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**Language Variations in Written English by Waray Students from Different Academic Disciplines**

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**Alona Medalia Cadiz-Gabejan**

Assistant Professor II, Samar State University

[alonamedalia.gabejan@ssu.edu.ph](mailto:alonamedalia.gabejan@ssu.edu.ph)

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Abstract

This study explored the language variations, even commonality and individuality, of essays written in English by Waray students from different academic disciplines, to wit: Education, Psychology, Industrial Technology, Nursing, and Civil Engineering. The written texts had the same title and focused on the same theme, “*Me, Myself, and I*”. The essay of each student was independently analyzed based on four factors: lexical density, length in words, structural organization, and vocabulary and syntactic encoding. Three (3) main conclusions were drawn from the discourse analysis. First, the essay write-ups were characterized by personal choice and individual preferences revealing that the composition of the student-writers varied in all four variables mentioned. Second, differences existed among the write-ups based on their lexical density or informativeness of the content. Third, the essay write-ups of the tertiary students shared generic characteristics: They were highly informative, relatively long in one-hour sitting, generally followed the IBC (Introduction, Body, Conclusion) Approach in organizing the structure, and utilized

terminologies that were simply common to all academic disciplines. Therefore, the analyzed essays substantially maintained common characteristics or generic features of writings for an academic discourse, or what are alluded to as ‘commonality’. This endeavour would be fulfilling and, to a great extent, rewarding if the findings would provoke or motivate future studies to delve into essay write-ups. Hence, it was suggested that more studies should be conducted on the linguistic characteristics of essay write-ups since this genre is less explored compared to other genres.

**Keywords:** Language Variations; Essay Write-up; Written English; Waray Language; Waray Students

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INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE

Every human being uses language as his basic means of communication. Its use is one part of humanity's cultural rights as, true enough, language identifies one's culture. According to Anderson (2012), there are 6,909 distinct languages and major dialects spoken around the globe. Language enables us to formulate and communicate our thoughts, emotions, experiences, and even rights. However, when linguistic hierarchies emerge within a political context, this scenario may be the cause of conflicts. Hence, from this situation, language is undoubtedly associated with conflicts of not only the identity, but also of power structure.

Academic writing, much like any other kind of writing, is effective when writers use conventions that other members of their community find familiar and convincing (Hyland, 2009). These conventions include the lexicon or jargon that the writer effectively uses to attract his intended readers. The process of writing includes creating a text where the writer assumes his readers will recognize and expect, and the process of reading involves generating assumptions about what the writer is trying to convey. It is this writer-reader coordination which allows the co-construction of coherence from a text. Therefore, scholars and students alike must attempt to use conventions that other

members of their discipline, whether journal editors, proof readers, reviewers, subject specialists, teachers, or examiners, will recognize and accept. Thus, it is from this context that discourse analysis has become a central tool for identifying the specific language features of particular groups, especially of certain academic disciplines.

In this paper, the researcher investigated how some familiar conventions of academic writing were used in different disciplines and what these differences could tell about the work in the disciplines themselves. She was prompted to conduct this study to depict the variations of English language used in writing an essay by Waray students who came from different academic disciplines. Hence, the researcher explored the conventions relevant to written communication according to Winter's (1994) key areas in considering lexical and grammatical cohesion, namely: lexical density, text length, structural organization, and syntactic encoding. Specifically, the researcher probed into the following questions:

1. To what extent does an individual writer's stylistic preference account for the variations in writing the essay, "*Me, Myself, and I*"?
2. What similarities exist in the written texts composed by Waray students from different academic disciplines?

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3. What differences exist in the written texts composed by Waray students from different academic disciplines?

**Review of Related Literature**

This study found its anchorage on Swales' (1990) notions of discourse community and genre as well as Crystal and Davy's (1969) concept of style. Each of these factors has shed light on this study.

According to Becher (1989), through a normative use of language, 'discourse community' is a network of scholars who create, share, and/or transmit knowledge. They belong in one community who possess the same perspectives and share the same knowledge of a particular field. They also have the same jargon which help them communicate the kind of understanding and relationship they want to develop. Discourse community can be regarded as a universal set comprising of subsets of discourse communities which are far from being homogeneous. That is, each field has conventions, norms, and expectations with respect to the creation, dissemination, and sharing of knowledge. In other words, the norms and the expectations in one discipline-specific community such as Criminology or Psychology will not necessarily be similar as those of another discipline-specific community such as Accountancy or Engineering.

The linguistic term 'discourse community' espoused by Swales (1990) is

usually compared and contrasted with the term 'speech community' formulated by Hymes (1974). More general is the latter who includes language learners and users who naturally and commonly share a sociolinguistic behaviour and a common linguistic framework. While one naturally belongs to or is born into a speech community, Swales (1990) explicates that one chooses and decides to join a specific discourse community based on his personal interests and motivations. Within a discourse community, it is the traditional usage of language that makes the term 'genre' come into existence. Generally speaking, the Aristotelian classification system of literary forms is evoked by the said term. Over the years until the 20th century, it has emerged to involve works in register studies as exemplified by Halliday (1974) and Swales (1981), and lately been popularized by many other language experts and scholars.

In Applied Linguistics, the following factors characterize what a genre is, to wit: content, form, communicative purpose, medium (spoken or written), and the intended audience (who are members of either a professional or academic community). According Bhatia (1993) and Shehzad (2005), however, the communicative purpose of a genre aims to achieve its central defining feature or its most significant characteristic since it is this objective that affects the internal

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structure of the text and the organization of language. Thus, it is regarded as an institutionalized rhetorical template which permits users to successfully attain a communicative purpose. Further, according to Bhatia (1993), a genre has rhetorical features and certain conventional linguistic characteristics that reflect the cultural ideologies and social motivations of the community that generated them. Yet, a number of genre proponents and theorists (e.g. Swales, 2009) accord with one another that genres permit for individual preferences and choices while allowing constraints and certain restrictions.

The third model that is taken into account in this study is 'style' which, according to Crystal and Davy (1969), sums up the variation of language according to use and user in terms of dialect, nature of interaction, field of discourse, communicative purpose, medium of communication, and text type. Style, in other words, is the variation in language at the level of an idiolect, considering the field of discourse, communicative purpose, and text type. It is the special technique employed by a language user in his intention to communicate his thoughts, emotions, and experiences, either by speaking or writing. In this research, the recognition of individual preferences or personal choices is central determining factor to the concept of style. Style, as stressed out by Hyland (2008), perceives

the language of a speech community as an aggregate or an approximation of the linguistic variations manifested among the individuals who compose the community. It depicts that the language of every identifiable member of the community is a variation on a shared or common linguistic framework, that although they belong in one speech community, variations of a particular language still manifest and are sufficiently decadent. The point that needs to be emphasized here is that every member of a certain community chooses and decides to perform a specific communicative event from a common repertoire of linguistic knowledge and resources. Consequently, different individuals may produce the same linguistic patterns in accomplishing or fulfilling similar communicative purposes. Yet, all these patterns could still be characterized by differing individual features and stylistic preferences that have become the traits of the language user.

In this specific endeavour, the researcher considered the essay as a genre of an academic community from which the data were drawn, from certain discourse communities which were under consideration. It was anticipated that the essay write-ups of the Waray students from five (5) academic disciplines, considered as the discourse communities in this study, would considerably maintain discipline-specific as well as generic features which could be significantly and dominantly

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characterized by their individual linguistic choices and stylistic preferences.

### Methodology

This section presents and describes the research design, the participants involved, and the data gathering procedure necessary for discourse analysis of the written texts.

### Research Design

In a complementary and harmonious manner, the study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative procedure used was purely descriptive in nature and only included statistical tools such as mean distributions, percentages, and frequencies. Provided, however, that the number of words utilized by every writer varies, the quantitative comparison made among them was depicted in terms of average distributions and percentages, rather than frequency. Concerning the qualitative method, the researcher employed discourse analysis. The data were meticulously coded and organized into themes, patterns, and relationships which, in turn, supported and enhanced the interpretation of the findings of the study.

### Participants

Using criterion sampling, where participants, regardless of age and gender, 1) had to be in their third year of tertiary education in Samar State University (SSU), 2) must belong to the Top 5 Dean's List

per college, and 3) had the willingness to participate in the study, the researcher came up with one (1) student participant from each of the five (5) course programs or academic disciplines offered in SSU, Catbalogan City, Samar, during the school year 2017-2018. The said academic disciplines were Bachelor in Secondary Education-Major in English (BSEdEng), Bachelor of Science in Psychology (BSPsych), Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology (BSIT), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), and Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE).

### Data Gathering Procedure

In order to gather the needed information for the study, the researcher prepared the title and the theme to be written upon and presented this to the participants. They were requested to write an essay with the title "Me, Myself, and I" and were given an hour to do it simultaneously in one venue only.

The researcher, then, resorted to some interviews with the participants to clarify or verify some obscure inputs in the essay write-ups like unreadable words due to one's handwriting.

### Data Analysis Procedure

For easy reference, each essay selected for the study was given an identification label. The label indicated the academic discipline, the writer's name's initials, and the number to differentiate one essay from another. All

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these were done to adhere to the ethical principle of anonymity which is a significant requirement in research.

As mentioned, the identification labels below were utilized in lieu of the titles of the academic disciplines and the names of the essay writers:

- 1) Bachelor in Secondary Education-Major in English – BSEdEngAMC1;
- 2) Bachelor of Science in Psychology – BSPsychMG2;
- 3) Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology – BSITOAC3;
- 4) Bachelor of Science in Nursing – BSNMBG4; and
- 5) Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering – BSCEMAG5.

Each student’s essay was independently analyzed according to the four variables, to wit: lexical density, length in words, structural organization, and vocabulary and syntactic encoding. Gesuato (2009), who studied the variation of titles across the four genres in Linguistics, was the source and anchorage of the study’s analysis framework.

**Results and Discussion**

**Lexical Density**

Lexical density refers to the proportion of meaningful items and/or lexical words to the total number of words in a text stated as a percentage. To explain it in a different manner, it is the total amount of

information expressed by a text as a function of the number of lexical words employed. In every language, the lexical words are the nouns, pronouns (except articles and determiners), verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and some interjections. These are the parts of speech that can stand alone as they possess their own meaning and can independently express an idea even without the other words. These are also called as lexical categories or content words. Thus, the higher the lexical density of a text, the more informative it is; the lower the lexical density of a text, the less informative it is. All the words in the titles of each writer were counted in measuring the lexical density of titles in this study. The functional categories or function words, which are the opposite of content words, were also counted, and the number of the function words was subtracted from the total number of words to arrive at the number of lexical words. This was preceded by computation of the proportion of the lexical words to the total number of words, as illustrated below:

$$\text{Lexical Density} = \frac{\text{Number of Lexical Words}}{\text{Total Number of Words}}$$

As far as the data were concerned, the following, on one hand, were regarded to be function words: articles, possessive determiners, conjunctions, and prepositions. On the other hand, as mentioned, nouns,

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pronouns (except articles and determiners), verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and interjections were regarded as the lexical words. Other word class items apart from these were not found in the data.

The criterion for orthography, basically, was employed in the calculation of the words. Thus, a linguistic item preceded or followed by a space or a punctuation mark (except an apostrophe) was considered as one word. The syntactic-semantic criterion was seldom used depending on certain linguistic contexts. For instance, proper nouns, nominal groups, and hyphenated words, which refer to a geographical demarcation, were counted as single words. An acronym, along with its full form (whenever applicable), was also counted as a single word. Generally, words which were separated by spaces were counted as single words because, together, they could function as single constituents in a phrase or clause. Again, when reference was made to a name of another publication, it was counted as one word. Table 1 synthesizes the measures of lexical density of each essay write-up.

Table 1: Measures of Lexical Density

Word Counts	BSEdEngAMC1	BSPsychMG2	BSOAC3	BSNMG4	BSCEMAG5	Total
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Lexical words	145	157	137	177	247	863
Function words	57	65	80	105	143	507
Total words	202	222	217	282	390	1313
Percentage of lexical words	71.78%	70.72%	63.13%	62.76%	63.33%	65.73%

As it can be gleaned from Table 1, the essays analyzed had high lexical densities, ranging from 62.76 percent to 71.78 percent. BSEdEngAMC1’s essay had the highest lexical density of 71.78 percent, a difference of 1.06 percent from BSPsychMG2’s whose write-up had the second highest lexical density of 70.72 percent, 8.45 percent from BSCEMAG5’s whose write-up had the third highest lexical density of 63.33 percent, 8.65 percent from BSITOAC3’s whose essay had the fourth highest lexical density of 63.13 percent, and 9.02 percent from BSNMBG4’s whose composition had the least lexical density of 62.76 percent.

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Generally, the essay write-ups in the data set registered a lexical density of 65.73 percent, indicating the characteristic of high lexical density of write-ups. Further, it was observed from the data that BSEdEngAMC1 was the most to use a lot of lexical words.

**COMPOSITION LENGTH (IN TERMS OF NUMBER OF WORDS)**

Table 2 depicts the number of words per paragraph made by each essay writer and the number of paragraphs they were able to compose in a one-hour sitting.

Table 2: Measures of Composition Length

Number of Paragraphs	BSEdEng AMC1	BSPsych MG2	BSITO AC3	BSNM MG4	BSCCE MAG5	Total
Paragraph 1	38	42	38	34	38	186
Paragraph 2	111	98	51	21	38	259
Paragraph 3	53	65	29	0	39	157
Paragraph 4		17	55		2	74
Paragraph 5			44		4	48
Paragraph 6					9	69
Total Number of Paragraphs and Word Counts	3 Paragraphs; 202 Words	4 Paragraphs; 222 Words	5 Paragraphs; 217 Words	3 Paragraphs; 282 Words	6 Paragraphs; 390 Words	21 Paragraphs; 1315 Words

As it is shown in the table, it can be gleaned that BSCCEMAG5 has the longest composition of the essay write-up since it has the highest number of paragraphs (6) and word counts of 390, a

difference of 118 words from BSNMBG4 with only three paragraphs yet with 282 words, 168 words from BSPsychMG2 with four paragraphs and 222 words, 173 words from BSITOAC3 with five paragraphs yet with 217 words, and a difference of 188 words from BSEdEngAMC1 with three paragraphs and with the least number of word counts which is 202.

**Structural Organization**

Since unity or connectedness is one of the significant features of a well-formed text (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) that binds sentences together, academic textual patterns are so vital for university students or any language learners to be able to recognize, organize, and replicate well-

and well-united paragraphs. As Muttall (2003) and Nuttall (2003) these organizational patterns generate relevant contributions to the overall coherence of the discourse by dividing text into chunks of information, sign-posting logical connections between ideas, and drawing attention to themes and meaning with lexical choices. This can be done through general/specific, question/answer, claim/counterclaim, and through signaling devices, such as specific lexical preferences, and synonym and antonym use. As McCarthy (1991) elucidated, to be able to use these signaling devices, both readers and writers need to be first aware of them so that they will get to



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know how to employ them well when it is necessary to process textual relations that are not readily obvious and to compose text that helps the reader in the performance of interpretation.

In the essay write-up of BSEdEngAMC1, the researcher/analyst observed that the student-writer has provided a well-constructed and a well-organized composition. The author of the essay presented it using the general-specific pattern since she began with the current situation and followed it with a flashback of her life. Throughout the three-paragraph composition, she used conjunctions such as ‘but still’, ‘also’, and ‘currently’ to organize her thoughts and to maintain a coherent and cohesive composition.

In the essay of BSPsychMG2, the analyst observed that the write-up began with a cliché “Everyone has a good and bad side” which is, perhaps, not common for a male student to use it in writing. Throughout his four-paragraph composition, however, he seldom used transitional devices to connect his ideas into a coherent whole. He repeatedly used the personal pronoun ‘I’ to elicit his ideas and insights about his personal life. His construction of sentences, therefore, was direct to the point.

In the composition of BSITOAC3, the analyst could say that the female writer

also began with a cliché “Everyone of us has our own personality and character” which is, perhaps, common and normal for a female student to use it in writing. Throughout her five-paragraph written output, she only used connective phrases, such as ‘In my life’ and ‘But because of this’, to develop her organization of the sentences and paragraphs.

In the essay write-up of BSNMBG4, the analyst noticed that the female student-writer started as well with the saying “All of us has its own personalities, own dreams, and responsibilities that each one of us feel different”. As observed, the said saying had little error in grammar when the writer used the possessive pronoun ‘its’ to refer to the antecedent ‘us’, when it should be ‘our’.

Lastly, in the composition of BSCEMAG5, the researcher observed that the student-writer started her essay with rhetorical questions. This is one style to begin a composition that stimulates the reader’s interest. The pattern used was the same with BSEdEngAMC1’s which general-specific textual pattern was since BSCEMAG1 utilized a flashback element already in the middle of her six-paragraph write-up.

**Vocabulary and Syntactic Encoding**

Vocabulary, according to Carter (1996), establishes certain semantic functions in the connection of clauses or sentences in a

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discourse. As compared to conjunctions, they move the reader forward by providing expectations or stimulating them to anticipate of future texts.

Further, as stated by Carter (1996), the use of vocabulary allows the writer to compact a great deal of information into the clause or sentence. Thus, the researcher utilized the term 'syntactic encoding' in this study, following Gesuato (2009), to pertain to word syntaxes observed in the title units.

In the composition of BSEdEngAMC1, the student-writer developed words and phrases such as 'not-so-wealthy', 'laboriously unmindful', 'typical' 'candidly expecting', and 'with flying colors', which showed that as an Education student major in English, her vocabulary was, so far, good. Her grammar, as well, was better than that of the other student-writers since the analyst found nothing to be corrected of.

In the essay of BSPsychMG2, the student-writer showed that there was nothing deep in his use of the English language except that he used it straightforwardly. Also, there was only minimum error committed in his construction of words and sentences, such as: 'Some people thinks', and 'minggle' (spelling).

In the essay of BSITOAC3, the writer showed that there was nothing deep in her use of the English language except that she had somehow beaten around the bush in developing ideas. Also, there was only minimum error committed in her construction of words and sentences, such as: 'Some of us doesn't', 'I haved done', 'Because of this' (to refer to plural circumstances mentioned beforehand), 'to straight the line', and 'the kind of person that'.

In the write-up of BSNMBG4, the student-writer developed words and phrases as simple as '15-year-old girl', and 'deadly problems', which showed that as a female Nursing student, her vocabulary was, so far, average. Her grammar, as well, needed little improvement. The 'how my faith is strong' phrase was a manifestation that the writer needed to develop her syntactic knowledge.

Lastly, in the essay write-up of BSCEMAG5, the student-writer was only able to produce simple vocabulary that any ordinary student in the tertiary level could produce just like BSPsychMG2, BSITOAC3, and BSNMBG4. However, so far, as a female Civil Engineering student, her approach to writing the essay was similar to that of the other female writers since she started with rhetorical questions and ended with clichés. Her grammar had minimum error as she wrote the following: 'Do I know that I really am myself?', 'my

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mother who gave birth of me’, ‘the only one that know’, ‘receive’ (spelling), and ‘My birthdates was in Oct. 31, 2000’.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings discussed in the previous section focused on the three (3) research questions. In this section, the focus of the discussion is on: a) individual style; b) similarity and disciplinarily; and c) differences and disciplinarily.

**Individual Style**

The data revealed significant differences among the styles depicted in the essay write-ups of Waray students coming from the different academic disciplines.

As it could be gleaned from Table 1, the essays analyzed had high lexical densities, ranging from 62.76 percent to 71.78 percent. BSEdEngAMC1’s essay had the highest lexical density of 71.78 percent, a difference of 1.06 percent from BSPsychMG2’s whose write-up had the second highest lexical density of 70.72 percent, 8.45 percent from BSCEMAG5’s whose write-up had the third highest lexical density of 63.33 percent, 8.65 percent from BSITOAC3’s whose essay had the fourth highest lexical density of 63.13 percent, and 9.02 percent from BSNMBG4’s whose composition had the least lexical density of 62.76 percent.

Generally, the essay write-ups in the data set registered a lexical density of 65.73 percent, indicating the characteristic of high lexical density of write-ups. Further, it was observed from the data that BSEdEngAMC1 used a lot of lexical words.

Comparatively speaking, the higher the lexical density of a text, the more informative it is; the lower the lexical density of a text, the less informative it is. Hence, BSEdEngAMC1’s essay was the most informative one, followed by the Psychology student, Civil Engineering student, Industrial Technology (IT) student, and Nursing student.

Furthermore, Table 2 showed that BSCEMAG5 had the longest composition of the essay write-up since it had the most number of paragraphs (6) and word counts of 390, a difference of 118 words from BSNMBG4 with only three paragraphs yet with 282 words, 168 words from BSPsychMG2 with four paragraphs and 222 words, 173 words from BSITOAC3 with five paragraphs yet with 217 words, and a difference of 188 words from BSEdEngAMC1 with three paragraphs and with the least number of word counts which is 202. Therefore, from the data given, it could be gleaned that the Civil Engineering student transcribed ideas the fastest with 390 words within an hour, followed by the Nursing student, Psychology student, IT

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student, and Education-major in English student.

Given that the differences analyzed above were among tertiary student-writers from different academic disciplines, they could not be associated nor attributed to influences of the course programs or disciplines taken and studied. Instead, they are traceable to their individual stylistic preferences.

### **Similarities and Disciplinarily Of the Essay Write-Ups Of Five Tertiary Students**

Essay write-ups in the data set were generally very informative. After all, the purpose of the essays was to present the individual writer's personality sketch. The student-writers had to convey their experiences, say something about themselves, and describe their personality as a whole. In this sense, their essays performed an expository function and needed to be informative as much as possible. Thus, the overall lexical density of the titles in the data was 65.73 percent, while the lexical densities of the individual essay writers ranged from 62.76 percent to 71.78 percent. This implies that their essays relatively made less use of function words and more of content words. As justified by Goodman et al. (2001), the high informatively of these essays is conventional since writers do, though

occasionally, modify them to increase their informatively.

As explained by Gesuato (2009), since essays need to be informative, they are long in order to capture the interest and attention of potential readers at a glance. Hence, so far, all five (5) tertiary student-writers were able to write a minimum of three (3) paragraphs in one (1) hour following the three (3) steps in developing an essay: introduction, body, and conclusion.

Moreover, the essays showed minimal grammatical errors, misspellings, and incorrect use of punctuation marks in general, except of BSEdEngAMC1's write-up which manifested no error in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and use of punctuation marks.

Lastly, the essay write-ups of the five tertiary students from different academic disciplines shared generic characteristics: They were highly informative, relatively long in one-hour sitting, generally followed the IBC (Introduction, Body, Conclusion) Approach in organizing the structure, and used terminologies that were simply common to all course programs or disciplines.

### **Differences and Disciplinarily Of The Essay Write-Ups Of Five Tertiary Students**

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The essay of BSEdEngAMC1 was considerably more informative than the essays of the rest of the tertiary student-writers. This was supported by the specific finding that the essay write-up of BSEdEngAMC1 had the highest lexical density. The fact that this essay writer had the highest lexical density, and a difference of 1.06 percent from BSPsychMG2 who had the second highest lexical density, proved that the difference was not just due to chance. This implies that an Education student, an English major at that, could write very informative essays and would know better how to make use of content words over function words. His vocabulary is significantly dense since he knows how to maximize his use of lexical words in writing an essay.

In addition, from the data given in Table 2, it could be gleaned that the Civil Engineering student transcribed ideas the fastest with 390 words within an hour, followed by the Nursing student, Psychology student, IT student, and Education-major in English student.

However, generally, it must be taken into account that this research was not a comparative study of essay write-ups among the five (5) tertiary student-writers from different academic disciplines with the title “Me, Myself, and I”. The focus here was to find out the extent to which the essay of an individual tertiary student varies on the common features of these write-ups.

The individual compositions were employed here to restrict or control for disciplinary variations. Nevertheless, these analyses and observations may also be regarded as a force or motivation for a detailed study on essays written by students, not only in the tertiary level, of different academic tracks, course programs, or professional disciplines with a larger data set.

**Conclusion:**

Three (3) main conclusions were drawn from this discourse analysis.

First, the essay write-ups were, to a considerable extent, manifested by personal choice and individual preferences of the tertiary students. The data showed that the composition on “Me, Myself, and I” of the individual essay writers from five (5) academic disciplines varied in terms of lexical density, length in words, structural organization, and vocabulary and syntactic encoding.

Second, differences existed among the write-ups of these five tertiary students. The essay of BSEdEngAMC1 was considerably and comparatively more informative than the essays of the rest of the tertiary student-writers. This was supported by the finding that the essay write-up of BSEdEngAMC1 had the highest lexical density. The fact that this essay writer had the highest lexical density, and a difference of 1.06 percent from BSPsychMG2 who had the second highest

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lexical density, showed that the difference was not just due to chance. This, indeed, implies that an Education student, an English major at that, could write very informative essays and would know better how to make use of content words over function words. His vocabulary is significantly dense since he knows how to maximize his use of lexical words in writing an essay. In addition, from the data given in Table 2, it could be gleaned that the Civil Engineering student transcribed ideas the fastest with 390 words within an hour, followed by the Nursing student, Psychology student, IT student, and Education-major in English student. This implies that a Civil Engineering student could construct words and/or sentences the fastest without even thinking whether the words he uses are content words or function words.

Third, the essay write-ups of these five (5) tertiary students shared generic characteristics: They were highly informative, relatively long in one-hour sitting, generally followed the IBC (Introduction, Body, Conclusion) Approach in organizing the structure, and utilized terminologies that were simply common to all course programs or disciplines.

The above-mentioned conclusions hugely support the notion and concept of style which explains that the language of an individual in a discourse community is a variation on a generic core of linguistic

features, a view shared by Hyland (2008). Hestressed out that the generation or creation of a language user's voice or persona in his write-up is evidently an act and a manifestation of his personal choice, ideological preference, experience, and confidence. Indeed, aside from upholding and adhering to Hyland's view, the employment of language in writing an essay with the title "Me, Myself and I" demonstrated "a balance between constraint and choice" (Swales, 2009:148).

Therefore, it can be dissented that the essay write-ups analyzed in this study considerably and significantly maintained common characteristics or generic features of writings for an academic discourse, or what are alluded to as 'commonality'; and yet, they are essentially and prominently characterized by individual stylistic preferences of the tertiary student-writers. Apart from adding new knowledge to the scholarship on individuality and disciplinarily, the results would contribute to the ever-widening scope of scholarship on academic discourse, in general, and academic write-ups, in particular, by drawing one's attention on a less explored written-to-be spoken academic genre such as writing an essay.

The efforts made in this research Endeavour will be fulfilling and, to a great extent, rewarding if the findings enumerated above would provokers

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motivate further studies to delve into essay write-ups. Some of the language variations analyzed and observed above may well be associated to these differences. Other studies may focus on variation in the titles of other genres written among individuals from academic disciplines. On a final note, more studies should be conducted on the characteristics of essay write-ups since this genre is less explored compared to other genres.

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