previous studies refer to interpersonal aspects as interactional metadiscourse (e.g. Hu & Cao, 2015), this study uses the term "stance" (Hyland, 2005), and while previous studies refer to textual aspects as interactive metadiscourse (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014), this study uses the term "signposting" (Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015). Additionally, like Ifantidou (2005), this study rejects the idea that metadiscourse should be considered to be non-propositional (e.g. Vande Kopple, 1985), instead recognising that, considering their semantic and pragmatic value, signposting and stance markers contribute to propositional content.

A large body of research has investigated metadiscourse in English writing in professional and tertiary-level contexts. These studies have had a variety of foci, such as identifying genre features (e.g. Hempel & Degand, 2008) or comparing metadiscourse across languages (e.g. Dahl, 2004). A wide range of professional genres have been analysed, including academic writing (Hu & Cao, 2015), newspaper discourse (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Khabbazi-Oskouei, 2013), and popular science articles (Fu & Hyland, 2014). These studies have highlighted both the functions that signposts and stance markers fulfil and the ways in which these features typify each genre. For example, Fu and Hyland (2014) found that authors of popular science articles persuade their audience by hedging scientific claims while avoiding questions and first-person pronouns, thus allowing scientific findings to speak for themselves. Authors of opinion pieces, on the other hand, address their audience directly, ask questions, and boost claims to persuade their readers (Fu & Hyland, 2014, p. 24-25).

Unlike previous studies, the present study does not compare how first and second language speakers of English use metadiscourse, focusing instead on educational contexts, but studies that have compared metadiscourse across various language contexts are considered relevant, nevertheless (e.g. Crismore, Markkanen & Steffensen, 1993). A handful

of studies have compared the use of metadiscourse in Scandinavian languages with English (e.g. Blagojevic, 2004; Dahl, 2004). Findings have shown that Norwegian academic authors use metadiscourse at similar frequencies to British authors, both when writing in their mother tongue and when writing in English (Blagojevic, 2004; Dahl, 2004). This indicates that rhetorical practices in professional Norwegian and English writing are similar compared with other languages, such as French, where authors have been found to use around half the number of signposts (Dahl, 2004).

Metadiscourse in tertiary-level English writing has received considerable attention (e.g. Çandarlı, Bayyurt & Martı, 2015; Hasselgård, 2016; Ho & Li, 2018; Qin & Uccelli, 2019; Ädel, 2006). Hasselgård (2016) compared professional and novice writing, finding that professional writing contains lower frequencies of signposting. Hasselgård (2016: 127) argued that professional writing is more reader-responsible, meaning that it relies on fewer signposts as readers are expected to navigate their own way through the text (Hinds, 2011). In Scandinavian-based studies of tertiary-level writing, students who speak English as an additional language were found to use more metadiscourse than native speakers (Ädel, 2006; Hasselgård, 2016). Ädel (2006, p. 154) offered several explanations for these findings, such as that the students had different cultural backgrounds, or that they were writing for different purposes.

Only a handful of studies have analysed metadiscourse-related features in essays written at pre-tertiary levels (e.g. Dobbs, 2014). Qin and Uccelli (2019) compared metadiscourse used by high school, undergraduate and graduate students, finding, for example, that the youngest group used fewer hedges. Uccelli, Dobbs & Scott (2013) investigated how textual quality correlates with metadiscoursal features in upper secondary persuasive essays. They found that higher frequencies of signposts and hedges significantly correlated with higher quality, alluding to the teachers' values, such as good organisation and acknowledging other perspectives. Since pedagogical courses often

focus on training teachers to write academically, they argued, "it is not surprising that the features they would value in their students' writing are in fact core markers of organisation and stance in skilled academic writing" (Uccelli, Dobbs & Scott, 2013, p. 53). Finally, none of the reviewed studies analyse metadiscourse in pre-tertiary English writing in a Scandinavian context.

3 Methods

For this exploratory study, a corpus of upper secondary pupil essays was collected and analysed using an adapted taxonomy. Based on the results of descriptive statistical testing (Lowie & Seton, 2013), this study presents the metadiscourse features of pupils' writing in each genre and in the corpus overall. This section explains the procedure for compiling the corpus and outlines how categories were chosen for the taxonomy.

3.1 Building the Corpus

For the purposes of this exploratory study, a small corpus of essays was collected from two Norwegian schools and two British schools (see Table 1).

The sample was a convenience sample since the schools were contacted via this study's affiliated university. The British and Norwegian

Table 1. Text types in corpus written at British and Norwegian schools.

	Total number of texts (number of pupils)		Total word count and average length	Average grade and range
	UK	Norway		
Political analyses (timed)	-	10 (2)	11,182 (1118)	C (B-E)
Literary analyses (timed)	-	11 (3)	13,819 (1256)	C (B-E)
Linguistic investigations (coursework)	8 ⎱ (8)	-	21,918 (2740)	A (A-B)
Opinion pieces (coursework)	5 ⎰	-	5,212 (1042)	B (A-C)
Reflective pieces (coursework)	22 (22)	-	45,312 (2060)	B (A-F)
Total	35 (30)	21 (5)	97,470	

educational systems group pupils by age differently1, so data were collected from pupils completing their final school year, as these pupils may be preparing to begin tertiary studies, meaning that this study may be relevant for both school and university teachers. Altogether, the corpus comprises 56 essays, 35 written by 30 pupils at the British schools (72,442 words) and 21 written by five pupils at the Norwegian schools (25,001 words). Although the corpus is too small for performing inductive statistical tests, it provided rich data for exploring the kinds of metadiscourse that pupils at this level rely on. While most of the pupils were native speakers of English or Norwegian, five pupils reported having other first languages. Nevertheless, these pupils were considered proficient enough to participate in mainstream English classes. Prior to the final year of upper secondary school, pupils in Norway receive 968 hours of English tuition, and it seems that the pupils involved in this study were at least at the C1 proficiency level, meeting the Council of Europe's criterion (2001, p. 62): "Can write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues". However, this study does not aim to compare metadiscourse in essays written by first and second language speakers, focusing instead on identifying metadiscoursal features in five genres written in the Norwegian and British contexts.

The collected essays were written as part of evaluations set by teachers and based on criteria outlined by exam boards (Udir, 2013; AQA, 2019) for English subjects, which was considered preferable to administering a single pre-fabricated task. The essays written at Norwegian schools were written under timed conditions, while those at the British schools were written as coursework. Since the schools were responsible for implementing these evaluations, they represent the conditions under which pupils may usually work (Mackey & Gass, 2016).

---

[1] At Norwegian and British schools, pupils complete their final school year between the age of 17-18 and 18-19, re spectively.

The texts in the corpus were grouped into five genres based on their topic and function (Paltridge, 1995): political analyses, literary analyses, linguistic investigations, opinion pieces and reflective pieces. The political analyses aimed to discuss political issues. In the literary analyses pupils discussed their interpretations of various literary works. The linguistic investigations were reports of linguistic studies that the pupils had carried out. The opinion pieces aimed to engage a lay newspaper-reading audience in linguistic topics. The reflective pieces were about the processes and inspirations behind a series of creative pieces that pupils had written as coursework.

3.2 A metadiscourse taxonomy

In order to compile the taxonomy for this study, categories and search terms were adopted from previous studies (e.g. Hyland, 2019; Ädel, 2006) based on a close reading of around 30 of the texts in the corpus. The present study defines metadiscourse as linguistic resources that

Table 2. Signposting categories (adapted from Hyland, 2005; 2007; 2019; Ädel, 2006; 2010; Cao & Hu, 2014; Hasselgård, 2016).

Category	Subcategories	Description and *examples*
Transitions	Additive	Express relations of additions: *as well, moreover*
	Comparative	Express relations of comparison or contrast: *or, in comparison*
	Inferential	Express relations of cause and effect: *in order to, therefore*
Code glosses	Exemplification	Mark when an example is being given: *illustrate, highlight*
	Reformulation	Mark when a discourse unit is being reworded: *in other words*
Phoric markers	Enumerating	Make explicit how points in the text are organised: *first, finally*
	Pre- and reviewing	Refer to earlier or later parts of the text: *I will, as mentioned*
Topic markers	Introduction	Introduce the content of the text: this *paper* aims to
	Reference to text	Reflexively refer to the current text: *essay, project*
	Conclusion	Signal when conclusions are being drawn: *overall*

Table 3. Stance categories (adapted from Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Hinkel, 2005; Hyland, 2005, 2019; Prince et al., 1980; Salager-Meyer, 1994; Ädel, 2010).

Category	Subcategory	Description and *examples*
Hedges	Downtoners	Scale down intensity: *quite, relatively*
	Rounders	Mark when figures are inexact: *roughly, around*
	Plausibility shields	Mark that a statement may not be true: *potential, tend*
	First person hedges	Mark the author's involvement in a statement: *my opinion, I guess*
Boosters	Amplifiers	Modify gradable adjectives or verbs and heighten their scalar lexical intensity: *extremely, too, very*
	Universals	Mark the extremes of the continuum of meanings: *all, everybody, never*
	Plausibility boosters	Mark that the author is certain of what they are writing: *clear, indeed, sure*
Engagement markers	Questions	Direct questions, tag questions, rhetorical questions
	Reader reference	Address reader directly: *you, we*
	Directives	Direct the reader to perform an action: *look at, think about it*
	Personal asides	Mark non-integral information: *by the way*
Evidentials		Mark that the author is referring to another source of information: *describe, portray*
Self-mentions		Explicitly mark author involvement in text: *I, my, we*
Attitude markers		Express writer's attitude towards proposition: *interesting, hopefully*

serve interactional and organisational functions (e.g. Hyland, 2019), corresponding to two main metadiscoursal functions: "signposting" (Table 2) and "stance" (Table 3). Signposting refers to words and phrases that writers use to guide their readers through the unfolding text (Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015).

The signposting aspect has four main categories that are further divided into ten sub-categories. The transition and code gloss sub-categories have previously been used in studies that draw on Hyland's (2019) interpersonal model (Cao & Hu, 2013). The phoric marker and topic marker categories have been used in studies that draw on Ädel's (2006) reflexive model (Hasselgård, 2016).

Stance refers to the words and phrases writers use in positioning themselves and their readers towards the material in question (Hyland,

2005). Based on on Qin and Uccelli's (2019, p. 35) suggestion that studies should more finely distinguish metadiscoursal functions and based on previous studies that use sub-categories (e.g. Hinkel, 2005), this study offers an operationalisation of stance that splits six categories into 13 sub-categories. Hedges were recognised as either rounders, plausibility shields (Prince et al., 1980), downtoners (Hinkel, 2005) or first-person hedges (Salager-Meyer, 1994). Boosters were recognised as either amplifiers, plausibility boosters or universals (Hinkel, 2005). Engagement markers (Hyland, 2005) include questions, reader references, directives and personal asides (Ädel, 2010). As with most previous studies, self-mentions and attitude markers were classed as stance markers (e.g. Qin & Uccelli, 2019). Evidentials, which are often classed as signposts (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2013), were not considered to have an organisational function in the present corpus. Instead, they were primarily considered to be persuasive, drawing readers' attention to external sources that support the writers' views and were therefore classified as stance markers following, for example, Dafouz-Milne (2008, p. 99).

In total, 526 items[2] (see appendix) were found to function metadiscoursally in the present corpus. This is a greater number of terms than has been found in a number of previous studies (e.g. Ho & Li 2018). This seems to result both from closely reading essays in the corpus and from recognising that metadiscourse carries propositional meaning (Ifantidou, 2005), meaning that a wider range of words and phrases can potentially fulfil the signposting and stance functions outlined above.

The reliability of the categories was tested in collaboration with a second rater, who was a graduate-level corpus linguist. The second rater and I analysed 10 of the 56 texts to test for inter-rater reliability, agreeing on 4325 out of 4735 instances (>91%). The most problematic category was

---

[2] The analysis initially used 587 search terms, but only the words and phrases that functioned metadiscoursally in this corpus are reported here.

the enumerator category, scoring 76% after the discussion. This was largely due to instances of "finally" and "lastly", which were sometimes used to mark the ultimate point in a series and at other times used synonymously with "in conclusion" to mark the end of the text. The solution was to categorise latter instances as conclusion markers, recognising that the sentential context was insufficient and that the analysis needed to consider where these markers were situated in the entire text.

Attitude markers were challenging to work with. The search terms from Hyland (2019) were used for this study, as well as "honestly" and "significant". However, the search terms did not account for a number of other words and phrases that pupils used to express their affective attitudes, such as "my *favourite* novel", "it became *confusing*" and "I *like* what I finished with". Such terms were not included as there seemed to be too many to conduct a manageable analysis. Attitude marker sub-categories have been proposed, but these either mix formal and functional categories (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008), or were considered to be too all-encompassing for this study (e.g. Martin & White, 2005). Future research could aim to delimit the attitude marker category in order to apply it to non-academic genres.

To analyse the corpus, the 526 search terms were entered into the concordancing function in the program #Lancsbox (Brezina, McEnery & Wattam, 2015). The concordance lines were read manually to check whether each instance functioned as metadiscourse. For example, when "we" referred to a group to which the writer belonged, it was classed as a self-mention. When "we" included the reader, it was classed as a reader pronoun. When "we" appeared in a quote, it was excluded from the analysis. This study does not rely on inductive statistical tests, using instead descriptive statistics as a basis for identifying metadiscoursal features in each genre and in the corpus overall (Lowie & Seton, 2013). The frequencies were calculated as the number of instances per 100 words. In the results, the text extracts are marked with the letters N and

UK, representing Norwegian and British schools respectively. Pupils were assigned with a number and additional letters when they contributed with more than one essay. The search terms, which are either words, phrases or punctuation marks, are written in italics in the example extracts.

4. Results

This section presents the results from this exploratory analysis, using examples from the corpus to illustrate how each sub-category functioned in the five genres. Section 4.1 presents the signposting results and section 4.2 presents the stance results.

4.1 Signposting results

In the corpus, there were 7018 signposting markers, with a mean of 6.62 per 100 words. The majority of the signposting categories were present in all five genres (see Table 4). The linguistic investigations contained the highest frequency of signposts overall, which likely links to the length and purpose of these texts: these were the longest and most academic-like texts in the corpus and the only ones that were split into sub-sections (e.g. "introduction", "methodology").

Transitions were the most frequently used metadiscourse category. There were high frequencies of transitions of addition, comparison and inference, although a small pool of words accounted for these high frequencies (e.g. "and", "also", "as", "but", "or", "so"). All three types are exemplified in the following extracts:

1) This is *because* of his inventiveness and practicality. He can think rationally […] *and* he is religious *as well*, *but* not fanatically. (N5, literary analysis)
2) This declarative is very off-topic *but also* rebellious *because* it suggests she is refusing to style-shift according to the formality of the situation (UK3, linguistic investigation)

Table 4. Frequencies of signposts in each genre per 100 words.

Signposting categories	Political analysis	Literary analysis	Linguistic investigation	Opinion pieces	Reflective piece
Addition	2.91	3.49	3.46	2.89	2.74
Comparison	1.69	2.04	1.41	1.91	1.49
Inference	1.39	0.7	1.39	1.22	1.26
Total transitions	5.96	6.24	6.27	6.03	5.49
Exemplification	0.31	0.18	0.61	0.59	0.41
Reformulation	0.07	0.01	0.04	0.27	0.07
Total code glosses	0.38	0.2	0.65	0.86	0.48
Pre- and review	0.08	0.07	0.14	0.07	0.06
Enumerate	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.07	0.05
Total phoric markers	0.1	0.08	0.19	0.14	0.11
Introduce	0.07	0.02	0.07	0	0
Reference to text	0	0	0.28	0	0.01
Conclude	0.01	0.02	0.07	0.02	0.01
Total topic markers	0.09	0.04	0.41	0.02	0.02
Total Signposts	6.52	6.55	7.52	7.05	6.09

Regarding code glosses, exemplifiers were quite frequent in all genres. The pupils often relied on examples to specify their intended meaning, to prove their understanding of terminology or to support their argumentation:

3) The factories used cheap energy *like* steam and coal to fuel the machines for production (N2b, political analysis)
4) There is also a use of alliteration, *such* as "venal vengeance" and "mischievous malice (N4b, literary analysis)
5) When men are referred to as animals it is often a positive thing. For *example*, we hear the term 'silver fox' (UK1b, opinion piece)

Reformulators, on the other hand, were infrequent in most genres, implying that the pupils rarely recognised a need for rewordings, perhaps because they expected their teachers to be familiar with terminology. The authors of the opinion pieces, however, often used reformulators to explain technical terms. Since their task was to write for everyday newspaper readers, the pupils seemed to use reformulators both to impress teachers with linguistic terminology and to engage their target lay audience:

6) Theorists of this kind *(*'sociolinguists'*)*[3] call this 'member resources' which basically *means* everything that makes up the world of this 'ideal consumer'. (UK5, opinion piece)

Phoric markers were generally infrequent in the corpus with 19 essays containing no pre- and review markers and 38 essays containing no enumerators. Regarding pre- and review markers in these relatively short essays, the pupils may not have recognised a need to refer readers to other parts of the text. The linguistic investigations were the longest texts and thus had the highest frequencies of pre- and review markers. Previews were mostly used in introduction sections to signal upcoming content, often using "will" to fulfil this function. Reviews were often realised using "mentioned" and "again", and were largely used to signal when arguments were repeated:

7) This means the investigation *will* be diachronic in scope (UK5a, linguistic investigation)
8) This *again* links to Kroll's stages of writing development (UK2a, linguistic investigation)

The majority of pupils chose not to use enumerators, perhaps because they did not recognise a need to do so. The pupils that did use enumerators rarely used more than two or three in total, but one pupil used nine enumerators, two of which are shown in extract 9:

9) I had numerous key problems with this first draft, the *first* of which was that it was a poor location. […] The *second* issue [was that] both characters were unengaging and unsympathetic (UK24, reflective piece)

Topic markers were also relatively infrequent in the corpus, perhaps again due to the short length of the texts. Introductory markers were not

---

[3] Note that the search terms in extracts 6, 35, 36, 38, 41 include brackets and question marks.

used in the opinion pieces or the reflective pieces, but were used in all eight of the linguistic investigations, which were organised into sub-sections and had a more academic style. They were also used in seven of the ten political analyses:

10) *Introduction* For my *investigation*, I have chosen to write about the topic of problem pages (UK1a, linguistic investigation)
11) In this *essay* the slave trade and abolition will be discussed (N1a, political analysis)

Concluding markers were used in only 16 of the 56 texts. As with introductory markers, all of the eight linguistic investigations contained concluding markers (e.g. "conclusion", "one might conclude that", "overall"), indicating that both the acts of introducing and concluding were a necessity in these texts.

Only the linguistic investigations contained a noteworthy number of references to the text itself. Although a word such as "investigation" may not solely refer to the current text, such words were counted when the current text was one of the denoted entities. In this genre, references to the text were often used to delimit the topic (12), to explain limitations (13) and to reflect on experiences (14):

12) This *investigation* aims to discover what the salient features are of a film blurb (UK6a, linguistic investigation)
13) The limitations in this *study* were that I have used quite a small sample… (UK2a, linguistic investigation)
14) I greatly enjoyed doing this *study* as I was able to get an in-depth look into how entertainers actually make people laugh. (UK7, linguistic investigation)

Overall, transitions and exemplifiers were prominent signposting features in the corpus. Other signposting categories were also fairly frequent in the academic-like linguistic investigations. Otherwise, the short length of the essays required little signposting.

4.2. Stance Results

The frequencies of stance markers are presented in Table 5. There was a total of 7437 stance markers in the corpus, with a mean of 7.18 markers per 100 words. Regarding hedges, the linguistic investigations contained the highest frequency overall. However, each hedging sub-category was used somewhat idiosyncratically in each genre. Rounders were the most frequent sub-category in total, but were most prominent in the political analyses. In these essays, pupils tended discuss national and international issues and thus drew on statistics and broad generalisations in constructing their arguments:

15) This means *around* 40 Americans are killed by guns every day. (N1e, political analysis)

Table 5. Mean number of each stance category in each genre per 100 words.

Stance categories	Political analysis	Literary analysis	Linguistic investigation	Opinion piece	Reflective piece
Downtoner	0.13	0.27	0.3	0.36	0.42
Rounder	1.45	0.86	1.34	1.26	0.92
Plausibility shields	0.78	0.6	1.07	0.92	0.39
First person hedge	0	0.04	0.03	0	0.17
Total hedges	2.36	1.77	2.73	2.53	1.9
Amplifier	0.6	0.86	0.48	1.11	0.64
Universal	0.63	0.69	0.49	0.7	0.7
Plausibility	0.17	0.38	0.4	0.8	0.3
Total boosters	1.41	1.92	1.36	2.61	1.64
Question	0.04	0.16	0.01	0.49	0.01
Reader reference	0.17	0.39	0.08	2.02	0.25
Aside	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.11	0.08
Directive	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.01
Total engagement	0.2	0.57	0.12	2.74	0.35
Evidentials	0.69	0.87	1.01	0.79	0.22
Self-mentions	0	0.08	1.2	0.17	4.62
Attitude markers	0.22	0.05	0.19	0.37	0.19
Total stance markers	4.88	5.27	6.68	9.18	8.92

16) For *some*[4], this might sound more like a dictatorship, rather than democracy (N2a, political analysis)

In the opinion pieces, rounders again were often used to mark broad generalisations:

17) *Frequently*, parents cannot understand the technical language involved in *many* apps and technology. (UK2b, opinion piece)

In the linguistic investigations, pupils often relied on rounders when discussing the language features that they were analysing:

18) This colloquialism is *often* used in text messaging for brevity. (UK4a, linguistic investigation)

In general, downtoners were often used as a way of reducing the impact of statements. These hedges, along with first person hedges, were more frequent in the reflective pieces where pupils tentatively reflected on their creative writing decisions:

19) But on the other hand, the stories are also *quite* similar (N3c, literary analysis)
20) It's *pretty* clear how this line further complements the title (UK6b, opinion piece)
21) I *believe* I am *quite* strong at writing descriptively (UK25, reflective piece)

The pupils mostly used plausibility shields when tentatively making knowledge claims. These hedges were most frequent in the linguistic analyses, which were the most academic-like texts:

22) This *could* mean trouble for Trump's budget (N2d, political analysis)

---

[4] The word "some", referring here to "some people", is considered a rounder as it specifies that the author is not attributeing the statement to "all people".

23) Hamlet *seems* very depressed and confused as a person (N5a, literary analysis)
24) This interaction is *likely* to be a lot more effective (UK2b, opinion piece)
25) Kennedy *appears* to show a preference for the use of more abstract devices (UK8, linguistic investigation)

Plausibility shields were least frequent in the reflective pieces in which pupils were not required to make knowledge claims. When they were used in these pieces, plausibility shields were often used to recognise potential reader reactions to compositional choices:

26) It was best to ask other people as what I *may* remember as being hilarious *may* not be so funny to others. (UK17, reflective piece)

While hedges were almost twice as frequent as boosters in the political analyses and linguistic investigations, they were used at similar frequencies in the remaining genres. While the political analyses and the linguistic investigations were of an argumentative nature, the formal tone of these texts may have limited the extent to which pupils could assertively make claims without sourcing evidence. In opinion pieces, on the other hand, pupils relied on a wider variety of rhetorical devices. The following extracts exemplify how boosters were used in opinion pieces in ways that would probably have been penalised in other genres:

27) Their world famous slogan 'Because you're worth it' *really* makes it sound as though it's you and *only* you that they are talking to. (UK5, opinion piece)
28) There exists a similar word for men, 'Satyriasis'. But, *of course*, *no one* has heard of this obscure word (UK1b, opinion piece)

In the linguistic investigations, plausibility boosters and universal boosters were sometimes paired with hedges, indicating that these pupils

tried to find a more delicate balance between tentativeness and persuasion:

29) This *implies* that today's teenagers do not have *any*[5] sense of acceptable boundaries (UK3, linguistic investigation)

There were numerous boosters that arguably conveyed an inappropriate level of confidence. This inappropriateness is often related to the use of universal boosters, which were relatively frequent in all genres:

30) It is *impossible* to find the exact number of victims (N1b, political analysis)
31) *Every* human being consists of both good and evil (N4c, literary analysis)
32) These *facts* are *always* truthful and *always* back up what's said in the main advertisement (UK6b, opinion piece)
33) *Everyone* had more disposable income and they wanted cars (UK5a, linguistic investigation)
34) *All* bus journeys are they [sic] same which is something I'm sure we can *all* relate to. (UK28, reflective piece)

Engagement markers were more frequent in the opinion pieces, again highlighting how these pupils used a range of rhetorical devices in persuading their readers. The following extracts exemplify how the engagement marker sub-categories were used in the opinion pieces:

35) Who can really resist *our* favourite cheeky chappie, aye*?* (UK1b, opinion piece)
36) Another *(yes, yet another)* way that women are put down (UK1b, opinion piece)

---

[5] The word "any" is considered a booster here as it marks the extreme of teenagers not having acceptable boundaries, as opposed to "teenagers do not have *a* sense of acceptable boundaries".

37) *Think* about dove and their current success (UK5, opinion piece)

The corpus also provides evidence that the pupils adapted their metadiscoursal choices to the target genre. In the following extracts, one pupil liberally uses engagement markers and boosters in an opinion piece, whilst maintaining a more academic-like voice in their linguistic investigation:

38) Although *all* this *really* sounds like *our* favourite cheeky chap with his iconic bish-bash-bosh cooking methods, who are *we actually* talking to*?* (UK4b, opinion piece)
39) Comparing texts from the 17th century to the present day will hope to provide evidence of apparent change, including archaisms, semantic shifts and how modern day technology has influenced the English language (UK4a, linguistic investigation)

The literary analyses also contained noteworthy frequencies of questions and reader references. These pupils tended to write their essays as if they expected their readers to have read the literature in question:

40) *We* meet the Mr and Mrs Hurstwood who's got some issues in their relationship (N3a, literary analysis)
41) Is Hamlet right to describe himself as 'Essentially…not in madness but in craft'*?* (N5, literary analysis)

Evidentials in the corpus were typically used either to cite extra-textual sources or to draw on the material that the pupils were analysing:

42) *According to* Gun Violence Archive […], a total number of 12,392 American citizens have died by guns in 2016 in the USA. (N1e, Political analysis)
43) Brontë and Lawrence *portray* women's issues and rights in their story. (N3c, literary analysis)

44) Carr *uses* taboo lexis for comedic effect (UK7, linguistic investigation)

In the reflective pieces, however, evidentials were less frequent and, in a slightly different vein, functioned both to discuss other authors' compositional choices and to discuss compositional advice they received from teachers and friends:

45) Darren Shan also *includes* supernatural beings and themes (UK11, reflective piece)
46) My friends often *tell* me I am quite funny (UK17, reflective piece)

While self-mentions were almost entirely absent in the genres written at Norwegian schools (political analyses and literary analyses), these markers were frequent in the linguistic investigations and the reflective pieces. Despite the high frequencies of self-mentions in these genres, pupils infrequently made claims using first person hedges. In the linguistic investigations, pupils largely used self-mentions to reflect on the process of carrying out research. In the reflective pieces, the pupils used self-mentions to discuss their thought processes and decisions in writing their creative pieces:

47) *I* have learnt a great deal from *my* investigation (UK4a, linguistic investigation)
48) *I* think poetic form was an ideal choice to represent *my* style of creative writing. (UK9, reflective piece)

Of the attitude markers searched for, "interesting" and "important" were those that pupils most frequently resorted to using, but this category otherwise revealed little about the pupils' compositional choices in this corpus:

49) A strong elected prime minister is *important* for the UK (N1d, political analysis)

50) There are *interesting* linguistic techniques used in order to
    create humour (UK3, linguistic investigation)

By considering sub-categories of hedges, boosters and engagement
markers, these results imply that each genre is characterised by a
particular palettes of interactional resources, such as the use of rounders
in political analyses to draw on statistics and a combination of boosters
and engagement markers in the opinion pieces to convince readers of the
author's arguments.

5 Discussion

The results of this exploratory study indicate that in analysing less
prestigious genres (Ädel, 2018), researchers may benefit from drawing
on a broad range of metadiscourse categories from previous studies of
other genres in order to address more sensitively the corpus in question
(e.g. Ho & Li, 2018). By adapting a taxonomy to the content of the
corpus, this analysis provides insight into the kinds of metadiscoursal
resources that pupils relied on in five genres written at British and
Norwegian upper secondary schools. As mentioned, this study does not
aim to compare essays written by first and second language speakers.
Instead, the aim is to investigate the types of metadiscourse on which
pupils at this level rely and the effect that the target genre may have on
their compositional choices.

Regarding signposting, it seems that the frequencies of transitions
(Dobbs, 2013) and exemplifiers (Cao & Hu, 2014) resemble those found
in other corpora. This suggests there is a general need in knowledge-
based writing to signal relations of addition, comparison and inference.
There also seems to be a common reliance on exemplification, in this
case to specify meaning, prove knowledge and support argumentation.

Phoric markers and topic markers were relatively infrequent overall,
perhaps due to the short length of the majority of the texts in the corpus.
In writing short texts, pupils tended not to enumerate arguments, refer to

other parts of the text or the text itself, or mark introductions and conclusions. The linguistic investigations diverge from this trend, perhaps because these were the longest texts, were divided into sub-sections, and were the most academic-like genre (Hempel & Degand, 2007). Furthermore, compared with other essays, essay UK24 contained more enumerators and essay UK8 contained more pre- and review markers, indicating that the use of such markers may represent individual styles.

Regarding stance, the present results support suggestions (e.g. Qin & Uccelli, 2019) to use sub-categories of hedges to investigate the genre-dependent ways in which upper secondary pupils mitigate and strengthen their claims. For example, rounders were used in political analyses to make generalisations and to discuss statistics, while downtoners and first-person hedges were used in the reflective pieces to informally and tentatively discuss the authors' creative abilities. Regarding boosters, the amplifier and plausibility booster sub-categories were most frequent in the opinion pieces, illustrating the more rhetorical orientation of this genre.

The findings regarding hedges and boosters are comparable to other studies of novice writing (e.g. Dobbs, 2014; Hinkel, 2005) in that these argumentative features were used at relatively similar frequencies in the corpus. In professional genres, hedges are used up to four times more frequently than boosters (e.g. Hu & Cao, 2011; Fu & Hyland, 2014; Dafouz-Milne, 2008). Additionally, Lee and Deakin (2016) find that higher frequencies of hedges are equated with higher quality writing, and Hinkel (2005) equates boosting with more informal discourse. While it seems that tentativeness is valued in professional English writing, the essays in this corpus were comparatively over-confident, exemplified by the use of universal boosters, which were relatively frequent in all five genres. These findings therefore suggest that upper secondary pupils may benefit from explicit guidance in making knowledge claims (e.g. Qin & Uccelli, 2019).

197

The frequent use of engagement markers and boosters in the opinion pieces highlights the more argumentative nature of this genre. Similarly, Fu and Hyland (2014, p. 24-25) found that professionally written opinion pieces use boosters to "offer strong support for arguments" and engagement markers to "establish proximity with readers" and to "draw readers into [the] argument". The use of reader references in the literary analyses offers support for Afros and Schryer (2009), who found that literary scholars more frequently use inclusive-*we* in drawing conclusions. However, reader pronouns in these literary analyses were mostly used in assuming that the audience had already read the texts in question. Although the political analyses and linguistic investigations also had argumentative purposes, directly engaging readers and confidently presenting arguments were less prominent features of these genres.

Similar to previous research (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014), evidentials were frequently used in this corpus, mostly to discuss the material that the pupils aimed to analyse, or to draw on other sources to support arguments. This indicates that these pupils recognised the rhetorical importance of providing evidence for their claims. Furthermore, the higher frequencies of evidentials in the linguistic investigations and in the opinion pieces suggest that the pupils writing under process-oriented conditions were able to use a wider range of relevant sources, but a larger corpus would be needed to confirm this. Notably, evidentials were least frequent in the reflective pieces, serving a specific purpose when they were used: to draw on advice that the authors had received from friends and teachers, which may be perceived as being overly personal in other genres. Furthermore, the corpus contained a number of evidentials, such as "portray" and "uses", that have not been reported in other studies (e.g. Hyland, 2019). This might suggest that pupils use a wider range of markers to refer to text external sources than would be expected in professional writing.

Previous studies have found that self-mentions serve several purposes in professional writing (Harwood, 2005; Fu & Hyland, 2014). While self-mentions were present in 32 of 35 of the British school essays, they were present in only five of the 21 Norwegian school essays. This means that pupils at the Norwegian schools tended not to use self-mentions as would be expected in professional writing. This contrasts with Ädel (2006), who found Swedish students frequently used self-mentions. Since the absence of self-mentions in the Norwegian school essays cannot be explained by genre or by the pupils' status as second language learners, it may be that their teachers promoted a more traditional view of scientific writing: "that it simply reflects indisputable "facts" which have been proved by replicable empirical investigation" (Harwood, 2005, p. 1208). Considering research that shows self-mentions are being more frequently used in modern academic writing (Hyland & Jiang, 2016), this study tentatively offers support for Crismore, Markkanen and Steffenssen (1993, p. 68) who argue that "teachers must dispel the folklore and myths about what some teachers and textbooks say that writers do".

Attitude markers were more frequent in the rhetorically oriented opinion pieces, but these markers were nonetheless relatively infrequent in all genres. Similar to previous studies (e.g. Hyland, 2012), the most frequent attitude markers in this corpus were "important" and "interesting". However, the search terms used for this study were largely based on those used for investigations of academic writing (Hyland, 2019). A broader range of search terms, based on Martin's (1999) appraisal framework for example, could be used to reveal more about how upper secondary pupils express their attitudes.

6 Conclusion

By drawing on sub-categories from a range of previous studies based on the content of the current corpus, this study was able to capture sensitively the metadiscourse markers upon which this sample of upper

secondary pupils at Norwegian and British schools relied. The findings reveal the metadiscoursal characteristics in each of the five genres. For example, in the opinion pieces, pupils used higher frequencies of reformulators as they strived both to impress examiners and to engage lay readers, balancing jargon with everyday vocabulary. In the political analyses, rounders accompanied arguments supported by statistics and broad generalisations. Compared to previous studies, it was evident that the frequencies of certain metadiscoursal features conformed to professional writing practices, while others did not. On the one hand, the overall use of transitions, code glosses and evidentials supports the hypothesis that knowledge-based writing relies on textual cohesion and on supporting claims with evidence (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014). On the other, while professional writing is often typified by higher frequencies of hedges (e.g. Hu & Cao, 2015), the present corpus contained similar frequencies of hedges and boosters, and the use of universal boosters in particular suggests pupils presented their arguments with an inappropriate level of confidence.

This study faces several limitations that prevent drawing firmer conclusions. For example, inductive statistical tests could not be conducted due to the size of the sample, which was collected from a small number of pupils, whose personal writing styles may be overrepresented in the present material. Furthermore, although the data represent the genres in which pupils usually write, comparing essays written for various prompts under either timed or process-oriented conditions remains problematic (e.g. Ädel 2008) and a number of other variables, such as the individual proficiency of each pupil, may account for the findings reported here.

The findings suggest that pupils at this level are able to adapt their use of metadiscourse to the target genre, such as pupil UK4 who differentiated their use of boosters and engagement markers in their linguistic investigation and opinion piece. In order to substantiate these findings, future research could use a larger corpus to investigate how

pupils respond to different genres. Furthermore, individual teacher advice may have affected pupils' metadiscoursal choices, which also warrants further investigation (e.g. Hong & Cao, 2014).

Although the taxonomy used here still does not capture all the potential sub-categories that may be present in upper secondary writing, such as sub-categories of attitude markers, the results illustrate how future research that aims to analyse less prestigious genres (Ädel, 2018) may produce more nuanced results by consolidating sub-categories from various previous studies to address the features of the corpus in question.

References

Abdi, R. & Ahmadi, P. (2015). Signposting propositions: A study of interactive metadiscourse marking in the composition of research articles across sciences. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics, 5,* 5-17. https://doi.org/10.22055/rals.2015.11264

Abdi, R., Rizi, M. T. & Tavakoli, M. (2010). The cooperative principle in discourse communities and genres: A framework for the use of metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 42*(6), 1669-1679. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2009.11.001

Afros, E. & Schryer, C. F. (2009). Promotional (meta)discourse in research articles in language and literary studies. *English for Specific Purposes, 28*(1), 58-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2009.11.001

AQA Education (AQA). (2019). *AS and A-level English language*. AQA. https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-7701-7702-SP-2015.PDF.

Blagojevic, S. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic prose: A contrastive study of academic articles written in English by English and Norwegian native speakers. *Studies about Languages, 5*, 60-67.

Brezina, V. McEnery, T. & Wattam, S. (2015). Collocations in context: A new perspective on collocation networks. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 20,* 139-173.

Çandarlı, D. Bayyurt, Y. & Martı, L. (2015). Authorial presence in L1 and L2 novice academic writing and cross-cultural perspectives. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 20*, 192-202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2015.10.001

Cao, F. & Hu, G. (2014). Interactive metadiscourse in research articles: A comparative study of paradigmatic and disciplinary influences. *Journal of Pragmatics, 66*, 15-31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2014.02.007

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. University of Cambridge.

Crismore, A., Markkanen, R. & Steffensen, M. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuasive writing: A study of texts written by American and

Finnish university students. *Written Communication, 10*(1), 39-71.

Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: a cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*(1), 95-113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.10.003

Dahl, T. (2004). Textual metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discipline? *Journal of Pragmatics, 36*(10), 1807–1825. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.05.004

Dobbs, C. L. (2013). Signaling organization and stance: Academic language use in middle grade persuasive writing. *Reading and Writing, 27*(8), 1327-1352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9489-5

Education First. (2019). *EF English proficiency index*. https://www.ef.no/epi/.

Fu, X. & Hyland, K. (2014). Interaction in two journalistic genres: A study of interactional metadiscourse. *English Text Construction, 7*(1), 122-144. https://doi.org/10.1075/etc.7.1.05fu

Halliday, M. A. K. & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M.. (2014). *An introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Harwood, N. (2005). "Nowhere has anyone attempted … In this article I aim to do just that" A corpus-based study of self-promotional *I* and *we* in academic writing across four disciplines. *Journal of Pragmatics, 37*(8), 1207-1231. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2005.01.012

Hasselgård, H. (2016). Discourse-organizing metadiscourse in novice academic English. In M. J. López-Couso, B. Méndez-Naya, P. Núñez-Pertejo and I. M. Palacios-Martínez (Eds.), *Corpus Linguistics on the move: Exploring and understanding English through corpora* (p. 106-131). Brill Rodopi.

Hempel, S. & Degand, L. (2008). Sequencers in different text genres: Academic writing, journalese and fiction. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*(4), 676-693. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.001

Hinds, J. (2011). Reader versus writer responsibility: A new typology. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark essays on ESL writing* (p. 63-74). Routledge.

Hinkel, E. (2005). Hedging, inflating, and persuading in L2 academic writing. *Applied Linguistic Learning, 15*(1), 29-53.

Ho, V. & Li, C. (2018). The use of metadiscourse and persuasion: An analysis of first year university students' timed argumentative essays. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 33*, 53-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.02.001

Hong, H., & Cao, F. (2014). Interactional metadiscourse in young EFL learning writing. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 19*(2), 201-224.

Hu, G. & Cao, F. (2011). Hedging and boosting in abstracts of applied linguistics articles: A comparative study of English- and Chinese-medium journals. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*(11), 2795-2809. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.04.007

Hu, G. & Cao, F. (2015). Disciplinary and paradigmatic influences on interactional metadiscourse in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes,* 39, 12-25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2015.03.002

Hyland, K. (2005). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies, 7*, 173-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605050365

Hyland, K. (2007). Applying a gloss: Exemplifying and reformulating in academic disciplines. *Applied Linguistics, 28*(2), 266-285. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amm011

Hyland, K. (2012). Undergraduate understandings: Stance and voice in final year reports. In K. Hyland & C. Sancho-Guinda (Eds.), *Stance and voice in written academic genres* (p. 134-150). Palgrave Macmillan.

Hyland, K. (2017). Metadiscourse: What is it and where is it going? *Journal of Pragmatics, 113*, 16-29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.03.007

Hyland, K. (2019). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing.* Continuum.

Hyland, K. & Jiang, F. (2018). "In this paper we suggest": Changing patterns of disciplinary metadiscourse. *English for Specific Purposes, 51*, 18-30. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2018.02.001

Lee, J. J. & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 33*, 21-34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.004

Lowie, W. & Seton, B. (2013). *Essential statistics for applied linguistics*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2016). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Routledge.

Martin, J. R. & White, P. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Paltridge, B. (1995). Working with genre: A pragmatic perspective. *Journal of Pragmatics, 24*(4), 393-406. https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(94)00058-M

Prince, E. F., Frader, J. & Bosk, C. (1980). *On hedging in physician-physician discourse* [Conference presentation]. AAAL Symposium on Applied Linguistics in Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.

Qin, W. & Ucceli, P. (2019). Metadiscourse: Variation across communicative contexts. *Journal of Pragmatics, 139*, 22-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.10.004

Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes, 13*(2), 149-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(94)90013-2

Uccelli, P., Dobbs, C. & Scott, J. (2013). Mastering academic language: Organization and stance in the persuasive writing of high school students. *Written Communication, 30*(1), 36-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088312469013

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir.). (2013). *Læreplan i engelsk*. Utdanningdirektoratet. https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/lareplanverket/finn-lareplan/lareplan/?kode=ENG1-03.

Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication, 36*, 82-93.

Ädel, A. (2006). *Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Ädel, A. (2008). Metadiscourse across three varieties of English. In U. Conner, E. Nagelhout & W. V. Rozycki, (Eds.), *Contrastive Rhetoric: Reaching to intercultural rhetoric* (p. 45-62). John Benjamins.

Ädel, A. (2010). Just to give you a kind of map of where we are going: a taxonomy of metadiscourse in spoken and written academic speech. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 9*, 69-97. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.218

Ädel, A. (2018). Remember that your reader cannot read your mind: Problem/solution-oriented metadiscourse in teacher feedback on student writing. *English for Specific Purposes, 45*, 54-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2016.09.002

Appendix: Search terms

Attitude markers (36): agree, appropriate, correctly, curious, disappointed, disappointing, dramatic, dramatically, essentially, expected, honest, honestly, hopefully, important, importantly, inappropriate, inappropriately, interesting, interestingly, naturally, prefer, preferred, shocking, shockingly, significant, surprised, surprising, surprisingly, unbelievable, understandable, unexpected, unfortunate, unfortunately, unusual, usual, !

Boosters

Amplifier (32): alone, and, big, especially, even, extreme, extremely, far, greatly, highly, huge, impossibly, indeed, just, major, much, only, particularly, perfect, perfectly, pure, purely, really, severely, significantly, so, such, super, terribly, utterly, very, yet

Plausibility (26): actually, apparent, certain, certainly, clear, clearly, definitely, direct, directly, fact, knew, know, must, obvious, obviously, of course, real, reality, really, show, showed, showing, shows, supports, true, truly

Universal (38): all, always, any, anybody, anyone, anything, biggest, closest, complete, completely, easiest, entire, entirely, every, everyone, exact, exactly, farthest, forever, funniest, greatest, highest, impossible, most, never, newest, nicest, no one, nobody, none, nothing, only, sole, strongest, subtlest, throughout, totally, whole

Code glosses

Exemplifier (18): as, can be seen, e.g., example, examples, highlighted, include, included, includes, including, instance, illustrates, illustration, like, say, shown, such,)

Reformulator (6): in other words, meaning, means, meant, otherwise,)

Engagement Markers

Question (1): ?

Reader reference (15): let's, our, reader, readers, us, we, we're, we've, you, you'd, you'll, your, you're, you've, yourself

Directive (5): compare, consider, look, remember, think

Evidentials (93): according, addressed, addresses, argue, argues, believe, believed, believes, claim, claimed, claiming, claims, conveyed, criticize, criticized, criticizing,

deals, depict, depicted, depicts, describe, described, describes, describing, description, discuss, discusses, employ, employs, estimated, explained, explains, explanation, feel, feeling, felt, include, included, includes, judge, judged, mentioned, mentions, opinion, outline, outlines, portrayed, portrays, proposal, propose, proposed, refer, referred, refers, repeated, repeating, repeats, replied, replies, reply, replying, said, say, says, saw, sees, show, showed, shows, state, stated, suggest, suggested, suggesting, suggests, supports, talk, talked, talks, tell, tells, think, thought, told, use, used, uses, using, write, writes, written, wrote,)

Hedges

Rounders (48): almost, around, bit, certain, common, commonly, fair, few, fewer, frequent, frequently, general, generally, great, hundreds, largely, little, lot, lots, majority, many, most, mostly, much, multiple, normally, number, numerous, often, or so, other, others, range, regular, regularly, roughly, several, some, sometimes, tend, tends, thousands, towards, usual, usually, variety, various, widely

Downtoners (26): almost, as, barely, bit, borderline, certain, essentially, fairly, hardly, in a way, just, kind, little, only, practically, pretty, quite, rather, relatively, simply, slight, slightly, some, somewhat, sort of, -ish

Plausibility shield (44): apparent, apparently, appear, appeared, appears, arguably, assume, can, could, evidence, implied, implies, imply, implying, indicate, indicated, indicates, indicating, indication, likely, may, maybe, might, necessarily, perhaps, possibility, possible, possibly, potential, potentially, probably, propose, seem, seemingly, seems, suggest, suggested, suggesting, suggestion, suggests, support, supported, supporting, supports

First Person Hedge (6): believe, believed, guess, opinion, think, thought

Phoric markers

Enumerator (12): final, finally, first, firstly, following, followed, last, lastly, next, second, secondly, third

Pre- and review (9): again, as I said, established, mentioned, former, last, latter, stated, will

Self mention (9): I, I'd, I'll, I'm, I've, me, my, myself, we

Topic markers

Introducing (8): essay, intend, introduction, investigate, investigation, paper, task, text

Reference to text (3): project, study, investigation

Concluding (5): conclude, conclusion, final, last, overall

Transitions

Additive (13): addition, additionally, along with, alongside, also, another, as, at the same time, further, furthermore, moreover, otherwise, too

Comparative (37): all the same, although, as, aside, but, comparison, contrast, contrastingly, conversely, correspondingly, despite, equally, even if, even though, however, instead, like, moreover, nevertheless, no matter, nonetheless, on the other hand, oppose, opposed, or, otherwise, nor, rather, regardless, similarly, still, than, though, whereas, while, whilst, yet

Inferential (36): as, based on, because, cause, caused, causes, consequently, due, following, given that, hence, if, in order to, in this way, lead, leading, leads, mean, meaning, means, meant, otherwise, outcome, reason, result, resulting, results, since, so, thereby, then, therefore, thus, unless, when, with this in mind

526 search terms in total

Article 2

"They just waffle about the topic"? Exploring signposting in upper secondary essays in different educational contexts and genres.

Abstract

Essay writing is a central part of upper secondary education, where pupils often face the challenge of composing texts belonging to genres ranging from scientific investigations to political essays. In their essays, pupils are typically expected to present their arguments in a clear and logical manner, which is often realised by explicitly marking textual relations, referred to here as "signposting". A host of previous studies have investigated signposting in professional and tertiary-level contexts, but comparatively few have investigated signposting at pre-tertiary levels. This study contributes to the existing research pool by analysing signposts in a corpus of 115 English essays belonging to five genres written by pupils attending Swedish, Norwegian and British schools. A concordancer was used to scan the essays using 273 search terms belonging to 11 signposting sub-categories. This analysis is supplemented with data from teacher interviews. The findings demonstrate that transitions and exemplifiers, used to signal sentential relations, are central features of essay writing at this educational level. Signposts used to mark structural order, on the other hand, seem to depend on the target genre and on individual preferences. The interview data revealed that the teachers in Norway and Sweden tended to provide pupils with decontextualised lists of signposts, which raises the question

of whether teachers should offer more explicit instruction in the pragmatic signalling of textual relations.

Keywords: signposting; metadiscourse; essay writing; writing instruction

1 Introduction

Establishing a well-structured, logical line of reasoning is a central aspect of successful essay writing (Graff & Birkenstein, 2018). At the upper secondary level in the UK, for example, pupils are required to "guide [the] reader through a very coherent and cohesive text" (AQA, 2020, p. 33). In order to investigate how writers guide their readers, scholars have operationalised linguistic features that signal textual relations under the guise of terms such as "textual metadiscourse" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Vande Kopple, 1985), "interactive metadiscourse" (Hyland, 2019), and "metatext" (Mauranen, 1993). The term "signposting" (Abdi & Ahmadi, 2015) is chosen here due to its relative approachability and refers to punctuation marks, words and phrases used by writers to explicitly signal structural relations in guiding their readers through the unfolding text. Previous studies have identified the signposting features that characterise professional- and tertiary-level writing, and have compared these features across languages (Mauranen, 1993; Dahl, 2004) and genres (Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Cao & Hu, 2014). However, despite holding important implications for English teachers and writing instructors, a dearth of studies has addressed pre-tertiary writing (Dobbs, 2014).

To contribute to the existing pool of research, particularly regarding the transitionary phase between secondary and tertiary education, this study aims to explore the signposting sub-categories and types present in a corpus of 115 upper secondary pupil English essays, collected from schools in Norway, Sweden and the UK. The textual analysis is supplemented by data from teacher interviews. Of the reviewed studies, this is the first to supplement an investigation of signposting with teacher

interviews, which, considering the importance of feedback for writing development (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), offers an important perspective on how teachers address organisational features in the teaching of essay writing.

While English is used a first language in the UK, whether English should be considered a second or a foreign language in Norway and Sweden is controversial (Berggren, 2019; Rindal, 2014). One the one hand, since English is not an official language and is not used in governmental settings, these countries can be considered to be in the so-called "expanding" circle of English (Kachru, 1992). However, English is a highly prioritised school subject that has a separate curriculum from other foreign languages (Skolverket, 2021; Udir., 2021a), and it is widely used for educational (Hellekjær, 2007) and professional (Ljosland, 2008) purposes, as well as in various audio-visual media (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). Consequently, the use of English by Scandinavian language learners has received considerable research attention in these contexts (e.g. Hasund, 2019; Hulleberg Johansen, 2019; Tåqvist, 2016), which extends to investigations of signposting in tertiary level English essays (Ädel, 2006; Hasselgård, 2016).

Writing in English as an L2 has also been explored in the field of intercultural rhetoric (Connor, 2004), which has identified distinctive rhetorical patterns that characterise writing in different languages and discourse communities (e.g. Hinds, 2011; Valero-Garces, 1996). By investigating argumentative strategies across so-called "big" cultures (referring to, for example, national cultures; Holliday, 1999), studies have identified the lexical, grammatical and stylistic patterns that can vary (e.g. Aijmer & Hasselgård, 2015; Johansson, 2007). Research has also compared rhetorical patterns across "small" cultures, such as genres (Virtanen & Halmari, 2005) and academic fields (Fløttum et al., 2006). For novice writers and language learners, these findings hold implications for understanding the expectations that writers need to meet

in order to establish themselves as accepted members of a given community (Dahl, 2008; Hyland, 2003; Moreno, 2021).

In order to investigate pre-tertiary writing strategies, this study aims to explore signposting in essays written by upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian, Swedish and British schools, according to the following research questions:

- What are the (sub-)categories and types[1] of signposts used in upper secondary level essays written in the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts?
- How frequent are signposts and how are they used by pupils in each of the educational contexts and genres?
- What connections can be drawn between the pupils' use of signposting and teachers' reported instructional practices?

Thus, this study contributes to understanding the kinds of signposting markers on which pupils rely and the ways that teachers approach this aspect of essay writing.

2 Previous research

Studies of signposting have investigated organisational patterns across a wide range of contexts and genres (Hasselgård, 2016; Mur-Duenãs, 2011; Qin & Uccelli, 2019). Dahl (2004) reported that linguistics and economics articles written in English and Norwegian contained higher frequencies of signposts than those written in French. Similarly, studies have found that professional English and Scandinavian authors conform to similar signposting practices, both when writing in their respective mother tongues and when writing in English as an additional language (Blagojevic, 2004; Hasselgård, 2016). This suggests that English and Norwegian are writer-responsible languages, meaning writers tend to

---

[1] "Type" refers to "each graphical word form". For example, "cause" and "caused" are considered as two different types (McEnery & Wilson 2003, p. 32).

guide their readers more explicitly (Mauranen, 1993; Peterlin, 2005; Hinds, 2011). However, making broad claims about national languages may overlook more local factors affecting signposting practices (Hempel & Degand, 2006; Pérez-Llantada, 2010).

At the tertiary level, studies have found Scandinavian learners of English to use greater frequencies of signposts than native speakers (Ädel, 2006; Hasselgård, 2016). Ädel (2006) offered several explanations for these findings, including that: the learners of English were more metalinguistically aware; the learners arbitrarily used signposts to increase their word counts; and/or the learners and native speakers were writing in different genres.

Regarding disciplines and genres, studies have identified how signposting varies across writing communities (Hyland, 2019). For example, signposting tends to feature more heavily in academic writing than in journalese (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Gonzáles, 2005; Hempel & Degand, 2008), as writers of the former are required to guide readers through complex theories, procedures and results (Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009). Within academic writing, studies have demonstrated that signposting demands depend on the academic context. Cao and Hu (2014), for example, found that quantitative studies, in which writers usually employ more tables and offer several possible explanations for statistical results, contained more signposts than qualitative ones.

A handful of studies have investigated signposting in pre-tertiary writing. Qin and Uccelli (2019) found that high school learners of English used similar frequencies of signposts in colloquial and academic texts. The exception was code glosses, which were more prominent in academic texts as learners drew on examples to construct a convincing argument. Investigating textual quality, Dobbs (2014) found that signposting frequencies did not predict which grade a text received. However, textual quality was inhibited when signposts were used to construct unconventionally long sentences or used in ways that did not match their

meaning. Although some scholars argue that explicitly teaching signposting may lead to overuse (e.g. Hasselgård, 2016), Cheng and Steffensen (1996) reported that instruction helped tertiary-level students to signpost more successfully.

Studies of signposting have rarely incorporated interview methods (Hyland, 2004) and teachers have never been interviewed in connection with such studies. Nevertheless, some researchers have interviewed teachers in connection with broader investigations of essay organisation (e.g. Wingate, 2012). These have found that teachers value structure (Beck et al., 2018; Mahalski, 1992) and address this by, for example, advising students to use acronyms for organising paragraphs (e.g. PIE, or point, information, explanation; Monte-sano, 2015). However, Lea and Street (1998, p. 162) reported that, although essay structure was highly valued, teachers "could not describe how a particular piece of writing 'lacked' structure".

3 Methods

This section presents the procedures for collecting the corpus, compiling the signposting taxonomy, and holding the teacher interviews.

3.1 Corpus

Data were collected from schools contacted via the networks of the affiliated university. This is therefore considered a convenience sample (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Although over 90 schools were contacted, the final sample was collected at 14 schools: six in Norway, three in Sweden and five in the UK. To build the corpus, teachers were asked to collect non-fiction essays that were written for school evaluations. In total, 282 essays were collected from pupils (aged 17-19 years) completing their final year of upper secondary school. The corpus was delimited according to several criteria. Firstly, some pupils submitted several essays, but only one per pupil was required. Secondly, essays were grouped into five main genres based on writing prompts and

essay content: political essays, literary essays, opinion pieces, linguistic investigations, and commentaries. Essays belonging to other genres were removed. Finally, to create balanced samples, 20 essays belonging to each genre from each educational context were randomly selected, except linguistic investigations, of which only 15 were provided. The resulting corpus comprises 115 essays, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Total number and word counts of essays across educational contexts and genres.

	Norway	Sweden	UK	Word count
Political essay	20	20	-	31,843
Literary analysis	-	20	-	27,588
Opinion piece	-	-	20	15,148
Linguistic investigation	-	-	15	29,530
Commentary	-	-	20	42,847
Word count	18,431	41,000	87,525	146,956

In Norway[2], pupils were taking a course called Social Studies English and in Sweden, pupils were taking a course called English 7. For both courses, pupils learned about political affairs, particularly in the UK and the US (Skolverket, 2020; Udir., 2006), and wrote political essays. These aimed to discuss perspectives on contemporary (e.g. the 2016 US election) and historical (e.g. British colonialism) political events. In Sweden, pupils were also required to learn about English literature (Skolverket, 2020), which involved writing literary essays about works such as George Orwell's "1984" or "Game of Thrones".

In the UK, pupils were taking courses in either English Language or Creative Writing. For English Language (AQA, 2020), pupils wrote opinion pieces, which aimed to persuade readers of a certain viewpoint, and linguistic investigations, which reported results from studies they

---

[2] Of the essays from Norway, 10 were split into two parts (one short answer and one long answer), which is a common way to structure written exams in Norway. Since the answers were written during one exam and were about similar topics (e.g. US politics), these papers were treated as one essay for the purposes of this investigation.

had conducted. On the Creative Writing course (AQA, 2013), pupils wrote commentaries, in which they reflected on their compositional processes while writing a portfolio of creative pieces. While essays were written under timed conditions in Norway and Sweden, the essays written in the UK were written under process-oriented conditions[3].

Although collecting essays written for a single task would have contributed to *tertium comparationis* (Ebeling & Ebeling, 2020), administering a single task at all 14 schools was practically unfeasible. Instead, the essays were written for tasks based on exam board criteria. Furthermore, this study did not aim to compare L1 and L2 writing. Although the majority of the pupils had Norwegian, Swedish and English as their L1, respectively, some pupils had other L1s. Thus, the data represent the kinds of writing tasks that pupils would usually engage with in their respective educational contexts.

The pupils and teachers consented to participating and the study is registered with the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD, 2020). In order to ensure privacy, data were stored on a password-protected hard disk and all quotes in this article are anonymised.

3.2 Signposting taxonomy

Since signposting in upper secondary essay writing has rarely been investigated, this study utilised an adapted taxonomy based on previous studies and on the content of the present corpus. It recognises four main signposting categories, further divided into 11 sub-categories, as shown in Table 2.

---

[3] "Process-oriented" refers to when pupils write over several days or weeks with opportunities to receive feedback and make revisions (Susser, 1994).

Table 2. Signposting taxonomy (Cao & Hu, 2014; Hasselgård, 2016; Hyland, 2007; 2019; Ädel, 2006; 2010).

Category	Subcategories	Description and *examples*
Transitions	Addition	Signal relations of addition: *as well, moreover*
	Comparison	Signal relations of comparison or contrast: *or, in comparison*
	Inference	Signal relations of cause and effect: *in order to, therefore*
Code glosses	Exemplification	Signal that an example is being given: *illustrate, highlight*
	Reformulation	Signal that a discourse unit is being reworded: *in other words*
Phoric markers	Enumerate	Signal how points are ordered: *first, finally*
	Pre-/review	Refer to later/earlier parts of the current text: I *will, mentioned*
Topic markers	Introduction	Introduce the content of the text: *this paper aims to*
	Reference to text	Reflexively refer to the current text: *this essay, this project*
	Topic shift	Signal a shift in topic: *in terms of, moving on*
	Conclusion	Signal that a conclusion is being drawn: *overall*

These (sub-)categories were combined from previous studies based on a close reading of 50 essays, using at least one essay from each genre written at each school. During this close reading, potential signposting types were identified and added to a list of search terms (see appendix), which were used to scan the corpus in order to count signposting frequencies and investigate the ways in which the types were used.

Markers that signal relations of addition, comparison and inference were classed as *transitions* (Cao & Hu, 2014). The word *and* was excluded due to its high frequency, occurring 24.6 times per 1,000 words overall. Words, phrases, and brackets that introduce examples or reformulations were classed as *code glosses* (Hyland, 2007). Markers that numerically organise points and that refer to other parts of the text were classed as *phoric markers* (Ädel, 2006). Finally, markers that introduce or conclude a text, shift the topic, or refer to the text itself were classed as *topic markers* (Ädel, 2010; Hasselgård, 2016).

In order to test the taxonomy's reliability, two external raters[4] and the researcher analysed ten randomly selected essays. Using Cohen's kappa statistic, a high level of agreement was obtained (K = .88; Hallgren, 2012). The lowest level of agreement was found for conclusion markers (K = .76), resulting from categorisations of *final** and *last**, which were sometimes mistaken as conclusion markers when functioning as enumerators. In order to address this issue, the placement of these words in the overall essay was considered, revealing that these types were almost exclusively used as enumerators: only one instance of *last* was used to mark the end of the essay ("on that *last* slice of juicy information…", opinion piece, UK).

Some types were polysemic and belonged to two or more categories. The most versatile type was *as*, which belonged to six of the sub-categories. In order to avoid crossover, each instance of *as* was categorised separately. The following extracts illustrate how *as* was used to signal relations of addition (1), comparison (2) and inference (3) (search terms are written in italics):

1) The poverty is high and the economic inequality is high *as* well. (Political essay, Norway)[5]
2) It's *as* if your best friend is telling you – 'go on you know you should pamper yourself...' (Opinion piece, UK)
3) I'm assuming that he went through some conventional phase prior, *as* nothing else is suggested. (Literary essay, Sweden)

Taking a separate approach was necessary for *as*, which was highly frequent, but not for other polysemic terms such as *essay* (introduction marker/reference to text) or *so* (transition of addition/inference), which

---

[4] One rater analysed all sub-categories except the topic shift category, which was added at a later stage and, due to practical limitations, analysed by a different rater (K = .96).
[5] Search terms in the text extracts are written in italics.

were more readily categorised by reading their respective concordance lines.

Using the KWIC (key word in context) function in #Lancsbox (Brezina et al., 2020), the corpus was electronically scanned using 273 search terms. The resulting concordance lines were copied to Microsoft Excel and read manually. Instances were discounted if they had a non-organisational function or if they were in quotes from other sources. Following this, the frequencies of each sub-category per 1000 words in each essay were calculated. Because of the diverse nature of the corpus, it was not possible to isolate independent variables, so only descriptive statistics are reported in order to identify some of the more noteworthy signposting patterns in the corpus.

3.3 Teacher interviews

The 19 teachers involved in the data collection participated in semi-structured interviews (Mackey & Gass, 2016): 8 from Norway, 4 from Sweden and 7 from the UK. All teachers had tertiary-level qualifications in English and had at least 4 years of professional teaching experience. The interviews took place face to face, lasted roughly 30-60 minutes and were audio recorded. The interview guide contained 22 questions about practices regarding teaching essay writing, where five questions are of relevance to the present study:

- Do you teach your pupils about text organisation? If yes, what?
- Do you teach pupils about how to organise a paragraph/overall text structure? If yes, what?
- Can you comment on how your pupils organise their texts in general? What are they good at and what problems do they face?
- Do you teach pupils about linking words? If so, how?
- Do you teach pupils about words and phrases to introduce or conclude their essays? If so, how?

These questions aimed to investigate the teachers' general views about the teaching of signposting, related to both macro and micro-structural relations. The interviews were not transcribed in full due to practical limitations. Instead, each teacher's answers were summarised and relevant quotes were recorded.

4 Results

Section 4.1 reports results from the textual analysis. The most frequent types and the frequencies of each (sub-)category are presented alongside extracts used to illustrate the trends that were observed. Section 4.2 presents data from the interviews in order to supplement the textual analysis.

4.1 Signposting frequencies

Table 3 shows the most frequent types belonging to each signposting sub-category.

Table 3. The five most frequent types, and raw frequencies, of each signposting sub-category in the full corpus.

	Addition	**Comparison**	**Inference**	
Transitions	*also* 409	*but* 462	*because* 364	
	another 90	*or* 371	*as* 344	
	as 91	*however* 205	*if* 213	
	further* 74	*like** 195	*so* 186	
	addition* 22	*as* 156	*therefor** 150	
Code glosses	**Exemplify**	**Reformulate**		
	example* 300	*)* 37		
	such 160	*mean** 15		
	like 76	*known* 12		
	instance 33	*other words* 11		
	includ* 17	*called* 7		
Phoric markers	**Enumerate**	**Pre-/review**		
	first* 37	*again* 45		
	second* 23	*will* 12		
	last* 20	*mentioned* 10		
	final* 19	*earlier,*		
	follow* 16	*previously* 5		
Topic markers	**Introduction**	**Ref. to text**	**Topic shift**	**Conclusion**
	essay 15	*investigation* 20	*in terms of* 36	*conclu** 38
	text,	*study* 9	*regard** 21	*overall* 4
	introduction,		*when it c*me** 17	*sum, end* 2
	investigat* 4	*essay* 5	*as to* 16	*all in all, final,*
	going to 3	*project* 1	*particular* 13	*last* 1

* is used to indicate when the given type represents several forms

Extracts containing some of these types are used below to illustrate some of the trends that were observed in the corpus.

Table 4 shows the mean (and standard deviation) of each signposting category in each of the genres and educational contexts.

Table 4. Mean (standard deviation) of each signposting (sub-)category per 1,000 words in each genre collected from each educational context

Subcategories	Political essay, Norway (N=20)	Political essay, Sweden (N=20)	Literary essay, Sweden (N=20)	Opinion piece, UK (N=20)	Linguistic investigation, UK (N=15)	Commentary, UK (N=20)
Addition	5.04 (2.42)	4.94 (3.71)	3.25 (1.82)	4.43 (6.39)	8.45 (4)	5.01 (2.63)
Comparison	16.98 (5.24)	16.82 (6.35)	14.51 (3.79)	18.21 (9.43)	13.46 (3.52)	16.57 (5.52)
Inference	13.56 (5.51)	14.98 (8.16)	13.43 (4.44)	15.81 (14.37)	18.79 (9.68)	13.71 (4.96)
Transitions	**35.58 (6.69)**	**36.74 (12.83)**	**31.19 (6.44)**	**38.44 (25.94)**	**40.70 (11.15)**	**35.29 (9.53)**
Exemplification	3.32 (2.14)	4.01 (3.15)	3.26 (2.99)	3.89 (2.82)	7.44 (4.89)	4.45 (3.1)
Reformulation	1.14 (1.41)	0.73 (1.45)	0.63 (0.97)	1.42 (3.07)	0.80 (0.86)	0.31 (0.48)
Code glosses	**4.46 (1.9)**	**4.74 (3.98)**	**3.89 (3.52)**	**5.31 (4.35)**	**8.24 (5.39)**	**4.76 (3.02)**
Enumerate	1.00 (2.29)	1.26 (2.07)	1.30 (1.89)	0.91 (1.53)	0.61 (0.84)	0.71 (1.34)
Pre-/review	0.42 (0.76)	0.66 (1.21)	0.86 (1.44)	0.45 (1.16)	0.79 (0.73)	0.65 (0.71)
Phoric markers	**1.43 (2.37)**	**1.92 (2.48)**	**2.17 (2.54)**	**1.36 (2.15)**	**1.41 (0.92)**	**1.34 (1.79)**
Introduction	0.21 (0.46)	0 (0)	0.65 (0.65)	0.10 (0.33)	0.24 (0.33)	0 (0)
Ref. to text	0.06 (0.25)	0 (0)	0.14 (0.29)	0 (0)	0.72 (1.39)	0.03 (0.14)
Shift topic	0.62 (0.94)	1.01 (1.54)	0.81 (1.24)	0.97 (1.15)	1.50 (2.01)	0.62 (0.87)
Conclusion	0.40 (0.58)	0.71 (0.82)	0.50 (0.34)	0.05 (0.21)	0.33 (0.38)	0.12 (0.32)
Topic markers	**1.29 (1.34)**	**1.73 (1.51)**	**2.10 (1.56)**	**1.12 (1.30)**	**2.80 (2.62)**	**0.77 (1.06)**
Total signposts	**42.75 (7.16)**	**45.12 (15.3)**	**39.34 (9.39)**	**46.23 (10.89)**	**53.14 (10.69)**	**42.16 (10.89)**

In total, signposts were frequently used in each of the genres across the three contexts. Of the categories, transitions were the most frequent, representing 81% of the total number of signposts in the corpus. All three sub-categories were highly frequent. Transitions of addition were the least frequent of the three transition sub-categories, but this was due to the omission of the word *and* from the analysis. Transitions of addition were often used to accumulate evidence in support of a particular line of argumentation.

4) Trump is *also* tremendously critical of NATO. (Political essay, Norway)
5) And sadly this breaking of Sibyl's heart *also* led to her committing suicide the very same night. (Literary essay, Sweden)
6) *Another* shocking, global example of the flaws in the prison system is that prisoners in Russia are being treated like animals in a zoo. (Opinion piece, UK)
7) Giving detail like this entices the reader and adds more complexity to the text. *Furthermore*, the child uses of the coordinating conjunction, 'and' in order to increase complexity. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

In the commentaries, pupils also used transitions of addition to accumulate the inspirations behind their creative choices (8), and to explain their compositional processes (9):

8) I read international folklore *as well* as the penguin book of oral poetry. (Commentary, UK)
9) I added *another* 'character', the SatNav. This added *another* level of humour. (Commentary, UK)

Comparison transitions were often used to contrast different ideas:

10) Brexit may lead to an increasing wage in some occupations. *At the same time*, increased wages will lead to increased expenses

for the companies which will be a challenge. (Political essay, Norway)

11) On the *one hand* it keeps the party from being politically threatened, *but* on the *other hand* the party will not develop without dissidents or opponents questioning its leadership. (Political essay, Sweden)

12) This can be *compared* to Coulmas' theory, who says that women are known for talking about fantasy worlds. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

13) *Even if* parents enjoy the momentary peace that comes from giving a child a gadget to play with, such gizmos do not provide the interaction a child needs to properly learn language skills. (Opinion piece, UK)

They were also used to offer analogies:

14) *Similarly*, if you've been lying on a sofa or bed for a long time, it can feel *as* if though gravity is acting extra strong and subsequently making your movements slow and "heavy" looking. (Literary essay, Sweden)

15) The use of vocal fry has such negative effects on speech that it can be *likened* to the idea of having no speech at all. (Opinion piece, UK)

16) I didn't want the narrator to sound *like* a psychopath. (Commentary, UK)

In the literary essays, comparison transitions were also used when describing events from the literary works:

17) The third example is when Theon kills two innocent farmboys *instead* of Bran and Rickon Stark who escaped from Winterfell. (Literary essay, Sweden)

The type *as* was found to function in several ways, but it was most frequently used as an inferential transition. Inferential transitions seemed

to be mainly used in two ways in most of the genres. Firstly, they were used when describing stipulatory cause-effect relations:

18) A complication that occurred as a *result* of the Europeans settling in America was diseases. (Political essay, Norway)
19) The internet is vastly different from what it used to be *as* today's web content is substantially more extensive. (Political essay, Sweden)
20) Sibyl then starts to act bad *because* she can not think of anything else than the handsome Dorian Gray (Literary essay, Sweden)
21) This contrasts the usual representation of gender in society, Beyonce challenges this idea *because* of her passion for equality and the empowerment of women. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

Secondly, inferential transitions were used to propose novel cause-effect relations:

22) *If* this happens, the financially struggling countries will only struggle even more. (Political essay, Norway)
23) Is this *because* he's an inherently evil person? No. It's *because* he hasn't developed a moral understanding that goes beyond his own personal feelings and needs. (Literary essay, Sweden)
24) That's 150 lives that could have been lost *because* faulty legal systems put them in that horrific position. (Opinion piece, UK)
25) Tablets can be a very beneficial device for language-learning *if* the correct apps are downloaded. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

However, it was not always clear whether pupils were describing information from secondary sources (especially when no sources were cited), or making claims:

26) Less immigration will *lead* to lack of workforce, giving new opportunities to British workers. (Political essay, Norway)

In contrast, rather than describing events and making claims, inferential transitions were often used in the commentaries to offer the reasoning behind compositional decisions:

27) I thought it would add another element *if* the poem portrays physically falling just by looking at the page. (Commentary, UK)
28) I take that visual, of the beard and the hair *in order to* give my character the same intelligence and aged exterior/interior. (Commentary, UK)

Overall, code glosses were the second most frequent signposting category, which was mostly represented by high frequencies of exemplifiers, which were used to explicitly mark examples that supported observations and ideas:

29) Craig at the same time, uses a rather forceful vocabulary, for *instance* 'pride', 'stake', 'undermine', to appeal to the listeners emotions. (Political essay, Norway)
30) An *example* of Dorian regressing to stage one is when he kills his friend Basil. (Literary essay, Sweden)
31) When men are referred to as animals it is often a positive thing. For *example*, we hear the term 'silver fox' for an older good-looking man. (Opinion piece, UK)
32) The repetition of the definite article 'the' followed with a noun, *e.g.* 'nose' is evident throughout. (Linguistic investigation, UK)
33) I tried to add in short one word exclamations *like* 'STOP!' […] or 'Woah!'. (Commentary, UK)

Although exemplifiers were frequent in all genres, the literary essays contained instances where pupils provided examples without explicitly marking them, as in the following:

34) Another way the book […] chooses to paint its various scenes is through emotions. […] *[exemplifier omitted]* On P.20 Daisy

> remarks that '...it's romantic outside...'." (Literary essay, Sweden)

35) During the sixth and seventh season, Tormund fully develops morally into level three stage five. *[exemplifier omitted]* After surviving hardhome, he and Jon marched 2000 wildlings past the wall. (Literary essay, Sweden)

Compared with exemplifiers, reformulation code glosses were infrequently used and occurred in only 49 of the essays. When they were used, they usually functioned to introduce acronyms (36), or supplement specialist terminology (37):

36) Obamacare, also *called* Affordable Care Act *(ACA)*[6]. (Political essay, Norway)

37) Theorists […] call this 'member's resources', which basically *means* everything that makes up the world of this 'ideal consumer' (Opinion piece, UK)

Regarding phoric markers, both sub-categories were used sporadically by individual pupils. A close inspection of the linguistic investigations, for example, revealed that ten contained preview and review markers, while five did not. Raw frequencies ranged from one to six markers per linguistic investigation. The following extract shows how six preview and review markers were used in one of the linguistic investigations:

38) I *will* be able to analyse the use of rhetoric [and] *will* be able to directly compare the texts […] I have formulated two sub sections which *will* focus on specific aspects of language. […] JFK states that "the torch has been passed" […] *again* using a metaphor to creatively outline his message […] Based on the *discussed* aspects, it is evident that the context of the speech

---

[6] Note that the brackets are the search term in extract 36.

significantly influences the context. […] Inaugural addresses act *again* as a prime illustration. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

As with pre-/review markers, some pupils relied more on enumerators than others. For example, of the political essays written in Norway, 16 pupils used enumerators and four did not. Raw frequencies ranged from one to nine. The following extracts are taken from political essays that only contained one enumerator:

39) *Firstly*, he uses a lot of personal pronounce like "I", "you" and "We". (Political essay, Norway)
40) For the *next* point I will assume there will be a hard Brexit. (Political essay, Norway)

Marginally less frequent than phoric markers, topic markers were the least frequent signposting category overall. Of the topic marker sub-categories, topic shifts were the most frequent, but these occurred in just 54 of the essays:

41) *As for* the case of Sibyl Vane (Literary analysis, Norway)
42) *In terms of* grammar, text A employs the first person pronoun, which makes his experiences more personal. (Linguistic investigation, UK)
43) *When it came* to writing about my crush, […] I wanted to play with the clichés (Commentary, UK)

The conclusion markers that were present in the Norwegian and Swedish essays were used in a conventional manner:

44) In *conclusion*, government control is a threat to democracy (Political essay, Sweden)

In contrast, only four commentaries and one opinion piece from the UK used conclusion markers. Two of these essays used conclusion makers in a more informal manner:

45) To *sum* things up, manipulating information to eliminate opposition… (Commentary, UK)

46) On that *last* slice of juicy information […], you now know the linguist tricks used to lure you in. (Opinion piece, UK)

The linguistic investigations contained the highest frequencies of topic markers. These essays tended to conform to the structure of academic research papers. Some papers were split into sub-sections, where sub-headings were used to mark the introduction and conclusion, and some papers contained the types *paper* and *investigation* to refer to the text itself.

47) *Introduction* Beyonce is an example of a celebrity using her music to challenge and create discussion. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

48) *Conclusion* This *investigation* has provided a fascinating insight into the creation and delivery of political speeches. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

49) The limitation of my *study* was its small-scale nature. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

4.2 Teachers' reported signposting practices

The first interview question asked what teachers taught their pupils about general essay organisation. In Norway and Sweden, most teachers reported that they advised pupils to use an introduction-body-conclusion, or five-paragraph essay structure. In contrast, none of the UK teachers reported these practices. While some UK teachers mentioned organisational templates related to **"**problem-solution" or "cause-effect" structures, the remaining teachers expected A-level students to have learned about text organisation at earlier stages:

a) I feel very much reticent about [providing frameworks] at A-level […] if you are taking English language as an A-level, you know, we should be beyond that. (UK4)

When asked about paragraph structure, terms like "point" and "topic sentence" were mentioned by 12 teachers across the three educational contexts, relating to the notion of "one idea, one paragraph" (N4). Five teachers discussed systematic approaches to splitting a paragraph into three or four parts, usually using acronyms such as PQE (point, quote, explanation; S2 and S3) and PETAL (point, exemplify, technical term, analyse, link; UK2).

When asked about pupils' strengths and weaknesses regarding text organisation, most teachers discussed overall text and paragraph structure. Eight teachers across the three contexts identified signposting-related aspects as problematic, which either related to linking words (lacking necessary vocabulary, or overuse/underuse of such features), or to introductions:

b) Some students […] lack the words, you know the linking words, transitions, phrases. (N8)

c) The whole paper is loaded with linking words and grammatical structures, even though it sometimes doesn't fit. (S3)

d) It's actually something I think they really struggle with […] they're looking at the specific little bit that they're writing […] they're not then stepping back and looking at it as a whole (UK3)

e) One problem is creating an inviting and engaging introduction because you have […] the waffle introduction, where they just waffle about the topic and […] the boring rewriting the essay question introduction. (N7)

When asked specifically about whether they addressed signposting, the most popular approach, used by 12 teachers, was to hand out lists of linking words. Notably, 11 of these teachers were based at Norwegian or Swedish schools and only one was based at a British school.

f) I give them a list of linking words and phrases […] sometimes they do it correctly and sometimes they find words that don't actually work very well where they put them. (N4)

Of the remaining UK-based teachers, three argued that upper secondary pupils should be familiar with linking words from earlier educational levels:

g) We expect to do less work on connectives at A-level. (UK5)

However, when asked whether their pupils are skilled in using connectives, the same teacher replied:

h) I don't think they do have a very proficient understanding of how connectives link ideas and show relationships between ideas. (UK5)

Beyond handing out lists, a few teachers reported other approaches to teaching signposting. For example, one teacher asked pupils to identify linking words in model texts in order to raise their genre awareness (UK6) and two teachers gave their pupils gap-fill tasks (N6 and S3).

i) Structural devices are useful in two ways. […] When you're unpicking how a writer has guided you through […] their text. That's important! But [also] so that they can perhaps try and achieve some similar things when they're writing non-fiction pieces of their own whether those are academic essays or pieces where they're trying to more overtly guide someone's opinion. (UK6)
j) I have a hand-out where you have to put […] the linking words into gaps […]. The purpose of this task is to show them that they have a variety […] of words […] they can use. (S3)

Whether or not pupils should explicitly introduce and conclude their essays was a point of contention among the teachers. On the one hand, 11 teachers discouraged the use of introduction markers. The explicit marking of introductions was described as, among other things, "clunky", "stupid", and "not sophisticated". One teacher in Sweden commented:

k) I hate it, because I've read it a lot in my life […] it's not a mistake and if it helps them to start writing a good essay, of course […] but I try to make them be original. (S3)

Of these teachers, some reported features that they would prefer in an introduction, which included: "definition" (N2), "something from the media" (N3), "rhetorical question" (S1), "establish an argument" (UK1).

Four teachers reported that they encouraged introduction markers. One of these recommended it mainly for low-achieving pupils:

l) Sometimes the weaker student, it's quite a safe way to start […] some do it […] and get top grades. (N6)

Two teachers argued that explicit introduction markers should be used depending on the essay length and genre:

m) A longer paper, academic paper, requires that distinction, but […] one and a half pages […] it's too short to bother saying it so clear in the introduction. (N3)

In contrast, explicitly marking conclusions was discouraged by only three teachers, who argued either that marking conclusions is not conducive to gaining marks:

n) In terms of conclusion, [it] needs to be functional […] we focus on making that fairly small […] introductions and conclusions are not worth marks any more than the fact that it looks like an essay. (UK3)

Or that they may not be appropriate in certain contexts:

o) "In conclusion"? […] Not if they're writing in a kind of journalistic style. (UK6)

Other teachers reported either positive or indifferent views towards conclusion markers, commenting for example "it's probably more

acceptable" (N2), "this is totally okay" (S3), and "I don't feel as strongly about that" (UK4).

5 Discussion

Regarding the first research question, a wide range of signposting types belonging to 11 sub-categories were identified in the corpus. Most types have been identified in previous studies (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014; Ho & Li, 2018; Hyland, 2019), but some were only found by closely reading essays from the corpus, such as more informal phrases (e.g. *all in all, down to*) and archaic spellings (e.g. *therefor*). No types with spelling errors were identified, perhaps because all essays were written using word processors, which can automatically correct errors. The range of types demonstrates the importance of adapting a taxonomy for the purposes of analysing signposting in pre-tertiary writing, which, in this case, was characterised by a particular set of sub-categories and types. It also indicates that pupils at this level sometimes rely on informal signposting types in order to signal textual relations. This may be because the present genres are of a less formal register than tertiary-level essay writing. Alternatively, this may be related to the pupils' developing awareness of how different genres require different registers (Qin & Uccelli, 2020).

Results regarding the second and third research questions will be discussed together. Overall, the results offer insight into how pupils used signposts to organise their essays, revealing some of the strategies that they used to engage their readers. It was not possible to isolate "genre" as an independent variable in this data set since the pupils had different L1s and wrote under different conditions, thus precluding the use of inferential statistics. However, the results indicate certain trends that relate to the present genres, which supports Ädel (2006), who suggested that signposting usage may be linked to the target genre. Furthermore, it suggests that these pupils may have been aware that organisational demands vary across discourse communities (Dahl, 2008; Hyland, 2003;

Moreno, 2021). Regarding educational contexts, these results suggest that upper secondary pupils in the Norwegian, Swedish and British educational contexts used signposts at similar frequencies.

Transitions were the most frequent signposting category in all genres, reflecting that a fundamental part of establishing a logical line of reasoning involves signalling relations of addition, comparison and inference (Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Ho & Li, 2018; Khedri et al., 2013; Uccelli et al., 2013). Transitions of addition were often used to accumulate evidence in support of a particular line of argumentation (Kashiha & Marandi, 2019). In the commentaries, pupils also used transitions of addition to prove their knowledge of relevant literature, seemingly in order to impress teachers with their broad literary repertoires.

Comparison transitions were often used to contrast different perspectives or offer analogies. By comparing different viewpoints, pupils not only demonstrated their subject knowledge, they were also able to align with, or discredit, certain perspectives (Cao & Hu, 2014). Furthermore, pupils seemed to establish *pathos* by using analogies to appeal to their readers' pre-existing knowledge (Aragones et al., 2014). One feature that distinguished the literary analyses was that comparison transitions were also used when retelling events from the target literary works.

Inferential transitions were often used either to describe pre-existing cause-effect relations or to consolidate ideas to propose novel cause-effect relations (Bruce, 2010). The most frequent types were conjunctions ("because", "as", "if"), which usually feature more heavily in spoken discourse compared with academic writing, which is characterised by more frequent use of causal nouns and verbs (Biber, 2006; Parkinson, 2011). While describing and proposing cause-effect relations seemed to feature heavily in most genres, pupils also used inferential transitions in the commentary essays to explain their decision-making processes in writing creative pieces.

Exemplifiers were the most frequent of the remaining signposting sub-categories, which illustrates the value placed on supporting argumentation using examples (Alyousef, 2015; Liu & Buckingham, 2018; Qin & Uccelli, 2019). This may also be related to paragraph-structuring acronyms reported by five of the teachers, which implicitly prescribe the use of examples (e.g. point, evidence, explanation, link; Monte-Sano, 2015). However, in the literary analyses, pupils sometimes drew on examples without explicitly marking them. These pupils perhaps assumed that their readers were familiar with the literary material and would tacitly recognise examples. Alternatively, this could support Andresen and Zinsmeister (2018), who argued that literary scholars avoid metatext in order to maintain a more aesthetically pleasing style. Unlike exemplifiers, reformulators were used in a minority of the essays. It may be that the pupils rarely used specialist terminology and therefore had little need to offer reformulations. On the other hand, explaining specialist terminology for the benefit of teachers and examiners may have been considered unnecessary.

Phoric and topic markers were relatively infrequent in the corpus, overall. This may reflect that pupils generally did not recognise a need to explicitly orient their readers regarding macro-structural relations, perhaps because these essays were relatively short (Ho & Li, 2018; Ädel, 2006). The longest essays were the commentaries (roughly 2,100 words on average), but these contained the lowest frequencies of phoric and topic markers. It seems that the purpose of the commentaries was for the pupils to reflect on their compositional processes, which did not require them to adhere to a formal, academic style. In contrast, the linguistic investigations contained the highest frequencies of topic markers, in which the pupils marked sections using sub-headings and explicitly referred to their "studies", or "investigations", as they guided their readers through their aims, methods and findings (Qin & Uccelli, 2019). This links to comments made by two teachers, who expected introductions to be explicitly marked in academic writing. However,

topic markers were not equally prominent in all of the academic-style linguistic investigations, which is perhaps because this kind of explicit structural marking is not required by the AQA exam board (AQA, 2020). Instead, it seems that individual teachers of A-level English language set their own organisational requirements for pupils who conduct linguistic investigations. Alternatively, the use of topic and phoric markers may vary according to pupil preferences (Bruce, 2010; Yoon, 2017).

The low frequencies of introduction and conclusion markers contrasts with Ädel (2008), who found that introduction markers were one of the more frequent signposting features. The low frequencies in this corpus may partly be explained by the teachers' advice: while a majority were indifferent to or encouraged the use of conclusion markers, most teachers discouraged the use of introduction markers. While some teachers regarded them as indicators of poor quality, others argued that they were simply not conducive to gaining marks (Mahalski, 1992). Additionally, one of the UK teachers (UK6) pointed out that conclusion markers are not appropriate in journalistic writing, and only one of the 20 opinion pieces contained a conclusion marker.

Otherwise, despite the potential effects of varying prompts, argumentative purposes, and writing conditions, pupils seemed to use signposts at similar frequencies across the three contexts. These similarities support Dahl (2004) and Blagojevic (2004), who found similar signposting practices in professional[7] texts written by Scandinavian and native speakers of English. However, Hasselgård (2016) and Ädel (2006) found that tertiary-level learners of English in Scandinavia used higher frequencies of signposts than native speakers. Ädel (2006) hypothesised that the learners of English in her study may have used signposts to raise their word counts. This may not have been a concern for the pupils in this study, who wrote relatively short essays.

---

[7] It should be noted that since previous studies have used different taxonomies any comparisons are made tentatively.

These similarities may be explained be several factors. For example, this might reflect high English proficiency among the pupils in Norway and Sweden (Education First, 2020), contexts in which English is a highly prioritised school subject. It may also be the case that signposting practices can be directly transferred from Norwegian and Swedish to English, as these languages share similar linguistic roots (Haugen & Markey, 1973). Finally, considering that pupils in Norway and Sweden learn to write in similar genres in their respective L1 subjects (see e.g. Udir., 2021b), they may be able to directly transfer similar organisational strategies to their English essay writing (Gentil, 2011).

Although signposting frequencies seemed to be similar across the three contexts, the teachers reported somewhat different practices. While the five-paragraph essay is a controversial approach to teaching essay structure (Brannon et al., 2008; Smith, 2006), it was a popular tool among teachers in Norway and Sweden. Teachers in these contexts also tended to provide their pupils with lists of linking words. However, Gardner and Han (2018, p. 880) have criticised decontextualised lists because words belonging to each category "are not all interchangeable syntactically or semantically", and only two teachers recognised how a given context can affect signposting usage. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of such a decontextualised approach when alternative approaches could be used, such as identifying and analysing the use of signposts in model texts (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996; Hyland, 2003; Tribble, 2010). Three teachers in the UK expected that pupils at the upper secondary level should already be skilled at organising essays, even though they reported that this often was not the case. The seemingly greater focus on teaching organisational competence in Norway and Sweden may be connected to English being taught as an L2 in these contexts, where teachers may focus more on, for example, lexical and grammatical competence (Ellis, 2008; Scheffler & Cinciała, 2011; Silva, 1993).

Besides the approaches discussed above, teachers each reported idiosyncratic practices for teaching signposting (Blomqvist, 2018). Although textual organisation is a valued part of essay writing in all three educational contexts (e.g. the AQA English language A-level specification requires that pupils "guide the reader", 2020, p. 25), and although some teachers in the three contexts commented that their pupils' signposting competence was lacking, these findings indicate that none of these educational contexts offered standardised approaches to addressing such aims. Consequently, teachers may offer conflicting advice (as with introduction and conclusion markers), which pupils may find confusing (Lea & Street, 1998).

This study faces several limitations. It draws on a small corpus of essays and adopts a relatively broad, thin approach to metadiscourse analysis (Ädel & Mauranen, 2010). Confounding variables, such as essay writing conditions and pupils' mother tongue, prevented the use of inferential statistics. It was beyond the scope of the present study to account for the appropriacy and accuracy of such a wide range of types (Thomson, 2018). This limitation also prevented checking some of the teachers' claims that their pupils lacked signposting competence. Finally, although this study demonstrates the value of supplementing a textual analysis with interview data, the practices reported by teachers could not be corroborated with classroom observations, and, since practical considerations precluded questions in the interviews about the teaching of specific features, the questions elicited the teachers' general views about signposting in essay writing.

6 Conclusion

This study contributes to the existing pool of research by investigating signposting in essays written by upper secondary pupils, who are at a transitionary stage between secondary and tertiary education. The analysis identified a wide range of signposting sub-categories and types used by these pupils. Signposts, particularly transitions, were frequently

used to signal sentential relations. Furthermore, it seemed that transitions reflected rhetorical strategies, such as accumulating evidence, aligning with certain perspectives, and identifying cause-effect relations. On the other hand, signposts that signal structural order were relatively infrequent, which is likely because these relatively short essays required less structural guidance than would be needed in longer essays (Ho & Li, 2018). However, some pupils used these markers quite frequently, suggesting that personal preferences can factor into signposting usage. While the findings revealed relatively similar frequencies of signposts across the educational contexts and genres, some signposting sub-categories were used in a way that reflected the purposes of the target genre, such as the use of inferential transitions to describe compositional processes in the commentary genre. Nevertheless, only two teachers recognised that signposting varies according to the given context. Furthermore, most teachers in the Norwegian and Swedish contexts relied on decontextualised lists of linking words, the value of which is questionable (Gardner & Han, 2018), and the UK teachers argued that pupils learn about organisational features at earlier levels. This raises the question of whether upper secondary teachers should offer more explicit instruction in the pragmatic signalling of textual relations. For example, by writing in a range of genres of varying lengths, pupils may learn to recognise that reader needs depend on the communicative context (Kiuhara et al., 2009; Tavakoli et al., 2012; Tribble, 2010). Future studies could aim to investigate the appropriateness and accuracy of signposts and could corroborate teacher interviews with, for example, pupil interviews and classroom observations.

Appendix: Search terms

Code Gloss

Exemplifier (20): as, displayed, e.g., example, examples, highlighted, illustrate, illustrates, illustration, include, included, includes, including, instance, like, say, seen, shown, such,)

Reformulator (16): as, called, defined, i.e., known, meaning, means, meant, namely, or, other words, otherwise, referred, stands, that is,)

Phoric Marker

Enumerator (27): 1, 2, 3, begin, conclude, continuing, final, finally, first, firstly, followed, following, last, lastly, moving, next, one, opening, overall, second, secondly, start, starting, third, thirdly, two, whole

Pre- and review (24): above, again, already, as, back, discuss, discussed, discussing, discussion, earlier, established, following, former, going to, last, latter, look, mentioned, previous, previously, said, stated, suggested, will

Topic marker

Introducing (12): aim, analysis, begin, essay, intend, introduce, introduction, investigate, investigation, paper, task, text

Reference to text (7): analysis, blog, essay, investigation, project, study, writing this

Shift/identify topic (21): anyway, as for, as to, considering, in particular, in terms of, look, looking, moving, namely, notably, now, particular, regard, regarding, regards, resume, return, thinking, well, when it came, when it comes

Concluding (12): all in all, conclude, concluded, conclusion, conclusively, end, final, finally, last, overall, sum, summary

Transition

Additive (17): addition, additionally, along, alongside, also, another, as, at the same time, following, further, furthermore, moreover, on top, simultaneously, so, too

Comparative (58): all the same, although, another, anyway, as, aside, at the same time, besides, but, compared, comparison, contrary, contrast, contrasting, contrastingly, conversely, correspondingly, despite, equally, even if, even though, even when, except, however, instead, like, likened, likening, likewise, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, no matter, nonetheless, nor, one hand, one side, oppose, opposed, or, other hand, other side, otherwise, rather, regardless, similar, similarly, still, than, then, though, unlike, vs, versus, whereas, while, whilst, yet

Inferential (58): affect, affected, affecting, affects, as, based, because, by doing, cause, caused, causes, causing, consequence, consequences, consequently, considering, down to, due, effect, effected, effects, following, for this purpose, given, hence, if, in order to, in this way, in turn, lead, leading, leads, mean, meaning, means, meant, otherwise, outcome, reason, result, resulted, resulting, results, seeing, since, so, subsequently, thanks to, then, thereafter, thereby, therefor, therefore, through, thus, unless, when, with this in mind

Total: 273 search terms

References

Abdi, R. & Ahmadi, P. (2015). Signposting propositions: A study of interactive metadiscourse marking in the composition of research articles across sciences. *Research in Applied Linguistics, 5*, 5-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2009.11.001

Aijmer, K. & Hasselgård, H. (2015). Cross-linguistic studies at the interface between lexis and grammar. *Nordic Journal of English Studies,* 14(1), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.337

Alyousef, H. (2015). An investigation of metadiscourse features in international postgraduate business students' texts: The use of interactive and interactional markers in tertiary multimodal finance texts. *SAGE Open, 5*(4), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015610796

Andresen, M. & Zinsmeister, H. (2018). Stylistic differences between closely related disciplines: Metadiscourse in German linguistics and literary studies. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 18*(4), 883-898. https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2018.4.0042

AQA Education (AQA). (2013). *A-level creative eriting*. AQA.

AQA Education (AQA). (2020). *AS and A-level English language*. AQA. https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-7701-7702-SP-2015.PDF.

Aragones, E., Gilboa, I., Postlewaite, A. & Schmeidler, D. (2001). Rhetoric and analogies. *Research in Economics, 68*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rie.2013.09.002

Beck, S. W., Llosa, L., Black, K., & Anderson, A. T. G. (2018). From assessing to teaching writing: What teachers prioritize. *Assessing Writing*, *37*, 68-77. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2018.03.003

Berggren, J. (2019). *Writing, reviewing, and revising: Peer feedback in lower secondary EFL classrooms* [Ph.D. thesis]. Stockholm University.

Biber, D. (2006). *University language: A corpus-based study of spoken and written registers*. John Benjamins.

Blagojevic, S. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic prose: A contrastive study of academic articles written in English by English and

Norwegian native speakers. *Studies about Languages, 5*, 60-67. https://doi.org/10.23865/njlr.v4.1050

Blomqvist, P. (2018). Är vi överens om det? Samspel och samstämmighet i svensklärares bedömningssamtal om gymnasieelevers skrivande. *Nordic Journal of Literacy Research*, *4*, 1-21. https://doi.org/10.23865/njlr.v4.1050

Brannon, L., Courtney, J. P., Urbanski, C. P., Woodward, S. V., Reynolds, J. M., Iannone, A. E., Haag, K. D., Mach, K., Manship, L. A. & Kendrick, M. (2008). The five-paragraph essay and the deficit model of education. *English Journal, 98*(2), 16-21.

Brezina, V., Weill-Tessier, P. & McEnery, A. (2020). #LancsBox (Version 5.1.1) [Computer software]. http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/lancsbox

Bruce, I. (2010). Textual and discoursal resources used in the essay genre in sociology and *English. Journal for Academic Purposes, 9*(3), 153-166. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.011

Cao, F. & Hu, G. (2014). Interactive metadiscourse in research articles: A comparative study of paradigmatic and disciplinary influences. *Journal of Pragmatics, 66*, 15-31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2014.02.007

Cheng, X. & Steffensen, M. (1996). Metadiscourse: a technique for improving student writing. *Research in the Teaching of English, 30*(2), 149-181.

Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*, 95-113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.10.003

Dahl, T. (2004). Textual metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discipline? *Journal of Pragmatics, 36*, 1807-1825. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.05.004

Dahl, T. (2008). The KIAP project: Academic voices in harmony and contrast. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 7*(3), 203-204.

Dobbs, C. L. (2014). Signaling organization and stance: Academic language use in middle grade persuasive writing. *Reading and*

Writing 27, 1327-1352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9489-5

Ebeling, S. O. & Ebeling, J. (2020). Contrastive analysis, tertium comparationis and corpora. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 19*(1), 97-117. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.514

Education First. (2020). *English proficiency index*. https://www.ef.no/epi/regions/europe/norway/.

Ellis, R. (2008). Investigating grammatical difficulty in second language learning: Implications for second language acquisition research and language testing. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 18,* 4-22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2008.00184.x

Farrokhi, F. & Ashrafi, S. (2009). Textual metadiscourse resources in research articles. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning, 52*(212), 39-75.

Fløttum, K., Dahl, T., Didriksen, A. A. & Gjesdal, A. M. (2013). KIAP - reflections on a complex corpus. *Bergen Language and Linguistic Studies, 3*(1), 137-150. https://doi.org/10.15845/bells.v3i1.367

Gardner, S. & Han. C. (2018). Transitions of contrast in Chinese and English university student writing. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 18*(4), 861-882. https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2018.4.0067

Gentil, G. (2011). A biliteracy agenda for genre research. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *20*, 6–23. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2010.12.006

Gonzáles, R. A. (2005). Textual metadiscourse in commercial websites. *Ibérica, 9*, 33-62.

Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2018). *'They say I say': The moves that matter in academic writing*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Hallgren, K. A. (2012). Computing inter-rater reliability for observational data: An overview and tutorial. *Tutor Quant Methods Psychol. 8*(1), 23-34.

Halliday, M. A. K. & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *An introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Hasselgård, H. (2016). Discourse-organizing metadiscourse in novice academic English. In M. J. López-Couso, B. Méndez-Naya, P. Núñez-Pertejo, & I. M. Palacios-Martínez (Eds.), *Corpus*

linguistics on the move: Exploring and understanding English through corpora (p. 106-131). Leiden: Brill Rodopi.

Hasund, I. K. (2019). Informal language in English L2 writing: What are pupils taught from textbooks? *Acta Didactica Norge, 13*(3), 1-25. http://dx.doi.org/10.5617/adno.6599

Haugen, E. & Markey, T. L. (1973). *Scandinavian languages: Fifty years of linguistic research (1918 - 1968)*. Walter de Gruyter.

Hellekjær, G. O. (2007). *Fremmedspråk i norsk næringsliv - Engelsk er ikke nok!* Fremmedspråksenteret.

Hempel, S. & Degand, L. (2006). The use of sequencers in academic writing: A comparative study of French and English. *Schedae, 5*(1), 35-40.

Hempel, S. & Degand, L. (2008). Sequencers in different text genres: Academic writing, journalese and fiction. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*, 676-693. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.02.001

Hinds, J. (2011). Reader versus writer responsibility: A new typology. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark essays on ESL writing* (p. 63-74)*.* Routledge.

Ho, V. & Li, C. (2018). The use of metadiscourse and persuasion: An analysis of first year university students' timed argumentative essays. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 33*, 53-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.02.001

Holliday, A. R. (1999). Small cultures. *Applied Linguistics, 20*, 237-264. http://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.2.237

Hulleberg Johansen, S. (2019). Exploring the use of probes in a corpus pragmatic study of hedging strategies. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 18*(1), 121-148. http://doi.org/10.35360/njes.493

Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*(2), 133-151. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.02.001

Hyland, K. (2007). Applying a gloss: exemplifying and reformulating in academic disciplines. *Applied Linguistics, 28*, 266-285. http://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amm011

Hyland, K. (2019). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury.

Hyland, K. & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching, 39*(2), 83-101. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444806003399

Johansson, S. (2007). *Seeing through multilingual corpora: On the use of corpora in contrastive studies*. John Benjamins.

Kachru, B. B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures* (2nd ed.). University of Illinois Press.

Kashiha, H. & Marandi, S. (2019). Rhetoric-specific features of interactive metadiscourse in introduction moves: A case of discipline awareness. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, 37*(1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2018.1548294

Khedri, M, Heng, C. S. & Ebrahim, S. F. (2013). An exploration of interactive metadiscourse markers in academic research article abstracts in two disciplines. *Discourse Studies, 15*(3), 319-331. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445613480588

Kiuhara, S. A., Graham, S., & Hawken, L. S. (2009). Teaching writing to high school students: A national survey. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *101*(1), 136-160. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013097

Lea, M. R., & Street, B. V. (1998). Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, *23*(2), 157-172. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079812331380364

Liu, Y. & Buckingham, L. (2018). The Schematic structure of discussion sections in applied linguistics and the distribution of metadiscourse markers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 34*, 97-109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.04.002

Ljosland, R. (2008). *Lingua franca, prestisjespråk og forestilt fellesskap: Om engelsk som akademisk språk i Norge* [Ph.D. Thesis]. Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2016). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Routledge.

Mahalski, P. A. (1992). Essay-writing: Do study manuals give relevant advice? *Higher Education*, *24*(1), 113-132. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00138621

Mauranen, A. (1993). *Cultural differences in academic rhetoric: A textlinguistic study*. Peter Lang.

McEnery, T. & Wilson, A. (2003). *Corpus linguistics: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh University Press.

Monte-sano, C. (2015). Qualities of historical writing instruction: A comparative case study of two teachers' practices. *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(4), 1045-1079.

Moreno, A. I. (2021). Selling research in RA discussion sections through English and Spanish: An intercultural rhetoric approach. *English for Specific Purposes, 63*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2021.02.002

Mur Dueñas, P. (2011). An intercultural analysis of metadiscourse features in research articles written in English and in Spanish. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*, 3068-3079. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00228.x

Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). (2020). *NSD - Norwegian centre for research data.* https://nsd.no/nsd/english/index.html.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods designs in social science research. *The Qualitative Report, 12*, 281-316.

Parkinson, J. (2011). The Discussion section as argument: The language used to prove knowledge claims. *English for Specific Purposes, 30,* 164-175. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2011.03.001

Pérez-Llantada, C. (2010). The discourse functions of metadiscourse in published academic writing: Issues of culture and language. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 9*, 41-68. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.217

Qin, W. & Uccelli, P. (2019). Metadiscourse: Variation across communicative contexts. *Journal of Pragmatics, 139*, 22-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.10.004

Qin, W. & Uccelli, P. (2020). Beyond linguistic complexity: Assessing register flexibility in EFL writing across contexts. *Assessing Writing, 45*, 100464. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2020.100465

Rindal, U. (2014). What is English? *Acta Didactica Norge, 8*(2), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.5617/adno.1137

Scheffler, P. & Cinciała, M. (2011). Explicit grammar rules and L2 acquisition. *ELT Journal*, *65*(1), 13-23. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccq019

Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly, 27*(4), 657-677. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587400

Skolverket. (2020). *English*. Skolverket. https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/gymnasieskolan/laroplan-program-och-amnen-i-gymnasieskolan/amnesplaner-i-gymnasieskolan-pa-engelska

Skolverket. (2021). *Timplan för grundskolan*. https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/grundskolan/laroplan-och-kursplaner-for-grundskolan/timplan-for-grundskolan

Smith, K. (2006). In defense of the five-paragraph essay. *English Journal, 95*(4), 16-17.

Sundqvist, P. & Sylvén, L. K. (2016). *Extramural English in teaching and learning: From theory and research to practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Susser, B. (1994). Process approaches in ESL/EFL writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing 3*(1), 31-47. https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(94)90004-3

Tavakoli, M., Bahrami, L., & Amirian, Z. (2012). Improvement of metadiscourse use among Iranian EFL learners through a process-based writing course. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, *9*(9), 129-164.

Thomson, J. J. (2018). Hedging in English texts written by lower secondary pupils attending Norwegian schools. *Nordic Journal of Modern Language Methodology, 6*(1), 46-65. https://doi.org/10.46364/njmlm.v6i1.411

Tribble, C. (2010). A genre-based approach to developing materials for writing. In J. C. Richards (Ed.), *English Language Teaching Materials* (p. 157-178). Cambridge University Press.

Tåqvist, M. K. (2016). Facts and things: Advanced ESL learners' use of discourse-organising nouns. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 15*(4), 107-134. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.386

Uccelli, P., Dobbs, C. & Scott, J. (2013). Mastering academic language: Organization and stance in the persuasive writing of high school students. *Written Communication, 30*, 36-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088312469013

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2006). *Læreplan i engelsk – Programfag i utdanningsprogram for studiespesialisering.* Utdanningsdirektoratet. http://data.udir.no/kl06/ENG4-01.pdf

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir.). (2021a). *Fag- og timefordeling og tilbudsstruktur for Kunnskapsløftet Udir-1-2021.* https://www.udir.no/regelverkstolkninger/opplaring/Innhold-i-opplaringen/udir-1-2021/vedlegg-1/2.-grunnskolen/#2.2ordinar-fag-og-timefordeling

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2021b). *Finn eksamensoppgaver.* Utdanningsdirektoratet. https://sokeresultat.udir.no/eksamensoppgaver.html

Valero-Garcés, C. (1996). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Spanish-English economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes, 15*(4), 279-294. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(96)00013-0

Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication, 36,* 82-93. https://doi.org/10.2307/357609

Virtanen, T. & Halmari, H. (2005). Persuasion across genres: Emerging perspectives. In H. Halmari & T. Virtananen (Eds.), *Persuasion across genres* (p. 3-26). John Benjamins.

Wingate, U. (2012). 'Argument!' Helping students understand what essay writing is about. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 11*, 145-154. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2011.11.001

Yoon, H. (2017). Textual voice elements and voice strength in EFL argumentative writing. *Assessing Writing, 32*, 72-84. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2017.02.002

Ädel, A. (2006). *Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English*. John Benjamins.

Ädel, A. (2008). Metadiscourse across three varieties of English. In U. Conner, E. Nagelhout & W. V. Rozycki (Eds.), *Contrastive rhetoric: Reaching to intercultural rhetoric* (p. 45-62). John Benjamins.

Ädel, A. (2010). Just to give you a kind of map of where we are going: A taxonomy of metadiscourse in spoken and written academic

speech. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 9*, 69-97. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.218

Ädel, A. (2017). Remember that your reader cannot read your mind: Problem/solution-oriented metadiscourse in teacher feedback on student writing. *English for Specific Purposes, 45*, 54-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2016.09.002

Ädel, A. & Mauranen, A. (2010). Metadiscourse: Diverse and divided perspectives. *Nordic Journal of English Studies, 9*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.215

Article 3

Exploring epistemic stance and engagement in upper secondary pupil English essays.

Abstract

This study investigates epistemic stance and engagement markers, linguistic features used to position the author regarding the status of their knowledge claims and anticipate the readers' interests and reactions, in essays written at the upper secondary level. For the study, 115 English essays belonging to five genres were collected from 14 upper secondary schools situated in Norway, Sweden and the UK. In order to supplement the textual data, interviews were held with 19 English teachers at the participating schools. A taxonomy was devised based on previous studies and on a close reading of a selection of essays in order to identify the epistemic stance and engagement markers used by the upper secondary pupils. The results reveal how the upper secondary pupils used epistemic stance and engagement markers to establish arguments and engage readers, and certain categories, such as self-mentions and reader references, seemed to reflect the purposes of each of the present genres. However, boosters seemed to be inappropriately used and teacher advice regarding these features was somewhat limited. The findings offer useful insight for writing instructors looking to teach pupils about the appropriate use of epistemic stance and engagement markers in different genres.

Keywords: Epistemic stance; Engagement; Metadiscourse; Essay writing; Writing instruction

1 Introduction

When composing essays, school pupils have to exhibit a mastery of numerous written conventions associated with professional and academic communities. Not only do they have to exhibit their subject knowledge in a grammatically correct and coherent manner, they also have to make epistemic claims whilst anticipating their readers' interests and reactions. In order to do this, pupils might, for example, voice personal perspectives, recognise opposing views, cite extra-textual sources and directly address readers. Scholars have operationalised and investigated these features under the guise of terms such as "stance" (Biber & Finegan, 1988), "interpersonal metadiscourse" (Vande Kopple, 1985) and "interactional metadiscourse" (Hyland, 2019). In this study, the terms *"*epistemic stance" and "engagement" (e.g. Biber et al., 1999; Hyland, 2005) are used to refer to linguistic aspects that writers use to position themselves in relation to their knowledge claims and to explicitly draw readers into their unfolding argumentation. These terms do not cover the use of attitude markers (Mur Dueñas, 2010), which were too diverse and frequent in the present corpus to be thoroughly reported in this article.

Previous studies have investigated epistemic stance and engagement features across a range of contexts and genres (Bruce, 2010; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Gray & Biber, 2012; Marín Arrese, 2015; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012), often focusing on professional academic writing, and tertiary level writing. Research has also examined the use of such features in texts written by learners of English (Çandarlı et al., 2015; Lee & Deakin, 2016). While investigations have underscored that these features can be challenging for novice writers and language learners (e.g. Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Ho & Li, 2018; Mei, 2006), a dearth of studies have investigated such features in pre-tertiary writing (Dobbs, 2014; Qin & Uccelli, 2019; Uccelli et al., 2013). Understanding the various facets of composing successful school essays seems important considering that writing plays a central role in the teaching and assessment of most school

subjects. By investigating the stance and engagement features in a corpus of essay written by upper secondary pupils attending Norwegian, Swedish and British schools, this study offers important insight for English teachers and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instructors aiming to cultivate the writing competence of pre-tertiary pupils and freshman students. Furthermore, while previous studies of stance have rarely used interview methods (Çandarlı et al., 2015), the present study incorporates interviews to investigate the teachers' general views regarding epistemic stance and engagement features and to tentatively draw connections between their advice and the pupils' compositional decisions.

The Norwegian, Swedish and British educational contexts were chosen because they represent educational systems in which upper secondary pupils tend to be proficient in English and are contexts to which the author's affiliated university has access. In the UK, English is, of course, used as a first language. In Norway and Sweden, the status of English is less clearly defined (Graddol, 1996). Although English is not recognised as an official language (St. Meld. 35, 2007; Isof, 2021), it is widely used in educational (Hellekjær, 2007), professional (Ljosland, 2008), and entertainment settings (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). In the Norwegian and Swedish national curricula, English is a highly prioritised subject that is compulsory in years 1 to 11, and it is treated separately from other foreign languages with its own curriculum (Udir., 2020; Skolverket, 2020b). While this study does not primarily compare stance in essays written by learners of English (L2) and first language (L1) speakers of English, these contexts may offer further insight into how rhetorical patterns may vary among different language groups and discourse communities (Connor, 2004; Hinds, 2011; Hinkel, 2005; Valero-Garces, 1996). Furthermore, investigating how pupils who are in the process of completing their secondary education and are likely to continue to tertiary-level education use epistemic stance and engagement markers can provide useful insight for upper secondary and university writing

instructors. For this study, the following research questions were devised:

- Which categories, types and frequencies of epistemic stance and engagement markers are used in a corpus of upper secondary essays collected from the Norwegian, Swedish and British educational contexts?
- To what extent do epistemic stance and engagement markers reflect the purposes of different essay genres?
- To what extent is the pupils' use of epistemic stance and engagement markers connected to their teachers' reported practices?

This article reviews previous stance-related studies, offers a comprehensive taxonomy of epistemic stance and engagement that was adapted to the content of the present corpus, and reports results from a textual analysis, supplemented by results from teacher interviews.

2 Epistemic stance and engagement

Linguistic features related to epistemicity and engagement in writing have been approached using terms such as "stance" (Biber & Finegan, 1988), "engagement" (Hyland, 2005), "evidentiality" (Chafe, 1985), "interpersonal metadiscourse" (Vande Kopple, 1985) and "interactional metadiscourse" (Hyland, 2019). Biber et al. (1999) distinguish between attitudinal stance, features used to offer evaluations and affective reactions, and epistemic stance. This study focuses on the latter, which encompasses the linguistic features that authors use to navigate extra-textual sources and mark their degree of commitment towards the knowledge claims that they present (Biber et al., 1999; Gray & Biber, 2012; Marín Arrese, 2015). This study also considers engagement features, which are used to include readers in the unfolding text, predicting their interests and anticipating their potential reactions (Hyland, 2005; 2019). Together, epistemic stance and engagement

features work interdependently, opening or closing dialogic space as writers attempt to demonstrate to readers their foothold on the subject matter and their ability to synthesise alternative perspectives into their argumentation.

Although stance and engagement features are less prevalent in written contexts than spoken ones (Biber, 2006), studies continue to reveal the interactional strategies upon which discourse communities rely (e.g. Afros & Schriyer, 2009; Hyland, 2017; Keshavarz & Kheirieh, 2011; Sancho-Guinda, 2019; Swales, 2016), contrary to notions that specialised forms of writing are faceless and objective (Bazerman, 2014). Studies have shown that aligning with a certain discourse community, such as a particular academic field (Hyland, 1998) or type of journalism (Fu & Hyland, 2014), involves adhering to conventions regarding the degree to which authors are required to contextualise the premise of their thesis (Farrokhi & Ashrafi, 2009; Hyland, 2019), commit to their claims (Hu & Cao, 2015; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012), and address their readership (Jiang & Ma, 2019; Zou & Hyland, 2020).

Recognising which epistemic stance and engagement conventions are appropriate in a given written context can prove tricky for novice writers and language learners (Bax et al., 2019; Çandarlı et al., 2015; Yoon & Römer, 2020). By investigating interactions between stance and engagement features and holistic essay grades, studies have indicated that, while tertiary-level students and school pupils across grade levels are able to draw on a wide array of stance features, effective pragmatic usage of stance features is related to higher written quality (Dobbs, 2014; Mei, 2006). One aspect with which students and pupils seem to struggle is balancing their use of hedges and boosters in making epistemic claims: while studies usually find professional English writing to be characterised by tentativeness (e.g. Hu & Cao, 2015; Hyland & Jiang, 2016), novice writers tend to be overly assertive (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Dobbs, 2014; Ho & Li, 2018; Qin & Uccelli, 2019; Uccelli et al., 2013; Thomson, 2018).

Establishing a convincing epistemic stance also involves identifying and synthesising extra-textual sources. Previous studies have tended to focus on how authors cite secondary sources (Afros & Scryer, 2009; Ho & Li, 2018), but some studies have also recognised the ways in which primary sources are utilised (Bruce, 2010; Docherty, 2019). For novice writers, critically evaluating sources is an essential skill for entering professional discourse communities. However, even with explicit tuition, honing this skill can prove to be challenging (Du, 2019; Mei, 2006; Uccelli et al., 2013).

Regarding engagement markers and self-mentions, although these comprise important rhetorical features in professional academic writing (Harwood, 2005; Jiang & Ma, 2019; Vassileva, 1998), they tend to be used more heavily in student and pupil writing. This may reflect that these groups are still learning about appropriate written conventions, but it may also reflect that their target audience are mostly teachers and examiners (Dobbs, 2014; Hyland, 2004; Yoon & Römer, 2020). Nevertheless, Uccelli et al. (2013, p. 53) observe how academic values can influence pre-tertiary teachers' practices regarding epistemic stance and engagement features: "It is not surprising that the features they would value in their students' writing are in fact core markers of organisation and stance in skilled academic writing".

Among studies that have incorporated interview methods, Çandarlı et al. (2015, p. 197) reported that Turkish learners of English avoided the use of "I", in favour of "we", based on their teachers' advice. Li and Wharton (2012) reported that university students' use of stance can be affected by varying practices across individual institutions. However, interview methods are underused in studies of epistemic stance and engagement, and when studies have used interview methods, the focus has usually been on investigating the authors' rhetorical choices (Hyland, 2004; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Tavakoli et al., 2012). The present study offers a different perspective by interviewing English teachers about

their stance-related practices in order to consider the extent to which these may affect pupils' writing practices.

3 Methods

This section outlines the procedures for collecting the essays, holding the teacher interviews, devising an adapted taxonomy, and analysing the data.

3.1 Data collection

In order to address the research questions, I collected essays from upper secondary schools situated in Norway, Sweden and the UK and held interviews with teachers regarding their teaching of features related to epistemic stance and engagement. This can be described as a convenience sample since the participating schools were contacted via the affiliated university's network (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Although over 90 schools were contacted, only 14 schools agreed to participate: six in Norway, three in Sweden and five in the UK. Although the participating pupils were all completing their final year of upper secondary school, they were aged between 17 and 19, as pupils in the UK finish upper secondary school one year earlier than those in Scandinavian schools.

The present corpus contains 115 essays belonging to five genres written by 115 pupils based at six Norwegian, three Swedish and five British schools, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Total number and total word count of essays across educational contexts and genres.

	Norway (schools)	Sweden (schools)	UK (schools)	Word count (Mean)
Political essay	20 (6/6)	20 (2/3)	-	31,843 (796)
Literary analysis	-	20 (1/3)	-	27,588 (1,379)
Opinion piece	-	-	20 (3/5)	15,148 (757)
Commentary	-	-	20 (1/5)	42,847 (2,142)
Linguistic investigation	-	-	15 (3/5)	29,530 (1,969)
Word count (Mean)	18,431 (922)	41,000 (1025)	87,525 (1,591)	146,956 (1,277)

In total, the corpus contained 146,956 words with a mean length per essay of 1,277 words. Based on the prompts and essay content, the essays were categorised as belonging to one of five genres: political essays, literary essays, opinion pieces, commentaries, and linguistic investigations. In Norway[1], the political essays were written for the "Social Studies English" course, which is offered only to final year upper secondary pupils. One of the aims of the course is to discuss political affairs, particularly in the UK and the US (Udir., 2006, p. 6). The political essays in Sweden were written for the "English 7" course, for which pupils also learn about political affairs (Skolverket, 2020a). The political essays from both contexts thus aimed to discuss various perspectives on both contemporary (e.g. the 2016 US election) and historical (e.g. British colonialism) political events. As well as political essays, upper secondary pupils taking English 7 in the Swedish context were also required to write literary essays (Skolverket, 2020a), which aimed to discuss works such as "1984" by George Orwell and television shows such as "Game of Thrones". From the UK, opinion pieces, linguistic investigations, and commentaries were collected. The opinion pieces and

---

[1] In Norway, essays are often split into two parts for timed exams (one short and one long answer), which was the case for 10 of the essays. These were treated as one essay each for the purposes of the present study.

the linguistic investigations were written for a course in English language. One option that pupils could choose was to write a piece of original writing under the sub-heading "the power of persuasion" (AQA, 2019, p. 21). Although the opinion pieces were somewhat similar to the political analyses, these essays were classified differently: rather than discussing various perspectives, these pupils focused on arguing for a specific perspective in a format that more closely resembled opinion pieces printed in newspapers. For the same course, pupils were also required to analyse linguistic data and report their findings in a research-like paper, which are labelled here as linguistic investigations (AQA, 2019). The commentaries, the final genre, were written for a creative writing course in the UK. After having written a series of creative pieces, pupils were required to demonstrate a critical view of their own writing processes (AQA, 2015, p. 15). One of the notable differences across the educational contexts was that while essays in Norway and Sweden were written under timed conditions, the UK essays were written as coursework under process-oriented conditions[2].

In order to supplement the textual data and potentially account for the findings of the textual analysis, I held interviews with 19 teachers at the participating schools: eight in Norway, four in Sweden, and seven in the UK. The teachers, who were working with the participating pupils, all had a minimum of a one-year tertiary-level qualification in either English language or English literature and had from 4 to 37 years of teaching experience. In order to conduct these roughly hour-long semi-structured interviews, a guide covering five main areas was devised containing questions about: the teachers' background, their marking practices, their teaching practices regarding text organisation, their teaching practices regarding writer-reader relations, and their teaching practices regarding

---

[2] "Process-oriented" here refers to pupils being given a period of days or weeks to write their essay with opportunities to receive feedback and make revisions (Susser, 1994).

argumentation. This study reports results from the last two areas, which included the following questions:

- Do you teach pupils about words, such as "definitely", "everybody", "always", to make arguments assertively? If so, how?
- Do you teach pupils about words, such as "perhaps", "maybe", "roughly", to make arguments carefully? If so, how?
- Do you teach pupils about citing sources? If yes, what?
- Do you teach about using personal pronouns (e.g. "I", "my")? If so, what?
- Do you teach pupils about directly engaging their audience (e.g. by using questions or 2nd/3rd person pronouns)? If so, what?

Although the interviews were audio-recorded, it was beyond the scope of the present study to transcribe the interview data in full, so answers to each of the questions were summarised and key quotes were transcribed.

3.2 A taxonomy of epistemic stance and engagement

In order to analyse the corpus, a taxonomy of epistemic stance and engagement was devised based both on taxonomies used in previous studies (e.g. Hinkel, 2005; Salager-Meyer, 2004) and on a close reading of 50 essays from the present corpus. Instead of simply applying a taxonomy from a previous study to the present data set, it was deemed necessary to consider the particular features of the present corpus. In order to do this, one essay belonging to each genre written at each school was randomly selected for close reading. Based on the close reading, a trial-and-error process involved making changes to the taxonomy and testing these changes by selecting further essays to be closely read. By the end of this process, at least eight essays belonging to each genre were closely read. This taxonomy was thus compiled to capture the types of epistemic stance and engagement markers on which pupils in the present study relied, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Categories and sub-categories of epistemic stance and engagement (adapted from Prince et al., 1980; Salager-Meyer, 1994; Hinkel, 2005; Hyland, 2005, 2019; Ifantidou, 2005; Abdi et al., 2010; Ädel, 2010)

Category	Subcategory	Description and examples
Hedges	Rounders	Mark that exact figures/entities are not available: *roughly, around*
	Plausibility shields	Mark epistemic uncertainty: *potential, tend*
	Downtoners	Diminish lexical intensity: *quite, relatively*
	First-person hedges	Mark author tentativeness: *opinion, guess*
Boosters	Universals	Mark extreme of a continuum of meanings: *all, everybody, never*
	Plausibility boosters	Mark epistemic certainty: *clear, indeed, sure*
	Amplifiers	Raise lexical intensity: *extremely, too, very*
Evidentials		Mark that information is externally sourced: *describe, portray*
Self-mentions		Mark author involvement: *I, my, we*
Engagement markers	Reader reference	Directly address the reader: *you, we*
	Diverse strategies	Engage readers using the imperative mood, asides or questions: *think, by the way, ?*

The taxonomy recognises five main categories: hedges, boosters, evidentials, self-mentions, and engagement markers. Hedges are split into four sub-categories (Prince et al., 1980; *Salager-Meyer, 1994; Hinkel, 2005)*. Downtoners are used to mitigate the intensity of a statement. Rounders are used in place of exact figures. Plausibility hedges are used to recognise that a knowledge claim may not be true. Finally, first-person hedges, functionally similar to plausibility hedges but used in connection with a first-person pronoun (which were counted as self-mentions), mark that the author is unsure of a knowledge claim's veracity. First-person hedges (e.g. "think", "believe", "opinion") occurred together with first-person pronouns (e.g. "I", "my"), which were classed as self-mentions.

Boosters are split into three sub-categories (Hinkel, 2005). Amplifiers, contrary to downtoners, raise the intensity of a statement. While rounders are used when exact figures are unavailable, universals are used to mark the extremes of a continuum. Plausibility boosters, as opposed to

plausibility shields, are used to mark epistemic certainty. While there were instances of first-person boosters in the corpus (22 instances of "I know", "I'm sure" and "I'm certain" were found), these were not considered common enough to conduct a useful analysis, so they were categorised as plausibility boosters.

The present analysis also accounted for the effects of negation, which can switch a booster to a hedge and vice versa. For example, while the word "very" would usually be classed as an amplifier, "not very" is classed as a downtoner. The following are two examples from the corpus:

1) I was *not* moved *a bit*. (Classed as a universal rather than a downtoner)
2) The writer's spelling is *not always* consistent. (Classed as a rounder rather than a universal)

Although they are not usually strictly classed as epistemic stance or engagement markers (Gray & Biber, 2012; Hyland, 2005), self-mentions are included in studies that take broader approaches to analysing stance (e.g. Hyland, 2005; Hu & Cao, 2015). Self-mentions explicitly establish an author's level of epistemic commitment, mark their personal standpoints, and reveal their authorial identity to readers (Harwood, 2005). Self-mentions are used to refer to the authors themselves or to a group to which they belong (Hyland, 2001). For example, the pronoun "we" was classed as a reader reference when it included the reader, but as a self-mention when the reader was not included in the group in question (e.g. "*We* learned different techniques").

Evidentials attribute information to an extra-textual source. While some studies (e.g. Cao & Hu, 2014) recognise evidentials to be organisational features, this study considers that, by drawing on primary and secondary sources in order to establish the writer's subject knowledge and to contrast or support their views, evidentials serve to establish the broader discussion in which the author intends to assert their own claims (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008).

Engagement markers are used to interact directly with the target reader (Hyland, 2005). Reader references are used to directly address readers. Three other engagement strategies were observed: asking questions (190 questions were found), using the imperative mood (30 directives were found), and interrupting the text to offer a personal comment (62 asides were found). Due to the low frequencies of these markers in the present corpus, they were grouped together as a single "diverse strategies" sub-category. The question mark was used to search for questions. Directives and asides were identified using a set of words that were considered to instruct readers and introduce extra information, respectively.

A notable feature of the present taxonomy is the exclusion of attitude markers. Previous stance-related studies have tended to recognise no more than 118 types of attitude marker (e.g. Mur Dueñas, 2010; Hyland, 2019; Martin & White, 2005). In the present corpus, 218 attitude marker types belonging to four sub-categories were identified. Reporting these results was beyond the scope of the present article, so these were reported in a separate study (Thomson, 2020), hence the focus in this article on epistemic stance and engagement.

The taxonomy was trialled using 10 sample texts in order to calculate inter-rater reliability between myself and a second rater[3]. Cohen's kappa statistic was calculated (Hallgren, 2012), which showed a substantial agreement between the raters overall ($K = .82$). However, substantial agreement was not reached for the evidential category ($K = .29$, before discussion). Since previous studies have typically focused on the citation of academic sources (e.g. Hyland, 2019), there was disagreement on markers used to draw on primary sources. Markers such as "depict" and "portray" were used to cite literary sources, as in extract (3), which describes the events in the target novel, thus establishing the grounds for the essay's unfolding thesis.

---

[3] The second rater was a doctoral researcher within the field of English linguistics.

3) The dystopian novel '1984' (Orwell, 1949), *portrays* a society affected by media manipulation. (literary analysis, Sweden)

Markers used to cite oral sources are also included, as shown in extract (4), in which the pupil recognises one of the sources of inspiration for their own creative work, in this case both their friend and a popular movie.

4) One friend *mentioned* the film Love Actually. (Commentary, UK)

After agreeing to count markers that are used to mark the use of primary sources, substantial agreement was reached for the criteria used to categorise evidentials ($K = .72$).

3.3 Analysing the corpus

Overall, 543 epistemic stance and engagement types[4] were identified in the present corpus (see appendix). These types were considered to be the units of epistemic stance and engagement in themselves. However, in order to investigate the sentential context in which these units were used, and to remove instances that did not function as one of the sub-categories, the corpus was scanned using the concordancing program #Lancsbox. Over 30,000 hits were copied into Microsoft Excel and then manually read in order to identify and remove instances that either did not function as an epistemic stance or engagement marker or were found in extra-textual quotes. None of the markers were counted as belonging to two categories. Once the manual analysis was complete, the number of instances per 1,000 words was calculated for each text and entered into SPSS (IBM, 2017). Descriptive statistics were calculated in order to identify trends in the data, which are reported in section 4. Since this is a relatively small convenience sample, isolating independent variables

---

[4] Initially, 668 types were used to scan the corpus, but 125 were not found to function as epistemic stance and engagement markers in the present corpus and are therefore omitted from the appendix.

proved to be problematic, which precluded further statistical testing. Nevertheless, the findings from both the textual and interview data offer important insight into the upper secondary pupils' use of epistemic stance and engagement markers, the implications of which are discussed in section 5.

4 Results

Section 4.1 presents the most frequent epistemic stance and engagement marker types, followed by the frequencies of each sub-category in the genres from the three educational contexts. Results from the teacher interviews are reported to supplement the textual analysis, where relevant.

4.1 Epistemic stance and engagement marker types

Table 3 presents the five most frequent epistemic stance and engagement types of each sub-category in the full corpus.

Table 3. Most frequent types (and raw frequencies) of each epistemic stance and engagement sub-category in full corpus.

(Sub-)category	*Types* and raw frequencies				
Hedge:					
Rounders	*many* 236	*other* * 212	*some* 192	*lot* * 124	*most* * 98
Plausibility shields	*can* 205	*could* 193	*may* 109	*might* 97	*seems* 91
Downtoners	*just* 80	*quite* 59	*only* 53	*not* 41	*some* * 37
First-person hedges	*think* * 86	*feel* * 56	*believe* 45	*understand* 9	*opinion* 8
Booster:					
Universals	*all* 331	*any* *145	*only* 138	*no* 131	*throughout* 129
Plausibility boosters	*show* * 142	*clear* * 106	*fact* 80	*actually* 59	*evident* 31
Amplifiers	*very* 251	*even* 127	*so* 78	*much* 59	*really* 53
Evidential	*use* * 219	**'s* 86	*according* 67	*show* * 60	*write* * 45
Self-mention	*I* * 1,645	*my* * 650	*me* 175	*we* * 23	
Engagement:					
Reader reference	*you* * 473	*we* * 470	*our* * 176	*us* 152	*one* * 68
Diverse strategies	*?* 190	*)* (60)	*look* 10	*remember* 4	*think* 3

* denotes that a type represents several inflections (e.g. here, instances of "thought" are counted as "think")

In order to exemplify these results, section 4.2 reports extracts from the corpus that contain these types.

4.2. Epistemic stance and engagement markers across educational contexts and genres

This section reports results related to each of the stance categories, identifies some of the broader trends observed in the genres, and supplements these observations with quotes from the teacher interviews. Table 4 shows the mean (and standard deviation) of each epistemic stance and engagement (sub-) category in each genre from each of the educational contexts.

Table 4. Mean (standard deviation) of each epistemic stance and engagement (sub-)category per 1,000 words

(Sub-)category	Political essay (Norway), N = 20	Political essay (Sweden, N = 20)	Literary essay (N=20)	Opinion piece (UK, N = 20)	Linguistic investigation (N=15)	Commentary (N=20)
Rounder	14.18 (5.11)	12.45 (6.31)	7.44 (4.2)	12.12 (8.39)	7.88 (4.6)	9.04 (3.39)
Plausibility hedge	7.92 (7.46)	7.63 (5.6)	5.41 (3.15)	5.86 (3.53)	12.78 (6.62)	3.7 (2.3)
Downtoner	2.58 (2.33)	2.04 (2.39)	2.59 (1.79)	3 (2.4)	1.46 (1.07)	3.73 (2.89)
First-person hedge	0.56 (1.47)	1.25 (1.47)	0.93 (1.43)	1.23 (2.01)	0.17 (0.31)	3.13 (2.28)
Hedge total	**25.24 (11.19)**	**23.38 (11.09)**	**16.37 (6.94)**	**22.21 (11.65)**	**22.29 (10.39)**	**19.6 (6.71)**
Universal	10.38 (4.85)	15.37 (8.83)	11.94 (4.29)	13.66 (8.41)	7.51 (3.23)	8.36 (3.83)
Plausibility booster	3.16 (2.31)	3.23 (2.85)	4.61 (3.22)	6.21 (3.24)	5.79 (3.51)	3.17 (2.99)
Amplifier	9.01 (5.73)	8.54 (5.17)	6.03 (2.26)	10.76 (5.51)	4.26 (2.46)	6.36 (3.04)
Booster total	**22.55 (9.93)**	**27.14 (12.23)**	**22.58 (6.67)**	**30.63 (12.1)**	**17.56 (6.53)**	**17.89 (6.62)**
Evidential	**8.83 (8.33)**	**8.02 (4.32)**	**4.36 (2.37)**	**6.73 (5.11)**	**12.09 (5.81)**	**2.88 (1.46)**
Self-mention	**1.32 (2.89)**	**5.18 (8.87)**	**1.76 (2.41)**	**5.15 (9.4)**	**3.5 (5.07)**	**45.04 (16.28)**
Reader reference	6.96 (10.1)	28.39 (18.75)	8.69 (5.98)	17.93 (14.73)	4.01 (5.29)	2.92 (2.39)
Diverse strategies	1.84 (1.27)	2.2 (3.8)	0.76 (0.75)	6.22 (6.4)	1.1 (1.36)	0.34 (0.78)
Engagement total	**8.81 (11.05)**	**30.59 (20.67)**	**9.45 (6.06)**	**24.15 (17.31)**	**5.11 (6.18)**	**3.26 (2.57)**
Total stance markers	**66.72 (26.25)**	**94.32 (36.55)**	**54.53 (15.98)**	**88.87 (37.09)**	**60.55 (13.03)**	**88.67 (23.38)**

It should be noted that high standard deviations were found for many of the sub-categories in each of the genres, which reflects the wide ranges of frequencies found in each of the essays. For example, while one of the the political essays from Norway contained 26 rounders, one contained just 6. Another example was that while one of the UK opinion pieces contained 44 reader references, another did not contain any. These variations demonstrate that individual pupils had personal preferences and idiosyncratic styles. Nevertheless, the frequencies and usage of some of the sub-categories seemed to reflect the purposes of each of the genres, which are each exemplified in more detail below.

Hedges and boosters were frequently used by pupils across contexts and genres. Rounders were the most frequent hedging sub-category in all genres, except the linguistic investigations. They were most frequent in the political essays and opinion pieces and were often used when making real-life generalisations to circumvent the use of exact figures or the naming of specific entities.

5) *Many* of the police officers on duty are killed yearly buy guns. (Political essay, Norway) [5]
6) The kind of algorithm that Facebook and *other*[6] social medias use are very observant. (Political essay, Sweden)
7) So maybe I do not exactly understand the oppression *some* men feel because of feminism. (Opinion piece, UK)
8) It seems to be that *most* charity adverts chose to use shock tactics. (Linguistic investigation, UK)
9) I created a *lot* of different openings for my piece. (Commentary, UK)

---

[5] Any mechanical or grammatical mistakes remain uncorrected in the extracts.
[6] The present study recognises "other" as a rounder when it is used in place of the exact subjects, in this case it is used instead of naming the exact social medias.

Although real-life generalisations were also made in the literary essays, rounders were often used when describing the literary works:

10) This consequently to a row of selfish, cruel and vain actions from Dorian during *many* years which later is confirmed by Basil. (Literary essay, Sweden)

11) Daenerys care so much about what *other* people think of her. (Literary essay, Sweden)

Plausibility hedges were most frequent in the linguistic investigations and were often used to mark when arguments were being made tentatively:

12) This *can* be linked to Rothery's concept that children *may* go through a narrative stage. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

13) The use of the *potentially* taboo subject of sex *could* be seen as a brave choice by Beyonce. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

Downtoners were used most frequently in the commentaries. These pupils often expressed uncertainty or modesty regarding their creative choices:

14) The original draft of 'The Big Day Out' was *just* a couple getting stuck behind a tractor on a journey. (Commentary, UK).

15) I believe I am *quite* strong at writing descriptively. (Commentary, UK)

16) I decided to add a *bit* more variety to my writing by cutting the dialogue. (Commentary, UK)

In other genres, they were often used to decrease the impact of the statement being made (17, 18, 19), or to highlight a contrast (20, 21):

17) American politics is *quite* a complicated matter. (Political essay, Norway)

18) I also have prejudices myself. I believe everyone has them. And it is *not* that strange that we do have them. (Political essay, Sweden)

19) This mentality is *somewhat* similar to the children in the beginning of the book. (Literary essay, Sweden)

20) This is *just* one instance, but there is an endless list of similar travesties of justice. (Opinion piece, UK)

21) There were 220 promiscuous terms for females, but *only* 20 for males. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

Of the booster sub-categories, universals were the most frequent across all the genres. These were used to mark the extremes of a continuum:

22) In conclusion, social media supports the spread of propaganda and disinformation *all* over the world. (Political essay, Norway)

23) He tells their Brotherhood contact that he is willing to do *anything* to eradicate the Party. (Literary essay, Sweden)

24) She did not use *any* promiscuous terms or insults to give females superiority. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

25) I wanted to be able to work with somebody from scratch who had *no* idea what had happened or where they were. (Commentary, UK)

Plausibility boosters were used across the genres to emphasise the veracity of statements:

26) The political climate in the US has *clearly* changed after the election in 2016. (Political essay, Norway)

27) From 1973 to 2017, there has been a rise in feminism, *showing* that female roles have changed. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

28) I applied a similar use of body language, making it clear that Chloe was *actually* the dominant one in the relationship. (Commentary, UK)

Amplifiers were mostly used as pre-modifiers to emphasise lexical intensity, often for persuasive effect:

29) Some people argues that the personalization of the Internet is *very* convenient. (Political essay, Sweden)
30) This gives the effect that teenagers are now *so* lazy they leave out key words. (Linguistic investigation, UK)
31) I found that the high points of the game made the tragic parts *even* more emotional. (Commentary, UK)

Of the genres, the opinion pieces contained the highest frequencies of boosters overall. The following extracts highlight how universals (32), plausibility boosters (33) and amplifiers (34) were used for persuasive effect:

32) But there is (and *never* should be) *no* doubt that students who take the creative subjects at GCSE and A-Level […] work *just* as hard. (Opinion piece, UK)
33) In *fact*, it seems there are a very few commonly used words or phrases that would offend a male. (Opinion piece, UK)
34) They are making it increasingly hard for young people these days to succeed by making exams *extremely* artificial […] which *really* helps some students achieve their potential. (Opinion piece, UK)

A trend across the genres was that boosters occurred at similar frequencies to hedges. Some of the boosters were used to make strong claims that seemed appropriate given the context:

35) She still lost the election due to the *fact* that Donald Trump won the majority of the electoral votes. (Political essay, Norway)
36) *All* humans should have *complete* and unrestricted access to fundamental rights. (Opinion piece, UK)

However, across the educational contexts and genres, there were many instances of boosters used to make strong claims that seemed inappropriate:

37) The 2016 election is the *most* shocking election of *all* times in the US. (Political essay, Norway)
38) Here the target domain is exploration, a *very* abstract concept that is a theme *throughout* the book. (Literary analysis, Sweden)
39) But there is (and *never* should be) *no doubt* that students who take the creative subjects at GCSE and A-Level […] work *just* as hard to achieve the top grades. (Opinion piece, UK)
40) It was *evident* that *all* of the print adverts included attractive male and female models. (Linguistic investigation, UK)
41) Whenever *anyone* first goes to a gym, they are *always* intimidated by the 'bulky' guys. (Commentary, UK)

In the interviews, all but one of the teachers reported that they prioritised either boosting or hedging:

> It's either true or false […] I'm telling my students not to be tentative. (Teacher 10, Sweden)

> We move away from "maybe" […] in the past […] we had a student that […] was marked down because her argument was "perhaps" or "maybe" and they just said it's not an assertive argument. (Teacher 13, UK)

> I've had to write so many times in their papers this time "you need to modify this statement" because […] they are too sure of themselves […] you can't claim something that you don't know. (Teacher 8, Norway)

The remaining teacher reported that they encouraged pupils to adapt their use of hedging and boosting according to the given context:

> It depends on the effect you want to have. [They should] identify the effect in other people's writing so that they can then use it in their own writing at the right time, in the right context (Teacher 16, UK)

Evidentials in the political essays and opinion pieces were often used to cite secondary sources, such as sources of news, political speeches, TED-talks, and research:

42) *According* to CNN 26 people are confirmed dead and 20 are wounded. (Political essay, Norway)
43) Bush has *said* "We've seen nationalism distorted into nativism". (Political essay, Norway)
44) *According* to Juan Enriquez ([…] TED talk), this can […] result in that all genetic diseases have been extinguished. (Political essay, Sweden)
45) The payed commentators, referred to a bots in *Whigham's* article, are demanding payment. (Political essay, Sweden) [7]

The literary essays and commentaries contained a number of evidentials used to discuss primary sources:

46) 1984 is a fictional novel *written* by Mr. Orwell in 1947, *depicting* a dystopian society. (Literary essay, Sweden)
47) One book that is especially interesting to analyse in this way, is Oscar *Wilde's* book The Picture of Dorian Gray. (Literary essay, Sweden)
48) Zevin *portrayed* her character's personalities through dialogue. (Commentary, UK)
49) People liked the way I built it up, in their words they *said* "Love the build in this, the sentences seem to work perfectly". (Commentary, UK)

---

[7] The search term in extracts 45, 47 and 51 is the genitive "s".

The linguistic investigations contained the highest frequencies of evidentials, which were used to cite both secondary (50, 51) and primary sources (such as research data; 52):

50) *According* to Wareing, this is known as political power. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

51) This challenges *Pilkington's* theory which suggests women use language in order to maintain social relationships. (Linguistic investigation, UK)

52) In Text D, the pupil makes *use* of a range of prepositions such as "in", "on", "down" and "after". (Linguistic investigation, UK)

In the interviews, while teachers in all three educational contexts reported practices more closely related to citation technicalities, such as writing reference lists using APA style, none of them discussed how reporting verbs should be used.

Although they were relatively infrequent in most genres, self-mentions were highly frequent in the commentaries. Following the frequent use of self-mentions, the commentaries also contained the most first-person hedges. Pupils used these markers to reflect on their personal compositional processes:

53) *I* tried to do this in *my* work, but *I'm not sure* if *I* quite succeed in that. (Commentary, UK)

54) In the end *I* did change *my* whole story, but *I think* this lead to a more developed and clear plot. (Commentary, UK)

While a majority of the teachers (11 of 19) discouraged the use of self-mentions, some argued that these features are context-dependent, such as Teacher 17, whose pupils wrote commentaries and who promoted the use of these features:

We try to avoid it as much as possible in analyses so that they have the sort of dispassionate, sort of scientific, objective

voice and if they do use "I", then we change it to "we" as much as possible. (Teacher 14, UK)

We analyse other people's use of pronouns a lot […] I think that's one of the […] things my students will go to. (Teacher 18, UK)

This is probably the main way in which a creative writing commentary would differ […] they do need to write in the first person […] they have to be personal. (Teacher 17, UK)

Regarding engagement markers, reader references were most frequent in the Swedish political essays and British opinion pieces, where they were used to include and appeal to readers:

55) *We* fail to comprehend the life outside *our* screens and radios, outside *our* own nations and outside *our* own culture. (Political essay, Sweden)

56) Let *us* not forget that controlled assessments in A-Level Art will have *you* sitting in a room in silence for 10+ hours. (Opinion piece, UK)

In contrast, while self-mentions were highly frequent in the commentaries, reader references were relatively infrequent.

Questions, directives and asides (diverse strategies) were infrequent across most genres and the highest frequencies were found in the UK opinion pieces:

57) What would you do if you found $10 on the floor*?* Pocket it*?* Give it to charity*?* (Opinion piece, UK)[8]

58) *Think* about Dove and their current success in cornering the market. (Opinion piece, UK)

---

[8] Some of the search terms in extracts 57, 59, 60 and 61 are punctuation marks.

59) Why should a boardroom filled with men *(*or however they decide these things*)* be able to dictate what a female chooses to do with her life*?* (Opinion Piece, UK)

Reader references and engagement strategies often appeared in close proximity in the opinion pieces for rhetorical effect:

60) Why should a uterus stop *you* from serving*?* (Opinion piece, UK)
61) Willingham was executed for an arson murder of his three young daughters. Fair*?* Yes, *you* would probably all think, he killed his own children. Well... No. (Opinion piece, UK)

Five of the UK teachers reported that they encouraged the use of various engagement strategies in opinion pieces, as in the following two extracts.

We do use things like direct address [and], in the opinion article, we use rhetorical questions. (Teacher 13, UK)

We do a lot of work on devices and rhetoric and interpolation and hailing to an audience and all those sorts of things […] we do explicitly teach those elements. (Teacher 15, UK)

While two UK teachers (based at the same school) reported that they encouraged the use of engagement strategies, they discouraged the use of rhetorical questions, as these can be overused:

I often say to them 'you have to engage the reader's mind' [but] every paragraph will begin and end with a rhetorical question [so I] steer away from [them]. (Teacher 18, UK)

In Sweden, reader references were considerably more frequent in the political essays than in the literary essays. Of the two teachers in Sweden that were involved with political essays, one encouraged the use of reader references:

They are allowed to use [second and third person pronouns] and they should use them to engage the audience if that's what it's all about. (Teacher 12, Sweden)

The second teacher discouraged their use, arguing that reader references are too "informal" (Teacher 8, Sweden). Despite this difference in opinion, political essays from these schools contained similar frequencies of reader references.

Four of the seven UK teachers reported that they advised pupils to adapt their use of engagement markers to the context:

We do a lot of work on devices and rhetoric and interpolation and hailing to an audience and all those sorts of things […] the thing with questions is it creates a sense of multimodality […] that sort of direct address […] breaks the fourth wall and I don't think academic writing should do that. (Teacher 15, UK)

[In linguistic investigations] they should be more sort of detached and academic, [but in opinion pieces] they're trying to take their reader with them and position them so that they share in their opinion […] I would expect to see it there (Teacher 19, UK)

5 Discussion

The present corpus of upper secondary essays contained a wide range of epistemic stance and engagement types. Their usage and frequencies seemed to be somewhat connected to individual preferences, but also seemed to reflect the purposes in each of the genres. Furthermore, the interview results suggest that their usage is partly connected to teacher advice.

Overall, the corpus contained 543 epistemic stance and engagement marker types belonging to 11 sub-categories. Certain types were found

to be more frequent than expected (e.g. "use*" as an evidential; "other" as a rounder), and others seemed to be idiosyncratic features of this corpus (e.g. "*ish" as a downtoner; "p.s." as an engagement marker). It was also found that negation was sometimes used to change the pragmatic function of hedges and boosters. The wide variety of types might reflect the range of interests and backgrounds across individual pupils, who may have been trialling different essay writing strategies. Alternatively, the range of types may reflect the different purposes of the present genres. While the sub-categories and types outlined in this study may not account for all epistemic stance and engagement features in other corpora of upper secondary writing, the present taxonomy offers a comprehensive starting point. These sub-categories and types may also be of interest to English teachers looking to gain insight into written rhetorical strategies on which pupils at this educational level rely.

Hedges and boosters were prominent features in the present corpus, used to mediate quantities, mark epistemic status, and modify lexical intensity (Prince et al., 1980; Salager-Meyer, 1994; Hinkel, 2005). Rounders were often used in the political essays and the opinion pieces to make rough estimations when exact figures were either unavailable or unnecessary. In the literary essays, it seemed that rounders were often used when offering a synopsis of the given literary work. Universals, used to mark the extremes of a continuum, were the most frequent booster sub-category in all genres. Together with the high frequencies of rounders, the use of these features indicates that these pupils considered that quantifications play an important role in establishing convincing arguments (Thomson, 2020). In the linguistic investigations, pupils frequently used plausibility hedges to tentatively discuss their results, which seems to reflect the more academic-like style of these essays (Keshavarz & Kheirieh, 2012; Hu & Cao, 2015). In the commentaries, pupils used downtoners in a somewhat informal manner to express modesty with regards to their creative choices and abilities (Hinkel, 2005).

A notable trend in the present genres was that boosters occurred at similar frequencies to hedges, which contrasts with previous studies (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Hu & Cao, 2011; Hyland, 2019; Fu & Hyland, 2014) that have found hedges to be more frequent in, for example, academic and journalistic writing. Furthermore, it seems that all five genres contained instances where boosters were used in making overly assertive claims, offering support for previous studies that have reported similar findings in tertiary and pre-tertiary writing (e.g. Uccelli et al., 2013; Ho & Li, 2018). Surprisingly, several of the teachers reported that they encouraged the use of boosters and discouraged hedges, which may have acted as a catalyst for the pupils' over-assertiveness (Li & Wharton, 2012). Considering that explicit tuition has been found to be effective for helping novice writers in their use of stance features (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Dastjerdi & Shirzad, 2012; Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1994), these findings support calls to teach appropriate hedging and boosting practices at earlier educational levels (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Mills & Dooley 2014; Uccelli et al., 2013). This could be achieved by, for example, introducing pupils to these features and asking them to identify how they are used in model texts.

Previous studies that have investigated evidentials have mainly focused on markers used to cite academic secondary sources (e.g. Du, 2019; Ho & Li, 2018; Hyland, 2019; Neumann et al., 2019). The political essays, opinion pieces and linguistic investigations contained a range of secondary sources, which demonstrates the importance of sourcing information to identify pre-existing discussions and establish credible arguments. However, the present corpus also contained types that were used to cite primary sources (see also Bruce, 2010; Docherty, 2019). In the literary essays, pupils often cited literary events in support of their overall thesis. In the linguistic investigations, pupils used evidentials to report results from their data set. In the commentaries, pupils acknowledged sources of inspiration, including novels and friends,

seemingly both to establish their literary repertoire and to justify their own compositional decisions. For writing instructors, recognising how upper secondary pupils and freshman students rely on primary sources may prove useful when working towards citing a wider range of secondary sources. It is also notable that many teachers reported that they taught pupils about the technical aspects of citing sources, such as writing reference lists, but did not mention the difference between primary and secondary sources, the use of reporting verbs, or the importance of critically evaluating information (Connor-Greene & Greene, 2002; Du, 2019), which warrants further investigation.

The opinion pieces were characterised by high frequencies of boosters and engagement markers, which were often used to emphasise claims and directly address readers for rhetorical effect (Fu & Hyland, 2014), reflecting the exam board's requirement for these pupils to write a persuasive piece of writing (AQA, 2019). Accordingly, although two UK teachers discouraged the overuse of rhetorical questions, teachers in the UK tended to encourage the use of rhetorical strategies, particularly in opinion pieces. The Swedish political essays contained high frequencies of reader references, which were often used to establish consensus regarding issues that otherwise hold potential to polarise opinions. However, one of the two teachers who worked with the Swedish political essays reported that they discouraged the use of these features. This suggests that pupils may have to adjust their style according to demands made by different teachers (Li & Wharton, 2012), or may disregard teacher advice altogether. The high frequencies of reader references in the Swedish compared with the Norwegian political essays may also be explained by the essay prompts. Swedish schools tended to require that pupils establish a single overarching argument, exemplified by the following: "you have been invited to write an argumentative essay". In contrast, prompts used in Norway tended to require that pupils "discuss" different perspectives (e.g. "discuss the role of English-language media in setting the international news agenda").

Of the genres, the commentaries contained the highest frequencies of self-mentions and first-person hedges. This illustrates teacher 17's comment that, unlike other upper secondary essay genres, personal reflection was a central feature of these pieces. Self-mentions were infrequent in the remaining genres, which contrasts with previous studies (e.g. Vassileva, 1998) that have found that academic authors rely on self-mentions to recognise their role in knowledge construction. Most teachers discouraged the use of these markers, suggesting that they may have had more traditional views of writing, which dictate that facts should speak for themselves (Harwood, 2005).

Overall, the pupils' use of epistemic stance and engagement markers did not seem to clearly reflect whether they were studying English in an L1 or an L2 context. Although it was not possible to isolate independent variables, the findings tentatively suggest that other factors, such as the target genre and individual preferences, had more influence on the use of these features. This might reflect the high English proficiency of the pupils in Norway and Sweden (Education First, 2020), where English is highly prioritised from year 1 (Skolverket, 2020b; Udir., 2020). Furthermore, the participating pupils had opted to take specialised upper secondary English subjects. Consequently, they may have been able to draw on a wide range of linguistic features to navigate knowledge claims and engage readers. Alternatively, the typological similarities between Norwegian, Swedish and English (Haugen & Markey, 1973) may mean that Scandinavian pupils can directly transfer rhetorical strategies to English with a reasonable level of success (Uysal, 2019). In a similar vein, the pupils in Norway and Sweden are likely to learn to write in similar genres in their respective L1 subjects (see e.g. Udir., 2021) and might therefore be able to directly transfer similar rhetorical strategies to their English essays (Gentil, 2011).

While the participating teachers reported that they offered advice on many of the stance features investigated here, it remains unclear how and when this advice was provided. The advice sometimes seemed to be

either categorical (e.g. hedges and boosters), technical (e.g. evidentials), or traditional (e.g. self-mentions). This raises concerns about how epistemic stance and engagement features are addressed in upper secondary writing instruction. Additionally, while the pupils in the UK wrote linguistic investigations, it is notable that the pupils at the participating schools in Norway and Sweden did not write in academic genres. Similarly, Hellekjær (2005) found that, after graduating from Norwegian upper secondary schools, two thirds of tertiary students were not adequately prepared for reading tertiary-level academic English texts, partly due to a narrow range of reading input in schools. Thus, adjusting to specialised written styles upon entering tertiary education, especially considering expectations related to the use of epistemic stance and engagement markers (Hu & Cao, 2015; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Poole et al., 2019), may also be challenging for freshman students from these contexts. Teaching upper secondary pupils to adapt their use of epistemic stance and engagement markers to a range of genres, particularly academic ones, may be a viable approach for teachers (e.g. Tribble, 2010).

Due to the range of variables represented in the present data set, it was not possible to isolate independent variables, which precluded the use of statistical tests to compare across the genres. Furthermore, although this study would have benefitted from having a larger corpus, gaining access to upper secondary schools proved to be challenging, which limited the data collection procedures. Nevertheless, the corpus represents the kinds of tasks that pupils work with, which increases the external validity of the findings (Dörnyei, 2007).

6 Conclusion

By investigating the use of epistemic stance and engagement features in upper secondary essays, this study reports the sub-categories and types upon which these pupils relied, the trends of frequencies and usage in the present genres, and how the teachers' general views may influence the

use of these features. Overall, the pupils used a wide range of markers to negotiate knowledge claims and engage readers, which were, to a certain extent, used in ways that reflected the purposes of the target genres. It seems that teacher advice was only one factor among several others, such as individual preferences, curricula demands and the formulation of writing prompts, that affected the use of these features. However, the high frequencies of boosters support previous findings that pupils at this level are prone to overemphasising claims (e.g. Uccelli et al., 2013). Furthermore, the interviews revealed that teacher advice regarding these features may be somewhat inconsequential, categorical or outdated. Thus, this area of essay writing requires more attention in order to further understand how to raise pupils' awareness of how epistemic stance and engagement markers can be effectively used in various communicative contexts. Future studies could investigate the longitudinal effects of exposing pupils to reading and writing across a range of English genres (Hellekjær, 2005), both in L1 and L2 contexts. Furthermore, since previous studies have found that textual quality is related to the effective use of epistemic stance and engagement markers (Dobbs, 2014; Mei, 2006), future studies could establish criteria for the accurate and appropriate use of these features.

Appendix, (sub-)categories and search terms

Booster

Amplifier (64): a lot, all, alone, and, as, big, considerable, considerably, drastic, drastically, enormous, especially, even, ever, extra, extreme, extremely, far, fundamentally, great, greatly, heavily, heavy, highly, how, huge, if not, incredibly, indeed, just, major, massive, massively, mere, merely, much, only, particularly, perfect, prodigious, pure, purely, really, ridiculously, serious, severe, severely, significant, significantly, so, steadfast, strong, strongly, substantial, such, super, terribly, vast, vastly, very, well, whole, yet, !

Plausibility Booster (47): actually, all, apparent, certain, certainly, clear, clearly, definite, definitely, direct, directly, doubtlessly, evident, fact, glaring, indeed, knew, know, literally, must, naturally, no doubt, not, obvious, obviously, of course, proof, prove, proves, proving, real, reality, really, safe to say, self-evident, show, showed, showing, shown, shows, supports, sure, surely, true, truly, undisputedly, undoubtedly

Universal (63): 100, absolute, all, always, any, anybody, anyone, anything, anywhere, best, biggest, clearest, closest, complete, completely, consistent, constant, constantly, easiest, endless, entire, entirely, eternal, every, everybody, everyone, everything, exact, exactly, for good, forever, full, fully, funniest, greatest, highest, impossible, just, largest, least, most, nearest, never, newest, no, nobody, none, not, nothing, only, perfect, perfectly, purely, sole, solely, strongest, the one, throughout, total, totally, unlimited, whole, yes

Engagement Marker

Engagement strategies (16)**:** believe, break out, by the way, compare, consider, forget, go, listen, look, open, p.s., remember, think, try, ?,)

Reader reference (20): for anyone who, friend, let's, one, ones, oneself, our, ourselves, us, we, we'd, we're, we've, you, you'd, you'll, your, you're, yourself, you've

Evidential (162): according, accused, accuses, accusing, addressed, addresses, agree, agreed, agreeing, appeal, appealing, appeals, argue, argued, argues, as shown, ask, asked, asking, asks, assume, believe, believed, believes, bring up, brought up, call, called, calling, calls, claim, claimed, claims, clarifies, compare, compared, compares, comparing, convey, conveyed, conveys, criticize, criticized, criticizing, denotes, depicted, depicts, describe, described, describes, describing, discussed, discusses, dispute, employ, employing, employs, exaggerates, explain, explained, explaining,

explains, explanation, express, expressed, expressing, feel, feels, felt, find, finds, found, in text, include, included, includes, including, judge, judges, likening, mean, means, meant, mention, mentioned, mentioning, mentions, opinion, portray, portrayed, portrays, poses, posted, promote, promoted, promoting, proposal, proposed, published, put, quarrel, quote, quoted, quotes, raps, refer, referred, referring, refers, repeat, repeated, repeats, replies, represent, represented, representing, represents, responded, said, say, says, show, showed, showing, shown, shows, sing, singing, sings, situates, state, stated, stating, suggest, suggested, suggests, sung, support, supported, supports, talk, talked, talking, talks, tell, think, thinking, thinks, thought, told, use, used, uses, using, utilises, utilizes, write, writes, written, wrote,), *'s

Hedge

Rounder (64): almost, along the lines, around, certain, close, common, commonly, fair, few, frequent, frequently, general, generally, great, hours, hundreds, indefinitely, largely, little, loads, lot, lots, mainly, majority, many, most, mostly, much, multiple, near, nearly, normally, not, number, numerous, occasional, occasionally, often, or so, other, others, partially, partly, range, regular, regularly, roughly, several, some, sometimes, somewhere, tend, tends, thousands, times, towards, typically, uncommon, usual, usually, variety, various, widely, *n't

Downtoner (30): almost, at least, barely, bit, borderline, certain, essentially, fairly, hardly, in a way, just, kind, little, merely, more or less, near, not, only, practically, pretty, quite, rather, relatively, slight, slightly, some, somewhat, sort of, *ish, *n't

Plausibility Shield (50): apparent, apparently, appear, appeared, appears, arguably, argue, assumption, can, could, evidence, implied, implies, imply, implying, indicate, indicated, indicates, indicating, indication, likely, may, maybe, might, necessarily, not, perhaps, possibility, possible, possibly, potential, potentially, probably, seem, seemingly, seems, suggest, suggested, suggesting, suggestion, suggests, support, supported, supporting, supports, suppose, supposed, uncertain, uncertainty, unlikely

First-Person Hedge (18): argue, argument, assume, believe, believing, feel, felt, guess, intended, like, not, opinion, personally, think, thought, understand, understanding, *n't

Self Mention (9): I, I'd, I'm, I've, me, mine, my, myself, we, we'd

Total search terms: 543

References

Afros, E. & Schryer, C. F. (2009). Promotional (meta)discourse in research articles in language and literary studies. *English for Specific Purposes, 28,* 58-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2009.11.001

AQA Education (AQA). (2019). *AS and A-level English language*. AQA. https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-7701-7702-SP-2015.PDF

Aull, L. & Lancaster, Z. (2014). Linguistic markers of stance in early and advanced academic writing: A corpus-based comparison. *Written Communication, 31*(2), 151-183. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088314527055

Bax, S., Nakatsuhara, F. & Waller, D. (2019). Researching L2 writers' use of metadiscourse markers at intermediate and advanced levels. *System*, *83*, 79–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.010

Bazerman, C. (2014). Speech acts, genres, and activity systems: How texts organize activity and people. In C. Bazerman & P. Prior (Eds.), *Writing about writing: A college reader* (2nd ed.) (p. 309–39). Bedford/St Martin's.

Biber, D. (2006). Stance in spoken and written university registers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *5*(2), 97–116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2006.05.001

Biber, D. & Finegan, E. (1988). Styles of stance in English: Lexical and grammatical marking of evidentiality and affect. *Text, 9*(1), 93-121. https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1989.9.1.93

Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S. & Finegan, E. (1999). Longman grammar of spoken and written English. Pearson Education Limited.

Bruce, I. (2010). Textual and discoursal resources used in the essay genre in sociology and English. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 9*, 153-166. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.011

Çandarlı, D., Bayyurt, Y. & Marti, L. (2015). Authorial presence in L1 and L2 novice academic writing: Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspectives. *Journal of English for Academic*

Purposes, *20*, 192–202.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2015.10.001

Chafe, W. (1986). Evidentiality in English conversation and academic writing. In W. Chafe & J. Nichols (Eds.), *Evidentiality: The linguistic coding of epistemology* (p. 261-272). Ablex.

Cheng, X. & Steffensen, M. S. (1996). Metadiscourse: A technique for improving student writing. *Research in the Teaching of English, 30*(2), 149-181.

Connor-Greene, P. A. & Greene, D. J. (2002). Science or snake oil? Teaching critical evaluation of "research" reports on the internet. *Teaching of Psychology, 29*(4), 321-324. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328023TOP2904_14

Crosthwaite, P. & Jiang, F. (2017). Does EAP affect written L2 academic stance? A longitudinal learner corpus study. *System, 69,* 92-107. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.06.010

Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40,* 95-113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.10.003

Dastjerdi, H. V. & Shirzad, M. (2012). The impact of explicit instruction of metadiscourse markers on EFL learners' writing performance. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills, 2*(2), 155-174. https://doi.org/10.22099/jtls.2012.412

Dobbs, C. L. (2014). Signaling organization and stance: Academic language use in middle grade persuasive writing. *Reading and Writing, 27*(8), 1327-1352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9489-5

Docherty, P. (2019). An exploratory study in the use of direct quotation by L2 entry level Bachelor students. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *40*, 26–40. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.05.002

Dörnyei, Z. (2007)*. Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.

Du, Y. (2019). Effect of an EAP unit on EFL student effective and appropriate source-use skills. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *40*, 53–73. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.06.002

Education First. (2020). *English proficiency index*.
https://www.ef.no/epi/regions/europe/norway/

Farrokhi, F. & Ashrafi, S. (2009). Textual metadiscourse resources in research articles. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, *52*(212), 39–75.

Fu, X & Hyland, K. (2014). Interaction in two journalistic genres: A study of interactional metadiscourse. *English Text Construction, 7*, 122-144. https://doi.org/10.1075/etc.7.1.05fu

Gentil, G. (2011). A biliteracy agenda for genre research. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *20*, 6–23. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2010.12.006

Gillaerts, P. & Van de Velde, F. (2010). Interactional metadiscourse in research article abstracts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *9*(1)*,* 128-139. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.004

Graddol, D. (1996). *The future of English. A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21st century.* The British Council.

Gray, B. & Biber, D. (2012). Current conceptions of stance. In K. Hyland & C. Sancho-Guinda (Eds.), *Stance and voice in written academic genres* (p. 15-33). Palgrave Macmillan.

Harwood, N. (2005). "Nowhere has anyone attempted … In this article I aim to do just that" A corpus-based study of self-promotional *I* and *we* in academic writing across four disciplines. *Journal of Pragmatics, 37*(8), 1207-1231. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ami012

Haugen, E. & Markey, T. L. (1973). *Scandinavian languages: Fifty years of linguistic research (1918 - 1968)*. Walter de Gruyter.

Hellekjær, G. O. (2007). *Fremmedspråk i norsk næringsliv - engelsk er ikke nok!* Fremmedspråksenteret.

Hinkel, E. (2005). Hedging, inflating, and persuading in L2 academic writing. *Applied Linguistic Learning, 15*, 29-53.

Ho, V. & Li, C. (2018). The use of metadiscourse and persuasion: An analysis of first year university students' timed argumentative essays. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 33,* 53-68. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.02.001

Hu, G. & Cao, F. (2015). Disciplinary and paradigmatic influences on interactional metadiscourse in research articles. *English for*

Specific Purposes, 39, 12-25.
http://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2015.03.002

Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 30*, 437-455. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(98)00009-5

- (2001). Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. *English for Scientific Purposes, 20*, 207-226. http://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(00)00012-0

- (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*, 133-151. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.02.001

- (2005). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies, 7*, 173-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605050365

- (2017). Metadiscourse: What is it and where is it going? *Journal of Pragmatics, 113*, 16-29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.03.007

- (2019). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.

Hyland, K. & Jiang, F. (2016). Change of attitude? A diachronic study of stance. *Written Communication, 33*(3), 251-274. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088316650399

Hyland, K. & Milton, J. (1997). Qualification and certainty in L1 and L2 students' writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 6*, 183-205. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(97)90033-3

IBM Corp. (2017). *IBM SPSS statistics for Windows, Version 25.0.* IBM Corp.

Ifantidou, E. (2005). The semantics and pragmatics of metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *37*, 1325-1353. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.11.006

Institutet för språk och folkeminnen (Isof). (2021). *Språken i Sverige.* https://www.isof.se/lar-dig-mer/kunskapsbanker/lar-dig-mer-om-flersprakighet/spraken-i-sverige

Intraprawat, P. & Steffensen, M. S. (1995). The use of metadiscourse in good and poor ESL essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 4*(3), 253-272. https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(95)90012-8

Jiang, K. & Ma, X. (2019). Positioning and proximity of reader engagement: Authorial identity in professional and apprentice academic genres. In C. Sancho-Guinda (Ed.), *Engagement in professional genres* (p. 29-47). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Keshavarz, M. H. & Kheirieh, Z. (2011). Metadiscourse elements in English research articles written by native English and non-native Iranian writers in applied linguistics and civil engineering. *Journal of English Studies, 1*(3), 3-15.

Lee, J. J. & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *33*, 21-34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.004

Ljosland, R. (2008). *Lingua franca, prestisjespråk og forestilt fellesskap: Om engelsk som akademisk språk i Norge* [Ph.D. Thesis]. Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Marín Arrese, J. I. M. (2015). Epistemicity and stance: A cross-linguistic study of epistemic stance strategies in journalistic discourse in English and Spanish. *Discourse Studies, 17*(2), 210-225. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445614564523

McGrath, L. & Kuteeva, M. (2012). Stance and engagement in pure mathematics research articles: Linking discourse features to disciplinary practices. *English for Specific Purposes, 31*, 161-173. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2011.11.002

Mei, W. S. (2006). Creating a contrastive rhetorical stance: Investigating the strategy of problematization in students' argumentation. *Regional Language Centre Journal, 37*(6), 329-353. https://doi.org /10.1177/0033688206071316

Mills, K. & Dooley, K. (2014). Teaching persuasive texts: Building a language of evaluation through hedging and moderated intensification. *Literacy Learning: The Middle Years, 22*, 33-41.

Mur Dueñas, P. (2010). Attitude markers in business management research articles: A cross-cultural corpus-driven approach. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 20*(1), 50-72. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00228.x

Neumann, H., Leu, S. & McDonough, K. (2019). L2 writers' use of outside sources and the related challenges. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *38*, 106–120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.02.002

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods designs in social science research. *The Qualitative Report, 12*, 281-316. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2007.1638

Poole, R., Gnann, A. & Hahn-Powell, G. (2019). Epistemic stance and the construction of knowledge in science writing: A diachronic corpus study. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *42*, 100784. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.100784

Prince, E. F., Frader, J. & Bosk, C. (1980). On hedging in physician-physician discourse [Conference paper]. *AAAL Symposium on Applied Linguistics in Medicine.* University of Pennsylvania.

Qin, W. & Ucceli, P. (2019). Metadiscourse: Variation across communicative contexts. *Journal of Pragmatics, 139,* 22-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.10.004

Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, *13,* 149-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(94)90013-2

Sancho-Guinda, C. (2019). Networking engagement in professional practices. In C. Sancho-Guinda (Ed.), *Engagement in professional genres* (p. 1-28). John Benjamins.

Skolverket. (2020a). *English*. Skolverket. https://www.skolverket.se/download/18.4fc05a3f164131a74181056/1535372297288/English-swedish-school.pdf.

- (2020b). *Timplan för grundskolan*. Skolverket. https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/grundskolan/laroplan-och-kursplaner-for-grundskolan/timplan-for-grundskolan.

St.meld. nr. 35 (2007). *Mål og meining - Ein heilskapleg norsk språkpolitikk*. Kulturdepartementet.

Sundqvist, P. & Sylvén, L. K. (2016). Evidence from extramural English informing English language teaching. In P. Sundqvist, & L. K. Sylvén (Eds.), *Extramural English in teaching and learning, new language learning and teaching environments* (p. 113-150). Palgrave Macmillan.

Susser, B. (1994). Process approaches in ESL/EFL writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 3*(1), 31-47. https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(94)90004-3

Swales, J. M. (2016). Reflections on the concept of discourse community. *Concepts and Frameworks in English for Specific Purposes, 69*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.4774

Tavakoli, M., Bahrami, L. & Amirian, Z. (2012). Improvement of metadiscourse use among Iranian EFL learners through a process-based writing course. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 9(9), 129–164.

Tribble, C. (2010). A genre-based approach to developing materials for writing. In J. C. Richards (Ed.), *English language teaching materials* (p. 157-178). Cambridge University Press.

Uccelli, P., Dobbs, C. & Scott, J. (2013). Mastering academic language: Organization and stance in the persuasive writing of high school students. *Written Communication,* 30, 36-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088312469013

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2006). *English - programme subject in programmes for specialization in general studies.* Utdanningdirektorate*t*. https://www.udir.no/kl06/ENG4-01?lplang=http://data.udir.no/kl06/eng.

- (2020). *Fag- og timefordeling og tilbudsstruktur for Kunnskapsløftet*. Utdanningsdirektoratet. https://www.udir.no/regelverkstolkninger/opplaring/Innhold-i-opplaringen/udir-1-2019/vedlegg-1/2.-grunnskolen/#2.2ordinar-fag-og-timefordeling.

- *Finn eksamensoppgaver*. Utdanningsdirektoratet. https://sokeresultat.udir.no/eksamensoppgaver.html

Uysal, H. H. (2012). Argumentation across L1 and L2 writing: Exploring cultural influences and transfer issues. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 9*(1), 133-159.

Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication, 36*, 82-93. https://doi.org/10.2307/357609

Vassileva, I. (1998). Who am I/who are we in academic writing? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 8*(2), 163-190. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.1998.tb00128.x

Yoon, H. J. & Römer, U. (2020). Quantifying disciplinary voices: An automated approach to interactional metadiscourse in successful student writing. *Written Communication, 37*(2), 208-244. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2017.02.002

Zou, H. & Hyland, K. (2020). "Think about how fascinating this is": Engagement in academic blogs across disciplines. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *43*, 100809. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.100809

Ädel, A. (2010). "Just to give you a kind of map of where we are going": A taxonomy of metadiscourse in spoken and written academic speech. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *9*, 69-97. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.218

Article 4

Attitude markers in upper secondary pupil essays across educational contexts and genres

Abstract

The concept of interactional metadiscourse, which refers to linguistic resources that writers use to express their opinions and interact with their readers, has been a subject of growing interest in recent research on written communication. While many metadiscourse-related studies have focused on professional-level genres, few have analysed features of pre-tertiary writing. Furthermore, attitude markers, words that offer the author's affective evaluation, constitute a category of metadiscourse that arguably remains undertheorised. This study thus aims to investigate the types of attitude markers that upper secondary pupils rely on, and how the use of these types varies across educational contexts and genres. To address these aims, I collected and analysed a corpus comprising of 135 essays belonging to five genres written at Norwegian, Swedish and British schools. In total, 218 attitude marker types belonging to four sub-categories were identified. The frequencies of these sub-categories were then compared across educational contexts and genres. In contrast to previous studies, pupils in all three educational contexts offered their personal evaluations more frequently and with a greater range of types than would be expected in professional genres. The results also indicated that the pupils varied their use of attitude markers according to the purposes of the target genre. These findings may be relevant for guiding novice writers to adapt their expression of attitude to the communicative context.

1 Introduction

Essay writing is a central part of upper secondary education as pupils are frequently assessed via written assignments (Prosser and Webb, 1994). In their essays, pupils not only have to prove their knowledge but also express their "attitude", a term referring to words that offer an affective evaluation, in an appropriate manner. Drawing on the concepts of "stance" or "metadiscourse" (e.g. Gray & Biber, 2012; Hyland, 2019), a number of studies have investigated how professional authors and university students express their attitude across a range of contexts (e.g. Mur Dueñas, 2010; Lee & Deakin, 2016). While studies have found that attitude markers are infrequent in certain contexts, such as in academia where authors strive to remain objective (Hu & Cao, 2015), other studies have found attitude markers to be relatively frequent in contexts such as journalism (Dafouz-Milne, 2008), which illustrates the genre-specific demands to which authors have to adhere. Studies of novice writing have found that university students tend to avoid expressing their attitudes, emulating the impersonal style of academic writing (e.g. Ho & Li, 2018). However, studies have mainly focused on "high prestige genres in academia" (Ädel, 2018, p. 55), and little research has investigated attitude in pre-tertiary writing (e.g. Qin & Uccelli, 2019). Furthermore, studies of metadiscourse have tended to address a large number of linguistic resources. Consequently, attitude often remains undertheorised, and discussions pertaining to attitude are often limited. By analysing the types[1] and frequencies of attitude markers in a corpus of upper secondary essays, this study offers a more comprehensive operationalisation of attitude in order to investigate how pre-tertiary writers express their affective evaluations.

For the purposes of this investigation, I collected a corpus of 135 English essays written across five genres at upper secondary schools situated in

---

[1]The term "type" is used to refer to "each graphical word form" in a text (McEnery/Wilson 2003: 32).

Norway, Sweden and the UK. Using this data, attitude markers were quantified and compared across educational contexts and genres. To clarify, this study does not compare how first and foreign-language speakers of English express their attitudes. Instead, pupils were grouped based on the country in which they study English, regardless of their first language. The UK was chosen because English is taught as a first language. Norway and Sweden, in which English is taught as a foreign language, were chosen because these countries are highly ranked in terms of general English proficiency (EF, 2018). At the upper secondary level in these educational contexts, pupils are expected to be at a B2-equivalent level or higher (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 77). This study therefore considers how different practices across educational contexts might affect pupils' writing practices. The research questions for this study are:

- Which attitude marker types are used in a corpus of upper secondary pupil essays?
- How do attitude markers in upper secondary essays vary across educational contexts and genres?

This paper outlines relevant theory and previous research on the expression of attitude in various written contexts before presenting the present study's contribution to the field.

2 Previous research

Although, as Biber (2006, p. 99) puts it, "it is difficult to operationalise [a] study of value-laden word choice", many studies of written communication have investigated how writers express their "attitude" (Mur Dueñas, 2010) or "evaluation" (Martin & White, 2005). Previous research has tended to focus on professional (e.g. Fu & Hyland, 2014; McCabe & Belmonte, 2019) and tertiary contexts (e.g. Ozdemir & Longo, 2014) and a number of studies have compared metadiscoursal features in texts written by authors with various language backgrounds

(e.g. Gholami & Ilghami, 2016). However, little attention has been given to attitude in pre-tertiary writing and those few existing studies have tended to compare attitude in high and low rated essays (e.g. Dobbs, 2014). Furthermore, analyses have tended to rely on operationalisations of attitude that incorporate around just 70 attitude marker types (e.g. Lee & Deakin, 2016; Hyland, 2019). However, more elaborate operationalisations have been proposed, such as Mur Dueñas (2010), who reported using corpus-driven methods that involve considering the content of the corpus itself (Baker, 2010). Consequently, she found 118 types of attitude marker in a corpus of research articles within the field of business. This raises questions as to whether previous studies may have overlooked a number of attitude marker types by relying more on corpus-based methods, in which a corpus is used to test pre-existing hypotheses.

Previous research on academic writing has found that authors express their attitudes using a limited number of types that occur relatively infrequently (e.g. Hu & Cao, 2015; Khedri & Kristis, 2017). In a similar vein, studies on diachronic change (Gillaerts & Vande Velde, 2010; Hyland & Jiang, 2016) have found that the frequencies of attitude markers in research articles have decreased over the past few decades. Despite these low frequencies in academic writing overall, studies have found that the use of attitude markers varies across disciplines (e.g. Khedri, Ebrahimi & Heng, 2013; Hyland, 2019). Furthermore, research that has analysed a range of non-academic genres has shown that writers express their attitude relatively frequently in certain contexts such as newspaper writing (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; McCabe & Belmonte 2019) and popular scientific writing (Fu & Hyland, 2014). These findings illustrate that writers face different compositional demands across contexts: in some cases, they have to assert their credibility among professional peers, while in others they have to emotionally engage a lay audience. Additionally, cross-linguistic studies of attitude (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Gholami & Ilghami, 2016) have largely found that

professional authors writing in different languages express attitude in similar ways.

Findings from research on academic writing at the tertiary level have been mixed. Some studies have found that university students avoid expressing attitude. For example, some studies that have compared attitude in high and low rated essays (Lee & Deakin, 2016; Bax, Nakatsuhara & Weller, 2019) have found that attitude markers were infrequent regardless of essay quality. Lee and Deakin (2016, p. 29) argued that students may perceive attitude markers to express "subjectivity rather than objectivity, which may conflict with their notion of academic writing". Similarly, in an investigation of the effect of explicit compositional instruction, Cheng and Steffensen (1996, p. 162) found that, post-instruction, students used fewer attitude markers and persuaded their readers via "the force of the propositional content and logical argumentation" rather than by "soliciting agreement […] through personal relationships".

However, other studies of tertiary level writing that compare attitude in high and low rated essays have found that attitude markers were more prevalent in higher rated essays (Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1995; Ho & Li, 2018). Furthermore, in a study comparing texts written by native speakers of English and Turkish learners of English, Ozdemir and Longo (2014, p. 62) found that native speakers used higher frequencies of attitude markers. This led them to suggest that teachers of English as a foreign language should encourage students to use a broader range of interpersonal resources. Considering that findings from tertiary level studies have been mixed, there may be other factors that affect attitude marker use that may not have been considered, such as educational context, topic, or genre.

The small pool of studies that have investigated attitude in pre-tertiary writing have produced mixed findings. Qin and Uccelli (2019) reported that there were no differences in the use of attitude markers in academic

and colloquial pupil texts, and Dobbs (2014) found that deontic markers did not predict essay quality. However, Uccelli, Dobbs and Scott (2019, p. 52) reported that, although attitude marker frequencies did not predict essay quality, they found differences in the pragmatic use of attitude markers in high-rated contra low-rated essays. For example, in low-rated essays, attitude markers were used in conjunction with presenting categorical assertions that did not recognise other perspectives (e.g. "this is not the *right* thing to do"). In high-rated essays, on the other hand, pupils offered evaluations in a way that did recognise other perspectives (e.g. "This assertion does not always have to be *negative*"). By investigating the attitude marker types and frequencies in a corpus of upper secondary essays, this study intends to offer a different perspective on understanding the expression of attitude in pre-tertiary writing.

3 Methods

In order to investigate which attitude marker types pupils use and how frequencies vary across educational contexts and genres, a corpus of upper secondary essays was collected. To analyse the corpus, a taxonomy of attitude was devised based on previous studies and on the content of the present corpus. This section outlines the data collection procedures, the process of devising a taxonomy and the methods used for analysing the data.

3.1 Data collection

Over 90 upper secondary schools were contacted across Norway, Sweden and the UK during 2017 and 2018, but only 14 schools agreed to participate in the study. Thus, the data for this study were collected from six schools in Norway, three in Sweden and five in the UK. In total, I collected 282 essays written by pupils aged 17-19. However, a number of essays were omitted from the corpus based on several criteria. Firstly, while some pupils delivered two essays, only one essay per pupil was required. Secondly, essays that contained high frequencies of grammar and spelling errors were omitted. Finally, some essays were considered

to fall outside the present genres (see Table 1). The resulting corpus consisted of 135 essays belonging to five genres (political essays, literary essays, commentaries, linguistic investigations, opinion pieces), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Total number and word counts of essays collected from each educational context and belonging to each genre.

	Norway	Sweden	UK	Word count (Mean)
Political essay	40	20	-	50,085 (835)
Literary essay	-	20	-	27,588 (1,379)
Commentary	-	-	20	35,889 (1,794)
Linguistic investigation	-	-	15	29,530 (1,969)
Opinion piece	-	-	20	15,148 (757)
Word count (Mean)	36,673 (917)	41,000 (1,025)	80,567 (1,465)	158,240 (1,166)

The corpus consists of essays written for school evaluations, assigned either by exam boards or by teachers and therefore represents the conditions under which pupils usually write. Although writing for a pre-conceived task devised for a particular research question can be useful to achieve *tertium comparationis*, it was not practically feasible to prepare pupils at all 14 schools equally well for a single task. Thus, pupils wrote essays representing a range of genres and topics that reflect the curriculum aims in the respective educational contexts. In Norway and Sweden, pupils were required to write under timed conditions, whereas pupils in the UK wrote under process-oriented conditions (Badger/White 2000). In Norway, the political essays were written for a course called "Social Studies English" (Udir., 2006). These essays were largely discussions of current affairs, such as the 2016 US election, but two of these essays were historical: one was about British colonialism and the other about the industrial revolution. In Sweden, the pupils wrote political essays and literary essays for a course called "English 7" (Skolverket, 2020). The political essays were similar to those in Norway,

but covered topics like genetic engineering and filter bubbles. The literary essays were discussions of canonical literature, such as "Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde", and popular films and television series, such as "Game of Thrones". The commentaries were written for a British course called "Creative Writing" (AQA, 2013). For these assignments, pupils had to discuss their processes and inspirations in writing a series of other coursework pieces. The linguistic investigations and opinion pieces were written for a course called "English Language" (AQA, 2019). The linguistic investigations were reports from research projects that the pupils had carried out themselves. Like the political essays, some opinion pieces were written about current affairs, but the goal of these pieces was persuasive rather than discursive. Furthermore, opinion pieces essays were usually written with a more clearly delineated genre in mind such as newspaper articles or reviews.

3.2 Analysis

In order to investigate the types of attitude markers that these upper secondary pupils used, a taxonomy of attitude was devised to capture the words that were present in this particular corpus. In devising the taxonomy, both corpus-based and corpus-driven approaches (Baker, 2010) were incorporated, meaning that a list of search terms was compiled based both on previous studies (e.g. Mur Dueñas, 2010; Hyland, 2019) and on a close reading of 50 of the essays. The search terms were then categorised based on their semantic field according to a simplified version of Martin and White's (2005) taxonomy of evaluation. The four sub-categories of attitude that were prominent in this corpus related to complexity, emotion, morality and quality (referred to as C., E., M. and Q., respectively, in Tables 3 and 7), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Sub-categories of attitude.

Sub-category	Number of search terms	Explanation and *examples*
Complexity	18	Describes author's perception of difficulty: *basic, understandable*
Emotion	43	Expresses author's emotional response: *desperate, tense*
Morality	41	Attributes a social value: *dangerous, misleading*
Quality	115	Offers author's general assessment: *funny, important*

In total, a list of 218 marker types[2] were used to scan the corpus (see appendix). The quality sub-category could have been broken into further sub-categories, but it did not seem analytically useful to have sub-categories that encompassed a small number of search terms. The search terms were used to scan the corpus using the KWIC (key word in context) concordancing function in #Lancsbox (Brezina, McEnery & Wattam 2015). The concordance lines were copied into Excel and each concordance line was read manually, so that non-attitudinal instances could be removed. A word or phrase was considered to express attitude when it served an evaluative role and when that evaluation could be attributed to the writer, as exemplified by the following:

1) I also find it *hard* to create a whole narrative arc (complexity marker; commentary, UK)[3]
2) It *should* be his right to state this opinion (morality marker; political essay, Norway)

If the marker was used in a direct quote, or if the attitude was attributed to an extra-textual source (such as the reader of the current text or another author), the instance was discounted, as in the following:

3) You *understand* that if you are nice to a person, they will like you more (discounted complexity marker; literary essay, Sweden)

---

[2] Roughly 270 types were initially used, but only those types that were found to express attitude in the present corpus are reported here.
[3] Any spelling or grammar mistakes in the reported extracts are left unchanged.

4) Stanley claims that there is a marked *inequality* (discounted morality marker; linguistic investigation, UK)

In order to test the reliability of the taxonomy, the concordance lines from 10 texts were sent to a second rater alongside criteria for identifying each attitude marker sub-category. The level of agreement between the second rater's analysis and my own was 94%.

In order to investigate how attitude markers varied across educational contexts and genres, the frequencies per 100 words of each attitude marker sub-category were quantified for each essay and entered into SPSS (IBM Corp., 2017). In the full corpus, roughly 5,000 hits were retrieved using the search terms. After removing instances that did not function as attitude markers, 1,800 hits remained. The number of occurrences of each attitude marker type were calculated for each sub-category in order to identify which types were most frequent. The results did not meet assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity, so the Kruskal Wallis test was used to compare frequencies across educational contexts and genres. Accordingly, the medians and median absolute deviations (MAD) per 100 words for each sub-category are reported in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

4 Results

The results of this investigation are presented in the following two sections. The first section focuses on which types of attitude markers were used in this corpus. The second section focuses on how frequencies of each attitude sub-category varied across educational contexts and genres and provides extracts from the corpus to illustrate the trends that were observed.

4.1 Attitude marker types in upper secondary essays

Table 3 shows the number of different attitude marker types belonging to each sub-category in each educational context and in each genre.

Table 3. Total number of types of each category across educational contexts and genres and total types.

	Political essay (No)	Political essay (Sw)	Literary essay (Sw)	Commentary (UK)	Linguistic investigation (UK)	Opinion piece (UK)	**Total types**
C.	9	5	10	13	11	8	**18**
E.	12	10	6	33	16	14	**43**
M.	25	19	20	13	14	22	**40**
Q.	54	37	41	86	62	57	**114**
T.	**100**	**71**	**77**	**145**	**103**	**101**	**218**

One trend was that there were fewer different types of complexity markers (e.g. "struggle") than other sub-categories across the genres. One exception to this was the literary essays, which contained fewer types of emotion markers (e.g. "terrifying"). Another exception was the commentary genre, which contained the fewest types of morality markers (e.g. "appropriate") across the genres. Overall, quality markers (e.g. "effective", "well") were represented by the greatest number of types in all genres. The commentaries contained the greatest number of quality marker types, perhaps reflecting the wide range of qualities that pupils ascribed to other pieces of coursework. When comparing the three educational contexts, the UK essays contained the highest number of types overall, which was attributed to the greater numbers of emotion and quality marker types in the commentary essays.

Table 4 presents the five most frequent types (six when the fifth most frequent was tied between two types), alongside the raw frequencies of each type, belonging to each attitude sub-category in the full corpus.

Table 4. Most frequent types (and raw frequencies) of each attitude marker sub-category in the full corpus.

Complexity	Emotion	Morality	Quality
Easy (27)	Interesting (47)	Should (98)	Important (93)
Difficult (22)	Feel (17)	Need (34)	Good (58)
Hard (21)	Feeling (17)	Must (27)	Problem (54)
Complex (18)	Felt (12)	Better (25)	Effective (43)
Easily (13)	Like (12)	Bad (15)	Negative (35)
Understand (13)		Needs (15)	

The most frequent complexity markers were often used in relation to the perceived ease or difficulty of a task. Regarding emotion, pupils most frequently assessed whether something was "interesting" and used conjugations of the verb "feel". The three most frequent morality markers pertain to deontic modality, suggesting that pupils often discuss what action ought to be taken regarding the topic in question. The most frequent quality marker, "important", was often used to justify why pupils had chosen to discuss the topic in question. Extracts from the corpus that exemplify how these types were used are presented in the next section.

4.2. Attitude markers across educational contexts and genres

The medians and median absolute deviations per 100 words of attitude markers belonging to each of the sub-categories in the full corpus are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Median frequency (and MAD) per 100 words of attitude markers in full corpus

Sub-category	Full corpus (N = 135)
Complexity	0.06 (0.06)
Emotion	0.08 (0.08)
Morality	0.2 (0.16)
Quality	0.59 (0.25)
Total	**1.11 (0.38)**

The median of the total number of attitude markers in the full corpus was 1.11. Reflecting the wider variety of types (see Table 3) belonging to the quality category, these markers were also more frequent overall (*Mdn* = 0.59). In contrast, the complexity category was least frequent (*Mdn* = 0.06).

The medians and median absolute deviations of each attitude sub-category, as well as comparisons across the three educational contexts, are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Median frequency (and MAD) per 100 words of attitude markers across educational contexts. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, N = Norway, S = Sweden, U = UK

	Norway (N = 40)	Sweden (N = 40)	UK (N = 55)
Complexity	0.09 (0.09)	0.05 (0.05)	0.06 (0.06)
Emotion	0 (0)	0.07 (0.07)	0.18 (0.17)**NS
Morality	0.18 (0.18)	0.29 (0.22)	0.16 (0.12)
Quality	0.54 (0.2)	0.5 (0.24)	0.66 (0.24)*N**S
Total	**0.98 (0.25)**	**0.94 (0.42)**	**1.29 (0.48)*N**

The total number of attitude markers differed across the three contexts ($H(2) = 8.04$, $p = .018$). Pairwise comparisons showed that the pupils at British schools (*Mdn* = 1.29) used significantly more attitude markers in total than pupils at Norwegian schools (*Mdn* = 0.98, $p = .046$, $r = .25$), but not significantly more than at Swedish schools (*Mdn* = 0.94, $p = 0.56$, $r = .24$). Regarding sub-categories, emotion markers were significantly different across contexts ($H(2) = 24.54$, $p < .001$). Emotion markers were more frequent in essays written at British schools (*Mdn* = 0.18) than those written at Norwegian (*Mdn* = 0, $p < .001$, $r = .49$) and Swedish schools (*Mdn* = 0.07, $p = .003$, $r = .34$). Quality markers were also significantly different across contexts ($H(2) = 12.75$, $p = .002$) and were more frequent in essays from British schools (*Mdn* = 0.66) than essays from Norwegian (*Mdn* = 0.54, $p = .028$, $r = .27$) and Swedish schools (*Mdn* = 0.5, $p = .003$, $r = .34$).

The medians and median absolute deviations of each attitude sub-category, as well as comparisons across the five genres, are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Median frequency (and MAD) per 100 words of attitude markers across genres. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, P = political essay, L = literary essay, C = commentary, I = linguistic investigation, O = opinion piece

	Political essay (N = 60)	Literary essays (N = 20)	Commentary (N = 20)	Linguistic investigation (N = 15)	Opinion piece (N = 20)
C.	0 (0)	0 (0)	1.05 (0.95)	0.07 (0.07)	0 (0)
E.	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.23 (0.13)**PL	0.13 (0.13)	0.15 (0.15)
M.	0.27 (0.22)**I	0.2 (0.13)	0.12 (0.08)	0.06 (0.06)	0.5 (0.28)**CI
Q.	0.59 (0.24)	0.36 (0.16)	0.89 (0.23)**L	0.61(0.16)*L	0.62 (0.26)*L
T.	**1.04 (0.31)**L**	**0.73 (0.22)**	**1.35 (0.41)**L**	**0.82 (0.29)**	**1.47 (0.4)**L**

In order to supplement these results, extracts from the corpus are provided to exemplify the trends observed. The total number of attitude markers differed across genres ($H(4) = 22.23$, $p < .001$), and pairwise comparisons showed that the literary essays ($Mdn = 0.73$) contained significantly fewer attitude markers than the political essays ($Mdn = 1.04$, $p = .004$, $r = .4$), commentaries ($Mdn = 1.35$, $p < .001$, $r = .69$) and opinion pieces ($Mdn = 1.47$, $p < .001$, $r = .7$). A number of potential attitude markers were discounted from the literary essays because the pupils often cited the attitudes of literary characters (1), or reiterated narrative attitudes (2):

1) 'He had dreamed of her as a *great* artist […]. Then she *disappointed* him' (literary essay, Sweden)
2) Dorian Grey was a man who *easily* became influenced by people around him (literary essay, Sweden)

Additionally, a number of the pupils who wrote literary essays were required to base their analyses on Kohlberg's theory of morality (Blum, 1988). Thus, morality markers were often discounted because they were used in connection with describing, not with evaluating, Kohlberg's theory:

3) The first stage […] is all about being seen as *good* (literary essay, Sweden)

Of the sub-categories, complexity markers were the least frequently used type of attitude marker in all genres. Nevertheless, while there were no significant differences in the frequencies of complexity markers, different pragmatic trends across the genres were observed. Complexity markers in political essays, literary essays and opinion pieces were more often used to make general statements about how challenging the pupils perceived a task to be:

316

4) If you are born poor it is going to be really *hard* to ever get out. (political essay, Norway)
5) Kohlberg's theory is in fact *difficult* to prove in reality. (literary essay, Sweden)
6) When we hear the terms 'poverty' or 'inequality', it is far too *easy* to picture a distant, faraway culture. (opinion piece, UK)

In the commentaries, complexity markers were often used in connection with personal experiences regarding compositional struggles (7), and in the linguistic investigations regarding the challenges of conducting research (8, 9):

7) I have always found it quite *hard* to produce effective dialogue. (commentary, UK)
8) It was a *challenge* for me to organise the data, methodically and coherently (linguistic investigation, UK)
9) The transcript from Jimmy Carr's Laughing and Joking show was *easy* to find (linguistic investigation, UK)

Significant differences in the use of emotion markers were found ($H(4) = 28.41$, $p < .001$). The commentaries (*Mdn* = 0.23) contained significantly more than the political essays (*Mdn* = 0, $p < .001$, $r = .54$) and the literary essays (*Mdn* = 0, $p = .001$, $r = .62$). These pupils often described their personal emotions related to writing other pieces of coursework:

10) I *felt* inspired to set the scene (commentary, UK)
11) I was *satisfied* that the structure reflected the tone of the poem (commentary, UK)
12) It was my aim to make the opening seem like a typical *mundane* day (commentary, UK)

Although such markers were less frequent in other genres, pupils still expressed emotions for a number of purposes, often using conjugations of the word "interest". For example, some pupils gave an emotional

reason for choosing a topic (13), expressed their personal reaction to the material in question (14, 15), or expressed a reaction to be shared with the reader (16, 17):

13) Comedy is a genre which I have had great *interest* in (linguistic investigation, UK)

14) This is how I *felt* about the election in 2016 (political essay, UK)

15) Something which *surprised* me was the number of similarities both Hunter and Carr exhibited (linguistic investigation, UK)

16) The 2016 election is the most *shocking* election of all time (political essay, Norway)

17) In terms of euthanasia and rights to die, we cannot continue to *fear* the topic of death (opinion piece, UK)

Morality markers, which were significantly different across genres ($H(4) = 22.97$, $p < .001$), were more frequent in the political essays (*Mdn* = 0.27) than in the linguistic investigations (*Mdn* = 0.06, $p = .009$, $r = .37$), and more frequent in the opinion pieces (*Mdn* = 0.5) than the commentaries (*Mdn* = 0.12, $p = .009$, $r = .52$) and the linguistic investigations ($p = .001$, $r = .62$). In the political essays and opinion pieces, pupils often discussed current affairs, and were consequently more prone to evaluate whether or not something was morally acceptable (18, 19). Deontic markers constituted the most frequent types of morality markers, usually used to argue for actions that ought to be taken (20, 21, 22):

18) People got angry at each other for voting on someone as *awful* as Hilary Clinton or *nasty* as Donald Trump (political essay, Norway)

19) This implies that today's teenagers do not have any sense of *acceptable* boundaries (opinion piece, UK)

20) Governing organs of the USA *need* to come to an agreement (political essay, UK)

21) The schools *should* frequently talk about news around the world (political essay, Sweden)

22) Prison guards in the UK *must* be empowered to take action on smuggling (opinion piece, UK)

Although quality markers were the most frequent sub-category in all genres, comparing across genres produced significant differences (H(4) = 22.66, p < .001). They were significantly less frequent in the literary essays (*Mdn* = 0.36), than in the commentaries (*Mdn* = 0.89, p < .001, r = .72), linguistic investigations (*Mdn* = 0.61, p = .016, r =.53) and opinion pieces (*Mdn* = 0.62, p = .029, r = .47). Among the broad range of quality markers that were used, "important" occurred most frequently, often as a way of justifying the pupils' own choice of topics and arguments:

23) This text has only scratched the surface of a very *important* matter. (political essay, Norway)

24) His moral development was therefore *important* for the whole realm (literary essay, Sweden)

25) I think it was *important* to introduce magical aspects into this piece (commentary, UK)

26) It is *important* to understand the differences in audience of the two texts (linguistic investigation, UK)

The corpus also contained a large number of instances where pupils used quality markers to evaluate the material as either being in some way positive (27, 28, 29) or negative (30, 31, 32):

27) In the first paragraph, he puts pathos into *good* use (political essay, Norway)

28) There's a *good* reason as to why, children haven't had the time to develop. (literary essay, Sweden)

29) With the use of this *positive* imagery the idea is to make the audience feel they can help (linguistic investigation, UK)

30) Another *problem* with genetic engineering are the great risks of failure (political essay, Sweden)
31) This is a true story about a *bad* car crash I witnessed. (commentary, UK)
32) Why are women still labelled in such *negative* ways […]? (opinion piece, UK)

There were also a range of other qualities linked to, for example, visual aesthetics (33), prestige (34) and humour (35):

33) Let's admire the exterior of this sleek and breathtakingly *beautiful* car (opinion piece, UK)
34) Scotland could do better as an independent nation because of their *successful* industry (political essay, Norway)
35) Often the punchline isn't that *funny* (commentary, UK)

The next section discusses the implications of the results, drawing on findings from previous studies that have investigated attitude in various written contexts.

5 Discussion

By drawing on taxonomies used in previous studies and by closely reading a sample of essays, this study offers a more comprehensive operationalisation of attitude than has been used in most previous studies. The findings suggest that pupils in all three educational contexts used a wider range of types and higher frequencies of attitude markers than would be expected in academic writing (e.g. Hyland & Jiang, 2016) and in journalism (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008). Furthermore, pupils used certain attitude marker sub-categories at different frequencies and with different purposes in each genre. Each of these findings are discussed here in greater depth.

Significant differences were found across the three educational contexts, with pupils at UK schools using the highest frequencies of attitude

markers overall. This may reflect that English is taught as a first language in the UK: by being exposed to English in most school subjects (whereas pupils in Norway and Sweden are exposed to English primarily in the English subject only), the UK pupils may be more proficient in using a greater range of attitude marker types. However, it seems that the differences across contexts could be attributed to topics and genres that pupils work with. For example, while emotion markers were more frequent in essays written at British schools overall, it was the commentary genre that contained the highest frequency and greatest range of types. This reflects the purpose of the commentaries, in which pupils were to reflect on their personal processes in composing a series of coursework pieces (AQA, 2013, p. 15). Thus, an alternative reason for the differences across the three educational contexts may have been the differing national requirements. In the UK, pupils were required, on a national level, to complete pre-determined coursework assignments (AQA 2013; 2019). It may be that the process-oriented structure of these tasks, whereby pupils have more time to write and revise their work, is conducive to eliciting a wider range of attitude marker types. In Norway and Sweden, the curriculum consists of competence aims (Skolverket 2020; Udir. 2006;), but how these are to be achieved is determined by individual teachers, not by national educational boards. Consequently, it seems that the teachers at the participating schools in Norway and Sweden focused on preparing their pupils for final written exams by holding timed mock exams. These product-oriented approaches may not have granted pupils the opportunity to draw on an equally broad range of attitude types (Badger/White 2000). Thus, while studies have found that attitude markers vary among novice writers with different language backgrounds (e.g. Ozdemir & Longo, 2014), but not among professional writers with different language backgrounds (e.g. Noorian & Biria, 2010), it remains unclear whether upper secondary pupils in the Norwegian, Swedish and British contexts would express attitude differently had they been given the same task. Future studies might address this by comparing essays written for a single prompt across these

educational contexts (Dörnyei 2007: 188), or by comparing how pupils express their attitudes when writing under timed contra process-oriented conditions.

With regards to academic writing, the linguistic investigations probably constituted the most academic-like of the genres represented in this corpus. The linguistic investigations contained 1.29 attitude markers per 100 words in total. This is higher than, for example, Mur Dueñas (2010), who reported 0.81 attitude markers per 100 words in business articles, or Hyland and Jiang (2016), who found 0.31 attitude markers per 100 words in recently published applied linguistics articles. Compared with professional standards, it seems that the pupils expressed their attitudes more frequently than would be expected, but this may be explained by a number of factors. For example, this study used a wider range of search terms to scan the corpus than the studies mentioned, which may have excluded a number of words that express attitude. Another explanation may be that the pupils often evaluated their own experiences in conducting and writing academic-like studies in order to reflect on what they had learned. While such reflective passages may be seen as a useful pedagogical tool at this educational level (Walker, 1985), they would be unnecessary in professional writing.

Regarding journalistic writing, opinion pieces probably constituted the most journalistic-like genre in this corpus. Pupils used 1.58 attitudes markers per 100 words, which is higher than in other studies of journalistic writing, such as Fu and Hyland (2014, p. 7), who found 0.18 per 100 words, and Dafouz-Milne (2008, p. 103), who found 0.41 per 100 words. Despite the different frequencies reported, these studies found that attitude markers were used for similar purposes to those found in this study. For example, Fu and Hyland (2014, p. 22) reported that attitude markers were used to evaluate whether something was either positive or negative. They also reported that authors used attitude markers to assume a shared reaction with their readers, which was particularly prominent in the present opinion pieces and political essays.

Supporting Dafouz-Milne (2008, p. 103), deontic markers were the most frequent types of morality markers in this corpus overall, particularly in political essays and opinion pieces where they were used to promote certain actions to take in response to political issues.

Of the genres represented in this study, the literary essays contained the fewest attitude markers. While the pupils who wrote these essays expressed their attitudes to certain degree, evaluative words and phrases were often attributed to literary authors and characters, or to Kohlberg's theory of morality (Blum, 1988). While studies have investigated various metadiscoursal features within texts belonging to the field of literature (e.g. Afros & Schryer, 2009), none of those reviewed discuss the frequencies of attitude markers. It is therefore difficult to judge the degree to which these upper secondary essays adhered to professional practices.

Overall, although it remains unclear whether pupils in these English as a first and English as a foreign language contexts would express attitude differently given the same prompt, the findings suggest that pupils in both contexts were able to adapt their use of attitude according to the genre in which they were expected to write. For example, the political analyses and opinion pieces contained higher frequencies of morality markers, while the commentaries contained higher frequencies of emotion and quality markers. Further differences between the genres were observed regarding the pragmatic uses of attitude markers. For example, while complexity markers were used in commentaries to evaluate compositional challenges, they were used in the linguistic investigations to evaluate methodological challenges. Another example is the use of emotion markers, used in the commentaries to react to compositional processes, but used in other genres to justify the choice of topic, or to imply a shared reaction with the reader. Like Uccelli, Dobbs and Scott (2019), these observations illustrate the value of considering the pragmatic choices that pupils make rather than focusing only on attitude marker frequencies.

While Thompson and Hunston (1999) argued that "the term *evaluation* is […] slippery", this study approaches attitudinal features in upper secondary essays using a more elaborate operationalisation of attitude than has been used in most previous studies. While some attitude markers may have been overlooked, the combination of corpus-based and corpus-driven methods used for this study helped to account for the range of attitudinal expressions present in this particular data set. The results thus provide further insight into features of upper secondary pupil writing, a demographic who frequently engage in essay writing tasks, but who have received little attention in previous research. In order to further investigate upper secondary writing, future research could account for whether pupils express their attitudes accurately and appropriately.

6 Conclusion

By investigating the types and frequencies of attitude markers in upper secondary pupil essays across educational contexts and genres, this study contributes to understanding how attitude is expressed at pre-tertiary levels. Furthermore, this study offers an operationalisation of attitude that accounts for the content of the current corpus and incorporates a greater range of attitude marker types than used in previous studies. The results showed that pupils across the three educational contexts expressed their attitudes more frequently and using a greater range of types than would be expected in professional writing (e.g. Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Mur Dueñas, 2010). While the UK essays contained higher frequencies of attitude markers alongside a greater range of types, it seems that attitude varied more according to the genres in which pupils were required to write and pupils across the three contexts were able to adapt their use of attitude markers to the genre in question. This supports the notion that exposing pupils to a variety of genres at the upper secondary level may help to prepare them for the various genres that they may face upon leaving school (e.g. Tribble, 2010). Furthermore, pupils may be able to draw on a broader palette of attitudinal features when writing under process-oriented conditions (Badger/White 2000). Thus,

the findings from this study may, for example, be relevant for English teachers who aim to guide their pupils regarding the context-dependent nature of expressing attitude.

Appendix: Attitude marker search terms

Complexity (18): advanced, basic, challenge, challenges, challenging, complex, complicated, difficult, easier, easily, easy, hard, perplexing, struggle, understand, understandable, understanding, understood

Emotion (43): agree, appealing, calm, depressing, disappointed, embarrassing, enjoy, fear, feel, feeling, feelings, feels, felt, frightening, happy, hope, hoped, hopefully, hoping, interest, interested, interesting, interests, like, love, loved, mundane, pleasure, prefer, proud, sad, satisfied, scary, shock, shocking, surprise, surprised, surprising, surprisingly, tense, tension, terrifying, unfortunately

Morality (41): acceptable, appropriate, awful, bad, better, blame, correct, cruel, cruelty, dangerous, democratic, egocentric, evil, fault, forbidden, good, immoral, improve, innocent, misleading, moral, morally, must, nasty, need, needed, needing, needs, ok, okay, racist, right, should, taboo, terrible, unfair, value, well, worse, worst, wrong

Ascribing qualities (115): accurate, attractive, average, bad, beautiful, beauty, beneficial, better bright, capable, comedic, comfortable, confident, confused, conservative, cool, correct, crazy, critical, crucial, dramatic, effective, effectively, engaging, entertaining, essential, exaggerated, exciting, fault, friendly, fun, fundamental, funny, good, great, harsh, helpful, honest, humorous, ideal, importance, important, improve, improved, improvement, improves, influential, intellectual, intense, intimate, key, minor, mistake, mistakes, modern, mundane, natural, naturally, negative, negatively, nice, odd, okay, ordinary, perfect, perfectly, poor, popular, positive, powerful, prime, problem, problematic, prominent, proper, reasonable, relatable, relevant, responsible, right, safe, serious, significant, strange, strong, stronger, stupid, subtle, success, successful, successfully, superior, surprise, surprised, terrible, threatening, traditional, tragedy, tragic, trouble, unique, unusual, useful, vague, value, vital, vivid, vulnerable, weak, well, wild, wonderful, worse, wrong

218 search terms in total

References

Afros, E. & Schryer, C. F. (2009). Promotional (meta)discourse in research articles in language and literary studies. *English for Specific Purposes, 28*(1), 58-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2008.09.001

AQA Education (AQA). (2013). *A-Level creative writing.* AQA.

AQA Education (AQA). (2019). *AS and A-Level English language*. AQA. https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-7701-7702-SP-2015.PDF

Badger, Richard / White, Goodith 2000. A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal 54*, 153-160.

Bax, S., Nakatsuhara, F. & Waller, D. (2019). Researching L2 writers' use of metadiscourse markers at intermediate and advanced levels. *System, 83*, 79-95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.010

Biber, D. (2006). Stance in spoken and written university registers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 5*(2), 97-116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2006.05.001

Blum, L. A. (1988). Gilligan and Kohlberg: Implications for moral theory. *Ethics, 98*(3), 472-491.

Brezina, V., McEnery, T. & Wattam, S. (2015). Collocations in context: A new perspective on collocation networks. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 20*, 139-173.

Council of Europe. (2018). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Council of Europe.

Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 40*(1), 95-113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2007.10.003

Dobbs, C. L. (2014). Signaling organization and stance: Academic language use in middle grade persuasive writing. *Reading and Writing, 27*(8), 1327-1352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9489-5

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Education First (EF). (2020). *English proficiency index*. https://www.ef.no/epi/regions/europe/norway/

Fu, X. & Hyland, K. (2014). Interaction in two journalistic genres: A study of interactional metadiscourse. *English Text Construction, 7*(1), 122-144. https://doi.org/10.1075/etc.7.1.05fu

Gholami, J. & Ilghami, R. (2016). Metadiscourse markers in biological research articles and journal impact factor: Non-native writers vs. native writers. *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education, 44*(4), 349–360. https://doi.org/10.1002/bmb.20961

Gillaerts, P. & Van de Velde, F. (2010). Interactional metadiscourse in research article abstracts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 9*(2), 128-139. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.004

Gray, B. & Biber, D. (2012). Current conceptions of stance. In K. Hyland & C. Sancho-Guinda (Eds.), *Stance and voice in written academic genres* (p.15-33). Palgrave Macmillan.

Ho, V. & Li, C. (2018). The use of metadiscourse and persuasion: An analysis of first year university students' timed argumentative essays. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 33*, 53-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.02.001

Hu, G. & Cao, F. (2015). Disciplinary and paradigmatic influences on interactional metadiscourse in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes, 39*, 12-25. 10.1016/j.esp.2015.03.002

IBM Corp. (2017). *IBM SPSS statistics for Windows, Version 25.0*. IBM Corp.

Hyland, K. (2019). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.

Khedri, M., Ebrahimi, S. J. & Heng C. S. (2013). Interactional metadiscourse markers in academic research article result and discussion sections. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, 19*(1), 65-74.

Khedri, M. & Kritsis, K. (2017). Metadiscourse in applied linguistics and chemistry. *Discourse Studies, 15*(3), 319-331.

Lee, J. J. & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second*

Language Writing, 33, 21-34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.004

Martin, J. R. & White, P. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English.* Palgrave Macmillan.

McCabe, A. & Belmonte, I. A. (2019). Challenging the concept of pure objectivity in British and Spanish hard news reports: The case of the 2006 Lebanon War. In C. Sancho-Guinda (Ed.), *Engagement in professional genres* (p. 67-86). John Benjamins.

McEnery, T. & Wilson, A. (2003). *Corpus linguistics: An introduction* (2nd ed). Edinburgh University Press.

Mur Dueñas, P. (2010). Attitude markers in business management research articles: A cross-cultural corpus-driven approach. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 20*(1), 50-72.

Noorian, M. & Biria, R. (2011). Interpersonal metadiscourse in persuasive journalism: A study of texts by American and Iranian EFL columnists. *Journal of Modern Languages, 20*(1), 64-79.

Ozdemir, N. O. & Longo, B. (2014). Metadiscourse use in thesis abstracts: A cross-cultural study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 141*, 59-63. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.05.011

Prosser, M. & Webb, C. (1994). Relating the process of undergraduate essay writing to the finished product. *Studies in Higher Education, 19*(2), 125-138. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079412331381987

Qin, W. & Ucceli, P. (2019). Metadiscourse: Variation across communicative contexts. *Journal of Pragmatics, 139*, 22-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.10.004

Skolverket. (2020). *English*. Stockholm: Skolverket. https://www.skolverket.se/download/18.4fc05a3f164131a74181056/1535372297288/English-swedish-school.pdf.

Thompson, G. & Hunston, S. (1999). Evaluation: An introduction. In S. Hunston & G. Thompson (Eds.), *Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse* (p. 1-27). Oxford University Press.

Tribble, C. (2010). A genre-based approach to developing materials for writing. In N. Harwood (Ed.), *English language teaching materials* (p. 157-178). Cambridge University Press.

Uccelli, P., Dobbs, C. & Scott, J. (2013). Mastering academic language: Organization and stance in the persuasive writing of high school students. *Written Communication, 30*(1), 36-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088312469013

Utdanningsdirektoratet (Udir). (2006). *English - programme subject in programmes for specialization in general studies*. Utdanningdirektoratet. https://www.udir.no/kl06/ENG4-01?lplang=http://data.udir.no/kl06/eng

Walker, D. (1985). Writing and reflection. In D. Boud, R. Keogh & D. Walker (Eds.), *Reflection: Turning experience into learning* (52-68. Routledge Falmer.

Ädel, A. (2018). Remember that your reader cannot read your mind: Problem/solution-oriented metadiscourse in teacher feedback on student writing. *English for Specific Purposes 45*, 54-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2016.09.002