FALL 2023 Vol. 8 Issue 1

# AAALGrads

## THE AAAL GRADUATE STUDENT CONCIL NEWSLETTER

*Inside:*

# LETTER FROM THE CO-EDITORS

## Table of Contents



Dear AAALGrads Readers,

Welcome to the Fall 2023 issue of AAALGrads, where we once again dive into the vibrant world of applied linguistics from the perspective of emerging scholars and thinkers. Our pages are brimming with insightful articles, thoughtful reflections, a resource review, and a unique "Creative Corner" piece. As co-editors, it's our privilege to guide you through this edition, offering a glimpse into the diverse voices and narratives that shape our field.

This issue begins with a stimulating exploration of "Navigating Diverse Career Paths in Applied Linguistics." David Balmaceda delves into the significance of mentored experiences, offering a blueprint for developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Fellowship program. The piece underlines the importance of equipping applied linguistics students with strategies to thrive in a diverse professional landscape, and it's a must-read for those pondering their post-graduate career paths.

In "Strategic Metacognitive Awareness of a Doctoral Student," Sayed Ali Reza shares an essential perspective on the challenges and opportunities of doctoral journeys. He introduces a conceptual framework for developing "strategic metacognitive awareness," emphasizing the importance of individual practices and institutional support for graduate student well-being. This article is a valuable resource for students, faculty, and mentors navigating the often intense world of doctoral studies.

Our resource review for this issue, written by Carlo Cinaglia, introduces us to Zoë Ayres' book, "Managing Your Mental Health During Your PhD: A Survival Guide." The review highlights the book's pivotal role in helping graduate students navigate the complex and demanding terrain of academia, offering strategies for maintaining mental health and well-being.

Finally, our Creative Corner piece adds a unique flavor to this issue. Francesca Marino presents us with a heartfelt poem, "Looking for my niche." This intimate poem reflects on the emotional journey through academia, the challenges, the moments of reflection, and the ultimate quest for happiness and balance. A delightful creative touch to round off the academic content.

As we flip through the pages of this issue, we're reminded of the multifaceted nature of applied linguistics. It's not just about theories and research methodologies but also about personal growth, resilience, and navigating the complexities of academia. We hope these articles resonate with your experiences and provide valuable insights for your journey.

In closing, we'd like to express our gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and the AAAL GSC for their dedication and hard work in making this issue possible. As co-editors, we're excited to continue bringing you engaging content that reflects the dynamic and ever-evolving field of applied linguistics. We look forward to hearing your feedback, suggestions, and, of course, your contributions for future issues.

Happy reading!

Warm regards,
Jieun Kim, Edwin Dartey, Eric Ho, Sarah Howard, and Xinyue Lu
Co-Editors, AAALGrads

# 'Feminist Theory/Method & Approach' in TESOL/Applied Linguistics

*By Abantika Dhar*
*Illinois State University*

According to Carastathis (2014) "In feminist theory, intersectionality has become the predominant way of conceptualizing the relation between systems of oppression which construct our multiple identities and our social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege" (p. 304). Similarly, several scholars in Applied Linguistics have explored and studied the influence of racial hierarchies on language, identities, pedagogy, and education, emphasizing linguistic justice (e.g., Motha, 2014; Baker-Bell, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015). Though these studies have not explicitly mentioned the interconnectedness between linguistic justice and feminist theory, 'the intersectionality' in feminist theory and 'applied linguistics' both advocate equitable access to racial and linguistic privileges for everyone regardless of their gender and/or ethnicity. The significance of depicting an explicit connection between feminist theory and Applied Linguistics can be approached through the lenses of apparent feminism. As apparent feminism "encourages a response to social justice exigencies, invites participation from allies who do not explicitly identify as feminist but do work that complements feminist goals, and makes apparent the ways in which efficient work actually depends on the existence and input of diverse audiences" (Frost, 2016, p. 3). This article analyzes the role of Feminist theory/approach in already published work in the field of TESOL/Applied Linguistics. The paper explores and discusses the following research question in its analysis: How can Feminist Theory be relevant for dealing with hierarchical issues (related to the position of women/minoritized groups both as teachers and learners) in Applied Linguistics and related educational fields?

**Feminist Theory for TESOL Academics/Practitioners in Academia**

According to Lin et al. (2004), there is an inadequacy of published research work on the institutional marginalization of "women faculty of color working in TESOL and related literacy education field" (p. 488). The authors suggest that their shared lived experiences with marginalization and discrimination in the field of TESOL and literary education exhibit the "consistent hierarchical patterns across different institutional contexts that require feminist theorizing to attend to issues not only of gender but also of race and social class" (p. 488). In this collaborated piece of research work by Lin et al. (2004), seven women from different ethnic and racial backgrounds (African American, Bahamian of African descent, Chinese American, Chinese, Japanese, Sri Lankan Australian, and European American) share their autobiographical stories of facing discrimination and marginalization in academia. According to the authors, there is a common pattern of "gendered and racialized task and labor segregation" in assigning the women of color "labor-intensive administrative and teaching duties" in the personal narratives they shared (p. 494). Lin et al. (2004) then point out that the modern segregation of labor by gender had been pointed out by feminist theories almost 2 decades ago. The authors hence suggest the feminist standpoint theorist's model to "recognize that academia very often segregates labor based not only on gender but also on race" (p. 495). Lin et al.'s (2004) study also discusses the gendered and racialized segregation of labor in the academic discipline of TESOL, "a discipline that models itself on applied linguistics and second language acquisition" (p. 495). As the authors elucidate,

> In TESOL, those who teach future ESOL professors and researchers are at the top, those who teach future ESOL teachers come next, and those who teach ESOL are at the bottom. Furthermore, ESOL teachers are disproportionately part-time, adjunct, or temporary, and females (and among whom many women of color) typically fill the bottom ranks (p. 496).

Unfortunately, the frontline TESOL practitioners and workers (mostly female ESOL teachers) are not provided with adequate opportunities and resources to engage in research and/or publish work based on their experiences in prestigious journals of their discipline. Even when TESOL practitioners conduct research work and publish or present them at academic conferences, the already established mainstream researchers often disregard the value of their research work. For example, in one of the stories in Lin et al.'s (2004) article, "Catherine's 2-year, labor-intensive, action-research project with frontline EFL teachers participating as the key researchers" was dismissed and criticized by a senior faculty member as "trashy work" (p. 496). Such marginalization based on gender, race, and academic positions can be addressed and discussed by the intersectionality in feminist theory as,

> [Feminist standpoint theorists] explicitly call for women of color, working- class women, and lesbians to be present among the women whose experiences generate inquiry. They all discuss the limitations of sciences emerging only from white, western, homophobic, academic feminism (Harding, 1996, p. 311, as cited by Lin et al., 2004, p. 496).

Hence, feminist theoretical perspective like, standpoint theory, which "suggests that research and theory have ignored and marginalized women and feminist ways of thinking" (Standpoint theory, n.d), possesses the ability to be a potential theoretical stance for marginalized academics, practitioners and scholars in TESOL and related fields to inquire and address the issues of racial, hierarchichal, and gender-based discriminations in academia.

Furthermore, Belhadi & Seloni's (2022) study focuses on the autoethnographic stories of two transnational multilingual female scholars of color (one graduate mentor and one graduate mentee) with minoritized positions in a predominantly white institution from a transnational feminist lens. The scholars have an educational and research background in the field of TESOL/Applied Linguistics and with their autoethnographical counterstories, they endeavor to approach the issue of transnational scholars navigating through academic and personal life simultaneously. In this study, the authors explained their shared stories of difficulties and struggles to navigate through their roles as caregivers and academics during Covid pandemic in the year of 2020. However, on the brighter side, both the mentor and mentee in the study received help from sharing their own lived experiences of challenges being caregiver academics with other doctoral students and faculty members in the department who had been through similar experiences of struggle. According to Belhadi & Seloni (2022), the feminist theory they adopted in their work and personal lives during this time allowed them "to invite reflections, be okay with the fragmented and messy moments of our lives, and brought a sense of connection and groundedness in the middle of chaos and mess." Belhadi & Seloni (2022) primarily illustrate the value of feminist mentorship instead of traditional mentorship in doctoral work for transnational academic caregivers. Therefore, feminist mentorship can be a way of providing a safe space for transnational women academics, especially those who struggle to keep a balance between their professional duties and personal issues/labor to humanize the task of mentoring. Future research work based on the lived experiences of transnational marginalized people and women can be analyzed and investigated through the feminist theory and praxis like standpoint feminist theory.

**Feminist Methods/Theory in Sociolinguistics and Language Studies**

Kuntjara (2004) discusses the feminist perspective of research methods in sociolinguistics. According to the author, feminist researchers often adopt naturalistic research methods as they are more appropriate for voicing women's problems. The author further notes that such naturalist research methods like interviewing and ethnography can be suitable for language studies and sociolinguistic research (p. 35). Thus, feminist research methods can be relevant for research in language studies and sociolinguistics where the researchers might attempt to investigate the subtleties of language usage and the linguistic values which shape the world.

Cannizzo's (2021) introduces feminist pedagogy as a "teaching practice, philosophy, and process that seeks to confront and deconstruct oppressive power structures both within and outside of the classroom using a gendered lens" (p. 1). Discussing how feminist perspective in general can be implemented in ESL, the author states, "Feminism, like antiracism, is thus not simply one more social issue in ESL but a way of thinking, a way of teaching, and, most importantly, a way of learning" (Arleen Schenke, 1996, p. 158, as cited by Cannizzo, 2021, p. 2). Language learners can be able to understand the power dynamic and hierarchical patterns related to how languages work in the world through feminist pedagogy. They will also be able to be conscious of their own racial, gender, and linguistic identities and any kind of marginalization they might have to face in society due to those identities. Through feminist pedagogy, language learners can be encouraged to develop critical consciousness which can also, according to Cannizzo (2021), work as "a motivational tool for L2 writing development" (p. 1).

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Scholars have conducted studies based on the lived experiences of multilingual transnational/international people who are doctoral students and teacher-scholars in the field of Applied Linguistics/TESOL (e.g., Trinh et al., 2023; Bookman, 2019). Feminist theory can be a potential method and approach for investigating and analyzing the lived experiences of transnational/international/immigrant students and educators. The intersectionality in Feminist theory, methods, and approach in education has a common goal of humanizing teaching, learning and pedagogy, which can work as a tool for researchers in the field of applied linguistics to understand and discuss how language learners and transnational academics navigate through difficult social constructs in mainstream academic spaces. The scope of feminist theories and methods is not just limited to analyzing gender discrimination between men and women. Scholars in the field of language studies can utilize the intersectionality in feminist pedagogy to discuss and analyze different issues related to linguistic justice and equitable academic practices for everyone regardless of their gender, race, linguistic, and social backgrounds. Additionally, based on several studies mentioned, discussed, and analyzed in this paper, white women and women of color working as TESOL faculty and practitioners can share their stories of discrimination, who might be victims of gendered and racially segregated labor or struggling to receive less recognition of their research work for belonging to a low-profile profession like ESL. To conclude, the feminist intersectionality can be incorporated as an effective theoretical lens by the scholars and researchers in the field of TESOL/Applied Linguistics to raise, address and analyze hierarchical issues in connection to the discrimination against women/marginalized groups of people studying and working in the academic spaces.

**Abantika Dhar** is a PhD student and writing instructor in the Department of English at Illinois State University. Her primary research focus is Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and TESOL, with a secondary focus on Writing Studies, Translational Rhetoric and Cultural Rhetoric.

**References**

Baker-Bell, A. (2020). Linguistic justice: Black language, literacy, identity, and pedagogy (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315147383
Belhadi, K. & Seloni, L. (Fall, 2022). Humanizing doctoral mentorship during the pandemic. Transnational women creating feminist spaces through rhetorical listening and reflexivity. Journal of Multimodal Rhetoric, 2020(7.1). http://journalofmultimodalrhetorics.com/7-1-belhadi-seloni-
Bookman, B. (2019). The Intersection of Transnationality and Scholarship: Self-Positioning and Teaching, Research, and Service Practices of Three Transnational Teacher-Scholars. International Journal of Research in Teacher Education, 11(4), 1-15. http://ijrte.inased.org/makale/1898
Cannizzo, H. A. (2021). Implementing Feminist Language Pedagogy: Development of Students' Critical Consciousness and L2 Writing. Education Sciences, 11(8), 393. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080393

**References (con.)**
Carastathis, A. (2014). The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory. Philosophy Compass, 9(5), 304–314. https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12129
Flores, N., & Rosa, J. (2015). Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. Harvard Educational Review, 85(2), 149–171
Frost, E. A. (2016). Apparent Feminism as a Methodology for Technical Communication and Rhetoric. Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 30(1), 3–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651915602295
Kuntjara, E. (2004). Social research methods in feminist's perspective: a new way in doing sociolinguistic qualitative research. Kata (Surabaya), 3(1). https://doi.org/10.9744/kata.3.1.33-38
Lin, A., Grant, R., Kubota, R., Motha, S., Sachs, G. T., Vandrick, S., & Wong, S. (2004). Women Faculty of Color in Tesol: Theorizing our lived experiences. TESOL Quarterly, 38(3), 487. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588350
Motha, S. (2014). Race, empire, and English language teaching: Creating responsible and ethical anti-racist practice. Teachers College Press
Standpoint theory (n.d.). Encyclopædia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/topic/standpoint-theory
Yazan, B., Trinh, E., & Pentón Herrera, L.J. (Eds.). (2023). Doctoral Students' Identities and Emotional Wellbeing in Applied Linguistics: Autoethnographic Accounts (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003305934

# From a Perception-Based Understanding of Teaching Philosophy Statements to a Genre-Analytical One

*By Ella Alhudithi*
*Iowa State University*

FFollowing the recommendation from the American Association of University Professors and the National Commission of Higher Education to employ a formal process in which not only the scholarship and service of a faculty is reviewed but also their teaching in the 1980s (Robinson et al., 2012), numerous institutions of various sizes and missions have begun to adopt this formal review process and train their members in the States. While the specifics of their process vary, they appear to request a similar array of artifacts as evidence of performance (e.g., scholarship accomplishments, a statement of teaching philosophy, recommendations). Given this consideration of teaching philosophy for review purposes, several scholars from various fields of social sciences and humanities began to direct their attention to understanding this genre and its role in higher education and academic advancement. In what follows, I will first depict the core features of teaching philosophy statements from a perception-based approach, followed by discussing insights that a corpus-based move analysis could provide to the writing, evaluation, and teaching of the genre.

**Perspectives and Characteristics of Teaching Philosophy Statements**

Since the 1990s, several scholars have placed their focus on the role of teaching philosophy statements in academia and its core features (Chism, 1997; Goodyear & Allchin, 1998; Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Schönwetter et al., 2002). One of the earliest attempts to understand the genre was made by Schönwetter et al. (2002) who described it as "a systematic and critical rationale that focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and learning in a particular discipline and/or institutional context" (p. 84). Many subsequent investigations have yielded similar descriptions (Crookes, 2015; Grundman, 2006; Hegarty, 2015; Hegarty & Silliman, 2016), highlighting the importance of communicating teaching specifics an academic is expected to fulfill, which might be impacted by discipline, taught academic level, institutional mission, and other tangible and intangible contextual factors.

To support academics in constructing a statement that meets expectations, scholars have examined key language features and styles of the genre (Chism, 1997; Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Payant, 2017). One feature regarded as core has been the use of first-person narrative voice. Accordingly, such a voice can successfully support writers in expressing their philosophy with enthusiasm and authenticity. Grundman (2006) also highlighted the importance of "the word philosophy does not lead … to using a dry, passive writing style" (p. 1331), as it might not capture the attention and interest of readers. In addition to passive, the results of surveys from committee chairs and in-service faculty showed a strong preference for avoiding creative and multimodal elements (e.g., images and poems) as these do not adhere to academic writing norms and conventions. It would be thus particularly important for those interested in submitting their teaching philosophy for academic review purposes to follow a traditional essay format structure. For those inclined to use technical language, the recommendation has been to include details and rich examples to ensure that the teaching philosophy would be engaging to the reader.

In addition to the writing style, a few scholars have directed their attention to content topics of value to the reader (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998; Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Swales & Feak, 2011). The results of surveys and reviews on the genre showed 12 topics to be key: 1) integration of responsibilities, 2) professional development, 3) teaching effectiveness, 4) learning assessment, 5) learning environment, 6) teaching methods, 7) teaching application, 8) taught knowledge, 9) beliefs about teaching and teachers, 10) beliefs about learning and learners, 11) core values, and 12) today's educational needs. Such agreements suggest that communicating these topics would be crucial for the reader, especially those faced with time, human, and financial constraints that hinder their observation of every academic's "live" teaching. In these cases, such topics can be the colors that paint every angle and aspect of their teaching philosophy and bring it to life. However, informing the reader about these topics might be challenging. This might be especially true for those required to construct a one- to two-page statement, fulfill specific appointment duties, or serve a particular population and institutional mission.

Such a challenge necessitates consideration of rhetorical goals that academics communicate content and use specific language features to achieve. For content like 'integration of responsibilities' and 'professional development,' academics might communicate different evidence from participating in workshops to conducting peer observations. Yet, their rhetorical intent might be perhaps one, such as 'emphasizing commitment.' This raises the value of examining the genre at the rhetorical level as it would allow for connecting micro elements of the genre (i.e., content and language) to macro-ones (i.e., rhetorical goals), yielding rich descriptions that would support academics from various disciplines, appointment types, and career levels in determining which features can be core in their philosophy.

**Toward a Corpus-Based Move Analysis Investigation of Teaching Philosophy Statements**

The aforementioned scholarships have been fundamental in raising understanding of the genre and its key features, from writing style to content. Their use as pedagogical guides and references in developing workshops, guidelines, rubrics, and other training materials is evident in the literature and available online resources. While effective, limitations could be observed in their scope, with the majority focusing on micro elements of the genre. Another appears to be their focus on perceptions and preferences that in-service academics have rather than an empirical detailed investigation of the genre texts to uncover its conventions. Such investigation on how academics "actually" employ different genre elements to communicate their philosophy would be, indeed, instrumental for any seeking to write, evaluate, edit, or teach the genre.

What could possibly advance our understanding and support us in recognizing a wide range of features that academics typically employ in their statements is taking a corpus-based move analysis approach to study the genre. According to the founder of move analysis, Swales (2004), a move is a rhetorical goal or unit "that performs a coherent communicative function" in a discourse (p. 228). The work by Cotos (2018) details all subsequent procedures involved in analyzing moves of a genre, which begins with a manual reading to note functions and ends with a framework refinement and validation process. When combining the move analysis with the corpus linguistics approach, which uses computer techniques to analyze a large, balanced [1] collection of texts (Egbert et al., 2022), the investigation can yield all evidence needed to accurately describe a genre (Baker, 2006; Biber et al., 2007). With this given, it would be possible to claim that situating the investigation under this combined approach can offer several benefits to the study of this genre. It would allow for analyzing a large-sized corpus of teaching philosophies and identifying all moves that academics achieve in their statements. The combined approach would also support the analysis of all elements characterizing each move, such as functions, content, and language. Results of this investigation would offer explicit descriptions of all resources that academics draw upon to self-promote their teaching and themselves, along with explaining why, how often, and where they use each type.

[1] Balanced: Texts collected with careful consideration of demographic and situational boundaries of the target domain to ensure a well-representation of its categories, such as the geographical location, type, and size of institutions that academics teach at.

For my doctoral research, I am employing this corpus-based move analysis approach to study teaching philosophy statements authored by academics who are well-immersed in performing teaching responsibilities at large public universities in the States. I hope the results will uncover all specifics of this genre and support various academic centers, offices, programs, committees, mentors, students, postdocs, and any academic seeking to write, edit, teach, or review teaching philosophy statements. My experience in developing my first teaching philosophy involved several rounds of drafting and reviewing many available resources, so it is my hope that the knowledge that would result from this investigation would be perceived as "thorough" and "enriching." Indeed, with the ever-evolving realities and complex dynamics of teaching, taking an approach like this that connects micro-elements of the genre to macro-ones perhaps might not only advance our understanding but also equip us with all resources needed for a construction and a re-construction of a philosophy that meets consistent changes and needs.

**Acknowledgment**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all academics participating in my doctoral research, whom without, this research would not be possible given the occluded nature of the genre. My deep gratitude also goes to my co-chairs, Dr. Bethany Gray and Dr. Elena Cotos, for their training, advice, and wonderful encouragement. Last but not least, my thank you goes to the co-editors of AAALGrad for their amazing support.

**Ella Alhudithi** is a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Linguistics and Technology at Iowa State University, with research interests in corpus linguistics, languages for specific purposes, systemic functional linguistics, and language pedagogy. She received her master's from Colorado State University and has been studying different texts (e.g., research articles, language textbooks, and teaching statements) to uncover functions, frequencies, and distributions of different linguistic features since then. Her work aims to offer empirical evidence that empowers users with rich knowledge on genre/register specifics.

**References**

Baker, P. (2006). Using corpora in discourse analysis. London: Continuum.
Biber, D., Connor, U., & Upton, T. A. (2007). Discourse on the move: Using corpus analysis to describe discourse structure. John Benjamins.
Chism, N. V. N. (1997). Developing a philosophy of teaching statement. Essays on Teaching Excellence, 9(3), 1-2.
Cotos, E. (2018). Move analysis. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), The encyclopedia of applied linguistics (pp. 1-8). Oxford, UK: John Wiley and Sons.
Crookes, G. (2015). Redrawing the boundaries on theory, research, and practice concerning language teachers' philosophies and language teacher cognition: Toward a critical perspective. Modern Language Journal, 99, 485-499.
Egbert, J., Biber, D., & Gray, B. (2022). Designing and evaluating language corpora: A practical framework for corpus representatives. Cambridge University Press.
Goodyear, G. E., & Allchin, D. (1998). Statements of teaching philosophy. In M. Kaplan & O. Stillwater (Eds.), To Improve the Academy (pp. 103-122). OK: New Forums.
Grundman, H.G. (2006). Writing a teaching philosophy statement. Notices of the AMS, 53(11), 1329-1332.
Hegarty, N., & Silliman, B. (2016). How to approach teaching philosophy statements as career mission statements. Journal of Business and Educational Leadership, 6(1), 103-114.
Kearns, K. D., & Sullivan, C. S. (2011). Resources and practices to help graduate students and postdoctoral fellows write statements of teaching philosophy. Advances in Physiology Education, 35(2), 136-145.
Payant, C. (2017). Teaching philosophy statements: In-service ESL teachers' practices and beliefs. TESOL Journal, 8, 636-656.
Robinson, R., Franklin, G., & Novicevic, M. (2012). Post-tenure review and just-cause termination in U.S. public institutions of higher learning: A legalistic examination. Public Personnel Management, 41(1), 127-149.
Schönwetter, D., Sokal, L., Friesen, M., & Taylor, K. (2002). Teaching philosophies reconsidered: A conceptual model for the development and evaluation of teaching philosophy statements. International Journal for Academic Development, 7(1), 83-97.
Swales, J. M. (2004). Research genres: Explorations and applications. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Swales, J., & Feak, C. (2011). Navigating academia: Writing supporting genres. The University of Michigan Press.

# L2 Email Writing as A Site of Identity Struggle: The Story of an International GTA

*By Wei Xu*
*University of Arizona*

In higher education, there is a group of teachers who are receiving increasing attention in the literature – that is, Graduate Teaching Associates/Assistants (GTAs). Grouling (2015) points out that the positioning of GTAs as new graduate students is problematic because it begets resistance and conflicts for novice GTAs to adopt their new identities as both student and teacher, and such student-teacher identity conflict is reified in the use of discourse, especially in acquiring new genres of student writing and teacher writing. This is a paradoxical situation for GTAs as they need to "write to become someone they really know nothing about" (Dryer, 2012, p.440). Such challenges of "writing to becoming" can be more salient for international novice GTAs. As second language (L2) sojourners, international novice GTAs not only face the conflict of student-teacher identities but also the struggles brought by their use of English as L2. A survey of literature indicates that there is a dearth of research in a discourse analysis lens that delves into novice GTAs' online interactions with their students, such as email communications. To capture a picture of GTAs' identity struggles situated in discourse, the current autoethnographic study examines the researcher's authentic use of email discourse to manage a conflict with a student. By conducting a discourse analysis of the email correspondence, this feature article provides a window into how L2 email correspondence serves as a site of identity struggles for international GTAs in the US and provides implications of how teacher training programs may better support international GTAs.

**Theoretical Framework: Positioning**

The context of this study is based on an unpredictable conflict between the researcher and one of her students. Given the context of this study and the pragmatic nature of email communication, before we move on to the study design, it is important to clarify the construct adopted in this study, namely, positioning. Positioning originates from Foucault's concept of subject positions, which is closely related to societal discourses (Deppermann, 2013). To be specific, Faucault (1969) maintains that subjects can be positioned by discourses regarding power and legitimate practices in certain social settings. In this vein, Kayi-Aydar (2019) conceptualizes positioning as "being assigned positions by others or assigning positions to them" (p. 9). The present study adopts the definition of positioning in Kayi-Aydar (2019) and intends to tap into the researcher's self-assigning positions and positions assigned to her student in email correspondence.

As email writers always hold intentions or communicative purposes while drafting emails, another concept worth mentioning is intentional positioning. Kayi-Aydar (2019) maintains that intentional positioning "is accomplished in various ways, such as using descriptive language to describe one's actions and points of view, or referring to autobiographical events." (Kayi-Aydar, 2019, p. 6). Therefore, it is of vital importance to explore how the researcher achieved her intentional positioning discursively by using the descriptive language of actions and viewpoints. To this end, I examine: How does the researcher position herself and the recipient in the two email drafts discursively? What linguistic strategies are employed to realize the positioning identified?

**Data Analysis**

The researcher was an international student with a US visa in her first year of teaching when the two email drafts were generated. As a novice GTA and L2 sojourner, the new identities she was acclimating to may be reflected in her email writing. The data presented in this study comprises the first and final draft of an email that was sent to a student in her first-year writing class in the US. In addition, the researcher's written self-reflective narrative was drawn on to complement email drafts to answer the second research question.

For data analysis, multiple rounds of coding were conducted. In the first-round coding, the researcher color-coded descriptive language in the emails drafts that are related to actions, points of view, and the conflict between the researcher and the student. Linguistically, the researcher purposefully captured sentence structure such as person pronouns + action verb and person pronouns + viewpoints expressing words. Drawing on the findings in preliminary open coding, the researcher narrowed down the direction for further examination in her data to conduct axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In the second round of analysis, codes created in the first round of open coding were iteratively examined, such as positions assigned in descriptive language about actions and viewpoints hidden within the linguistic cues. The data analysis showed what positions were assigned in the emails and how they were reified by linguistic cues.

**Wei Xu** is a fourth-year Ph.D. candidate in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT) at the University of Arizona. She works as a graduate teaching associate and graduate assistant director for the Writing Program. Her research interests include multilingualism and multimodal composition for second language/multilingual writers, genre studies, and teacher perceptions.

**Findings and Discussion**

In the first email draft, most of the teacher's and the student's images are shaped by descriptive language about actions and the adjacent use of first-person pronoun I and second-person pronoun you, resulting in opposing roles of an agentive student against a relatively passive teacher. In the final draft, through the shift of the use of pronouns, the teacher is positioned as part of the institution, and a representative of many other teachers in the same university who share part of the institutional power. The student is positioned as one of many at the university who should be adhering to the institutionally assigned student responsibilities such as being self-disciplined. Through the shift of the use of pronouns, the roles between the teacher and the student are switched, being an agentive teacher versus a passive student. Another salient change in the final draft is the change in the use of requests with the word please. Table 1 provides a summary of the linguistic cues in the first and final email draft sent to the student, followed by further discussion of how the employment of these linguistic cues contribute to the positioning in the two email drafts.

**Table 1**

*Frequency of Linguistic Cues*

| Draft/Frequency | 2nd Person Pron. (*you*) | 3rd Person Pron. (*students, they*) | Pragmatic Word (*please*) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st Email Draft | 25x | 0x | 2x |
| Final Email Draft | 9x | 8x | 6x |

In the first email draft, the email writer's positioning stays on the personal level, which means she focuses on I (teacher) and you (the student) as two people in a situation of tension. Considering the context of the initial email was drafted, the writer's main purpose was to express and release strong emotions. This context and purpose also explain why she positions herself and the student through syntactic constructions of person pronoun + action verbs, through which the roles of an accuser and an accusee are assigned. However, with a purposeful goal in mind, positioning strategies adopted in her final draft are different. Bamberg (1997) proposes that positioning strategies are employed to make different identity claims and create different moral positions, such as to "elicit empathy" and "align the audience in a moral stance with the I against the other", and it is related to "how the narrator wants to be understood as a person (who she is)" (pp. 338-339). In this case, the email writer's purpose of sending the email to the student is to make the student realize the inappropriateness of her behavior. In alignment with this purpose, the researcher positions herself as part of the institution, which means she owns part of the power from the institution. In addition, the final draft is pragmatically structured in a more careful way, which is reflected discursively by the more frequent uses of please. The email writer assigns the position of a respectful, calm, and polite teacher to herself, and hence, based on the existing social and moral orders, conveys the expectation that the student should accept what the teacher proposes in her email.

**Implications**

Drawing on the case described in this study, I offer some suggestions for novice teacher training programs in the US higher education institutions which house many international GTAs. Firstly, teacher training curriculums should go beyond equipping novice teachers with strategies focusing on designing in-class activities.

Beyond teaching classes, novice teachers face bigger challenges in acquiring pragmatic skills in dealing with teacher-student relationships and class management. hese challenges are caused by the novice GTAs' dual roles as both student and teacher. Without a clear orientation to their position as a student teacher genres because they are not clear about how to orchestrate linguistic strategies to negotiate their Imultilayered identities. In an unpredictable scenario of a conflict between the teacher and the student as the current case exemplifies, the novice GTAs will need more support to maintain healthy and professional communication with the students.

> *Therefore, it is suggested that teacher training programs need to take the GTAs' practical needs into consideration and provide corresponding support. Secondly, international GTAs' identity struggles need to be brought to the forefront for the sake of assisting international novice GTAs to establish a smooth transition from an L2 English speaker student to a confident and professional instructor.*

Examples of possible interventions include encouraging the interactions within the established Community of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 2011). The teacher training programs could hold gatherings for the international GTAs to share their concerns and identity struggles with peers who are able to empathize. The members of CoP may collaboratively brainstorm solutions and strategies to tackle the dilemmas they encounter. Drawing on Kayi- Aydar's (2019) understanding of positioning, to alleviate focal GTAs' identity struggles, the teacher training program can explicitly assign roles to the GTAs by clarifying their importance and contribution, and the GTAs can self-assign roles to themselves by keeping reflective teaching journals, building an element of "Who am I?" in their teaching portfolio, and identifying the roles assigned to them from the students' constructive feedback.

To conclude, this feature article offers detailed information of how email discourse used in higher education in the US reflects email writers' complicated and multifaceted identities. The article also suggests implications for providing international GTAs with professional support.

**References**

Bamberg, M. (1997). Positioning between structure and performance. Journal of Narrative and Life History, 7, pp. 335-342.
Davies, B., & Harre, R. (1999). Positioning and Personhood. In R. Harre & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), Positioning theory (pp. 32-52). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
Deppermann, A. (2013). Positioning in narrative interaction. Narrative inquiry, 23(1), pp. 1-15, Benjamins.
Dryer, D. B. (2012). At a mirror, darkly: The imagined undergraduate writers of ten novice composition instructors. College Composition and Communication, 420-452.
Foucault, M. (1969). L'archeologie du savoir. Paris, France: Gallimard.
Grouling, J. (2015). Resistance and Identity Formation: The Journey of the Graduate Student-Teacher. In Composition Forum (Vol. 32). Association of Teachers of Advanced Composition.
Harre, R. (2012). Positioning theory: Moral dimensions of social-cultural psychology. In J. Valsiner (Ed.), The Oxford handbook of culture and psychology (pp. 191-206). New York: Oxford University.
Harre, R., Moghaddam, F. M., Cairnie, T. P., Rothbart, D., & Sabat, S. R. (2009). Recent advances in positioning theory. Theory & Psychology, 19(1), 5-31.
Kayi-Aydar, H. (2019). Positioning theory in applied linguistics: Research design and applications. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research techniques: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
Wenger, E. (2011). Communities of practice: A brief introduction. Scholars' Bank. http://hdl.handle.net/1794/11736

# Navigating Diverse Career Paths in Applied Linguistics: Insights from a DEI Fellowship Program

*By David Balmaceda M.*
*Washington University in St. Louis*

In addressing the challenge of how graduate programs can optimally support graduate students in their academic and professional trajectories, Cassuto and Weisbuch (2021) underscore the importance of fostering creativity, practical insights, and awareness of varied career prospects. This report delves into the significance of mentored experiences, notably internships, in graduate studies. It details creating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Fellowship program by a doctoral candidate in applied linguistics, offering a blueprint potentially suitable for DEI-centric initiatives and language and curriculum-based programs. The aim is to equip applied linguistics students with strategies to thrive in a diverse professional landscape.

**Contextual Background: The Mentored Experience in Higher Education**

In my quest to pursue a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, I chose an internship over further coursework, motivated by my enthusiasm for hands-on tasks like event management and development and my passion for DEI. I aligned with the Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), a key advocate for underrepresented students. The CDI's core focus areas include education and training, policy advocacy, identity development, and an innovation space, which I oversaw. Mentored by an experienced leader from institutions like UCLA, UCI, and Columbia University and an Associate Director skilled in LGBTQIA+ programming, I spearheaded the creating and structuring of the "CDI Fellows Program" in the Fall of 2020.

## The Fellowship Creation: Brief Guide and Tips

**Step 1: Define the Fellowship's Goals and Purpose**

The CDI Fellowship's primary objective is to offer a platform for students to generate and actualize innovative DEI ideas on campus. This initiative pursues multiple aims:

- **Innovation in DEI:** The fellowship encourages participants to introduce projects, educational series, policy recommendations, or research experiments that the CDI hasn't previously explored.
- **Projects Scope:** While projects can be singular events or sustained efforts, they must exemplify DEI innovation and resonate with CDI's key focus areas.
- **Campus Unity:** The program strives to enhance collaboration and communication between students, university entities, and various school departments.
- **Personal and Professional Growth:** The fellowship offers DEI experience and fosters introspection within this context. As fellows advance, they gain practical DEI experience, hone decision-making skills, build a robust community network, deepen their project commitment, and lay the groundwork for future DEI-centric roles.

Defining the fellowship's objectives paves the way for:

- **Target Audience Identification**: The fellowship prioritized undergraduate and graduate students, but the broader campus benefited from their project outcomes.

***Tip:*** We derived program goals from insights shared by key stakeholders. Identifying these stakeholders was mentor-guided, while feedback was collected via Zoom sessions and email exchanges. Joint efforts collecting varied viewpoints are crucial in sculpting a program's aims.

**Step 2: Structuring the Program**
Determine the program's duration. The CDI Fellowship unfolded over three semester-long stages:

1. **Application/Selection Phase**

- **Marketing**: For two months, campus-wide promotional efforts involved distributing flyers and announcements in student newsletters, groups, and school communication channels.
- **Information Session**: Conducted after a month of advertising.
- **Application**: Entrants submitted a brief DEI project outline encompassing the project's nature, innovation, aims, initial methods, and anticipated timelines—ensuring anonymity to avoid bias. Additional submissions included a CV and, if available, a recommendation letter.
- **Selection**:
- *Screening*: Initial assessment to filter out unrelated proposals.
- *Evaluation*: Proposals underwent rigorous review based on a rubric that assessed innovation, clarity, planning, and feasibility.
- *School Representation*: The highest-scoring two projects from each school proceeded to the next round.
- *Interview & CV Review*: Short interviews assessed zcandidates' commitment, and CVs were scanned for prior DEI or leadership roles.

2. **Educational/Project Planning Phase**

- Participants refined their initial projects through semester-long DEI discussions and training. Crafting a relevant syllabus was vital. Drawing upon my graduate research capabilities, I curated discussion themes, recommended guest speakers, and bonding activities. Key topics covered included:
- *Individual and Social Identity*: Examining personal and social identity with subtopics like intersectionality.
- *Culture & Communication*: Investigating cultural humility, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.
- *Gender Identity*: Discussing gender, racial, and social equity nuances and understanding privilege.
- *Project Guidance*: Offering resources on proposal drafting, budgeting, and adept project management.

3. **Project Execution Phase**

- This stage involved executing the DEI projects conceptualized in the prior phase. Over a semester, fellows either initiated or fully realized their proposed projects.

**Step 3: Establish Support and Resources**
The DEI Fellowship emphasized mentorship and resource accessibility. CDI staff served as the chief mentors for the initial two cohorts, supplying resources tailored to project requirements.

***Tip:*** Begin by assessing existing resources. Next, pinpoint deficiencies and contemplate solutions, perhaps via collaborations or grants.

**Step 4: Program Evaluation and Refinement**
Consistent evaluation is crucial. For the CDI Fellowship, surveys were administered at three stages: initially to assess the application process, midway to gauge ongoing program educational content and support, and finally, to determine overall outcomes. This continuous feedback refines the program's relevance and efficiency over time.

***Tip:*** Utilize digital platforms like Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, Redcap, or Google Forms for systematic feedback collection and make iterative improvements to maintain program relevance.

**Applied Linguistics: Tailored Skills for the CDI Fellowship**
Drawing from my applied linguistics training, I employed several skills to craft the CDI Fellows Program:

- **Problem-solving:** My applied linguistics interdisciplinary lens was pivotal in addressing challenges during the fellowship's design. This perspective enabled a holistic approach, capturing diverse feedback and effectively navigating macro challenges, like program structuring, and micro details, such as naming nuances.
- **Research Acumen:** Drawing on my experience creating research questionnaires and language teaching assessment tools, I devised three assessment surveys for the CDI program and formulated the preliminary questions for stakeholders.
- **Teaching & Interdisciplinary Insight:** Building upon my teaching experience and course design expertise, along with my ability to integrate insights from diverse fields to address applied linguistics issues, I crafted a syllabus for the fellowship. It seamlessly blended DEI topics with resources on proposal drafting and effective project management.
- **Critical Analysis:** The ability to critically dissect research findings bolstered the program's adaptability and ensured its strategies were soundly based.
- **Cross-Cultural Sensitivity:** My engagement in language-related contexts through language teaching and applied linguistic research enriched my understanding of diverse cultures, which was vital in shaping an inclusive and culturally resonant fellowship program.

**Skills from Internship Experience**
Internships like the one detailed in this report enrich a CV with versatile skills, priming candidates for roles in corporate social responsibility, human resources, and management:

1. **Project Management:** Overseeing and executing projects from conception to completion within the DEI domain, aligning with organizational aims.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Cultivating ties with varied stakeholders, from department heads to external allies, bolstering DEI endeavors.
3. **Program Development:** Crafting and refining DEI programs suited to an organization's demands.
4. **Collaborative Leadership:** Navigating cross-functional teams, directing collective actions, and ensuring alignment with larger organizational goals.

## Conclusion

This report offers a starting guide for developing new programs, relieving the burden of starting from scratch. The discussed internship experience emphasizes the value of diverse, immersive experiences in advancing graduate students' holistic growth. Like the DEI fellowship, internships equip students with critical skills suitable for various career trajectories, as Ezarik (2022) and Kang & Girouard (2022) highlighted. In light of the competitive academic job market, discussing the versatility of graduate-level applied linguistics skills across various sectors, from corporations to NGOs, is imperative. Such dialogues and subsequent actions may boost the standing of academic programs and foster student growth. As applied linguistics programs evolve, students should seek varied opportunities and mentorships, reinforcing career prospects across and beyond academia.

**Acknowledgments:** I owe profound gratitude to Dr. Cindy Brantmeier for her steadfast mentorship and guidance within the distinguished applied linguistics doctoral program she leads. I also appreciate Travis Tucker Jr. and Dr. Mark Kamimura-Jimenez's trust and direction in co-developing the fellowship program. Lastly, thanks to the diligent editors for refining this article.

**David Balmaceda M.,** a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Linguistics at Washington University in St. Louis, also holds a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education and an MA in Languages, Cultures, and Literature in Spanish. His research, situated at the crossroads of applied linguistics, social psychology, and higher education, delves into the potential implications of the Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) within the university L2 domain, particularly concerning Spanish programs. This pursuit seeks to unveil subtle nuances, potentially offering fresh perspectives on language enrollment dynamics and hinting at curriculum and program enhancement avenues.

Having taught at the university level in both Nicaragua and the U.S., David has refined his teaching methods in English and Spanish, embracing and learning from the richness of diverse student demographics, highlighting his passion and adaptability in pedagogy. A Fulbright alumnus and a recent inductee into the Bouchet Graduate Honor Society's WashU Chapter, he has also earned two fellowships and professional certificates from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. David remains steadfast in his commitment to advancing academic knowledge, promoting diversity, and embracing continuous learning.

References

Cassuto, L., & Weisbuch, R. (2021). The new Ph.D.: How to build a better graduate education. Johns Hopkins University Press. https://www.press.jhu.edu/books/title/12093/new-phd

Ezarik, M. (2022, September 23). A need to succeed: What students want and get from internships. Inside Higher Ed. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/09/23/students-internship-experiences-how-they-want-colleges-help

Kang, J., & Girouard, A. (2022). Impact of UX internships on human-computer interaction graduate students: A qualitative analysis of internship reports. ACM Transactions on Computing Education (TOCE), 22(4), 1-25. https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3517132

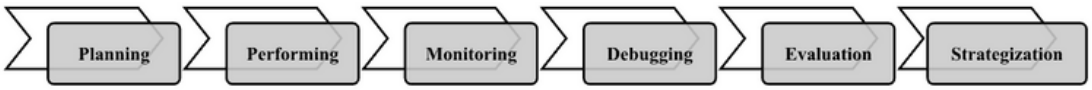
# Strategic Metacognitive Awareness of a Doctoral Student

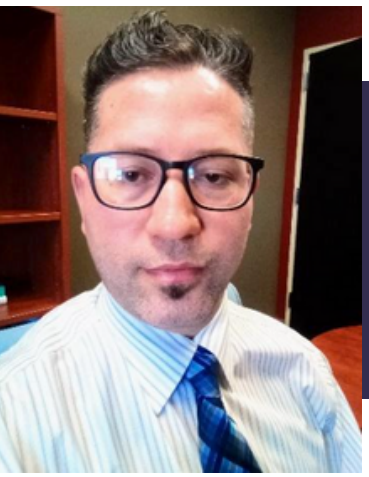
*By Sayed Ali Reza Ahmadi*
*Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

Although a doctoral journey is interspersed with a multiplicity of challenges for graduate students, I believe that this journey provides students with many professional and leadership opportunities. Here, I focus on one type of professional opportunity, which is teaching as an adjunct professor in higher education. I have experienced that this is one of the best professional experiences for doctoral students, which helps students become professional faculty as soon as they complete their doctoral degree. When I finished my coursework in my doctoral program in Composition and Applied Linguistics at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, I applied for a teaching position in the First-Year Composition Program at Duquesne University. I was teaching 101 composition courses in addition to working on my dissertation. Teaching experience has been a key success in my academic career. Therefore, in order to theorize how to become more successful in teaching for professional purposes, I suggest a conceptual framework entitled "strategic metacognitive awareness" constructed from six major elements. It is important to internalize that metacognition is "thinking about thinking" (Flavell, 1979, p. 1). By introducing this framework, I mean that First-Year Composition (FYC) teachers are conscious not only about what they teach but also about how and why they teach. Doctoral students, who are teaching composition, could employ this framework for effective teaching practices for metacognitive development purposes. These components are planning, performing, monitoring, debugging, evaluation, and strategization (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.**

*Strategic Metacognitive Awareness*



**Sayed Ali Reza Ahmadi** is a Ph.D. candidate in Composition and Applied Linguistics at Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he also serves as a Teaching Associate teaching 101 and 202 composition courses. In addition, he is an Adjunct Faculty of the First-Year Composition at Duquesne University. His research interests include metacognition and composition, metacognition and reading, critical pedagogy, and writing center-related studies.

**Planning:** During the planning stage of my teaching, I always think about formulating a high standard of instruction. I design a highly effective course syllabus and course content, design PowerPoint presentations for my classes, design Google Docs for self-review, pair review, and group work, etc. Particularly in the planning stage, I identify learning objectives for developing my students' composition awareness, and based on those learning objectives, I design some writing activities and incorporate strategies to achieve those learning objectives. Orr et al. (2022) assert that learning objectives are a roadmap that determines what can be achieved. In addition, I design a rubric to check my students' understanding of the course readings on writing, writing assignment, and my feedback on their major assignment. For instance, one of the lessons that I designed is "Rhetorical Analysis of an Interview". I designed this lesson based on five major learning objectives that enable my students (i) to practice writing process related to formal academic analysis, (ii) identify various rhetorical situations, (iii) use various rhetorical approaches, (iv) apply rhetorical approaches in writing, and (v) to evaluate different rhetorical practices. After I specify the learning objectives, I design a writing activity to help students achieve those learning objectives. For example, I ask my students to write an essay analyzing a video interview so that they could identify and write about the rhetorical situation in the interview in an essay format.

**Performing:** While teaching, I encourage students' engagement through class discussions, ask my students to reflect on their writing, and ask them to analyze weekly readings. Students' engagement is central to my teaching since I perceive that all students should have equal opportunities to participate in all class activities. According to Ferrer et al. (2020), "It is widely acknowledged that when students are actively engaged in the learning process and get pleasure and instrumental value from what they are doing, they have a propensity to achieve better learning outcomes" (p. 318). Furthermore, my teaching philosophy is based on a questioning strategy that motivates my students to think critically about their writing processes and encourages them to reflect on those processes in class. In addition, I ask my students to analyze weekly readings in groups by answering a set of pre-designed questions. I usually design several analytical and metacognitive questions to enable my students to delve deeper into the readings and also reflect on their own strategies on how they could apply the theories and strategies from the readings to their own writing practices.

**Monitoring:** While teaching, I constantly monitor not only my own teaching but also students' learning through self-questioning and questions directed at them. I usually check on my students to see whether they are on the right learning path. I argue that monitoring my own teaching helps me identify my strengths and weaknesses in my teaching practices which brings about improvement in my teaching. In addition, my teaching monitoring also has high impacts on my students' learning. Matsuda and Silva (2019) state that teacher's monitoring of students' learning is vital because teachers could understand how students progress with learning, how they do their assignments, and whether they need assistance and work with students on one-on-one sessions accordingly.

**Debugging:** If I see that the teaching strategies that I used did not work very effectively, I substitute them with another strategy. I usually use multiple pedagogical strategies in teaching composition, such as think-aloud, group reflection, digital arguments, etc. to help students understand not only what they write but also how and why they write. Sometimes, when I apply a group-work strategy to promote students' reflections within their groups and share their insights in the class with others, I perceive that some students are not comfortable being vocal in reflection. That is why I ask them to write their reflection and exchange them for peer-review. Debugging is a process of finding and resolving a strategy that cannot function effectively and substituting it spontaneously with another strategy that functions more effectively (DeLiema, 2019). Almost every metacognitive practitioner could evaluate the strategies they employ in teaching composition, and they need to be able to replace those with more effective ones when required.

**Evaluation:** At the end of every three weeks, I usually have a survey for my students asking them questions that evaluate their writing development. This type of survey usually helps me better understand students' writing development and the changes that I need to consider in my own teaching. Evaluations do not only help students identify their learning strengths and challenges and reflect on areas that they need help with, but also they help teachers identify students' challenges and provide assistance instantly (Taylor, 2014). Therefore, considering the learning strengths and challenges of my students, I identify those in need of further assistance and invite them for one-on-one meetings to further discuss their challenges pertaining to my composition class.

**Strategization:** Once I distinguish between the most and the least effective teaching strategies, I conceptualize new pedagogical frameworks for teaching composition by analyzing and conceptualizing strategies. For example, I believe in "explicit teaching of metacognition" as one of the effective strategies that help students plan their writing before writing, monitor their writing while writing, and evaluate their writing after they complete their writing. Next, I suggest an "anti-perfunctory writing strategy" that enables students to identify those external variables that affect their writing productivity by promoting procrastination in writing. Baird (2021) says that we build a strategy by designing a plan to achieve a number of major goals and objectives. That is, strategic metacognitive awareness enables teachers to build strategies from their major teaching goals and practices.

In a nutshell, if doctoral students seek to find teaching opportunities in composition, "strategic metacognitive awareness" could be a hands-on framework to help them teach not only for metacognitive development of themselves, but also for developing students' metacognitive awareness in composition through planning, performing, monitoring, debugging, evaluation, and strategization. My framework helped me teach professionally through reflection-based orientation, encouraging my students to reflect on their writing. Besides, I am now able to evaluate my own teaching practices through which I am able to build teaching strategies by evaluating whether my strategies work effectively and why or why not.

References
Baird, A. (2021). On writing research articles well: A guide for writing IS papers. Journal of the Association for Information Systems, 22(5), 1197-1211.
DeLiema, D., Dahn, M., Flood, V. J., Asuncion, A., Abrahamson, D., Enyedy, N., & Steen, F. (2019). Debugging as a context for fostering reflection on critical thinking and emotion. Deeper Learning, Dialogic Learning, and Critical Thinking: Research-based Strategies for the Classroom. Hrsg. von Emmanuel Manalo. New York: Routledge, 209-228.
Ferrer, J., Ringer, A., Saville, K., A Parris, M., & Kashi, K. (2020). Students' motivation and engagement in higher education: The importance of attitude to online learning. Higher Education, 1-22.
Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. American Psychologist, 34(10), 906.
Matsuda, P. K., & Silva, T. (2019). Writing. In N. Schmitt & M. P.H. Rodgers (Eds.), An Introduction to Applied Linguistics (3rd ed., pp. 279-293). Routledge.
Orr, R. B., Csikari, M. M., Freeman, S., & Rodriguez, M. C. (2022). Writing and using learning objectives. CBE—Life Sciences Education, 21(3), fe3.
Taylor, S. N. (2014). Student self-assessment and multisource feedback assessment: exploring benefits, limitations, and remedies. Journal of Management Education, 38(3), 359-383.

# Resource review of: Ayres, Z. J. (2022). Managing your mental health during your PhD: A survival guide. Springer.

*By Carlo Cinaglia*
*Michigan State University*

Graduate study is difficult for many reasons. For one, expectations surrounding the what, how, and why of academic labor are not made clear (Calarco, 2020). Additionally, the system of academia rewards the completion of work with additional work but discourages explicit conversations about how this work is performed and experienced (Berg & Seeber, 2016). This dynamic, combined with precarious working conditions, places graduate students in vulnerable positions within a system that capitalizes on their labor while usually overlooking their wellbeing (Yazan et al., 2023). These challenges can have negative effects on doctoral student mental health.

My doctoral experience so far has been similar to the above description. Throughout the first year of my PhD program, I kept a journal documenting my reflections about joys and insights as well as struggles and uncertainties. When I conducted an autoethnography analyzing these reflections the following year (Cinaglia, 2023), I began to think about the connections between academic socialization, mental health, and graduate student wellbeing. With so many implicit expectations surrounding what doctoral study entails, the internalized pressure to feel or function like a competent scholar in the early years of a graduate program can lead to debilitating distress and negatively affect individual wellbeing. Fortunately, a combination of reflexive writing, dialogue with peers, and supportive mentoring can demystify some of these implicit expectations and make the academic socialization process go a bit more smoothly.

It wasn't until the third year of my doctoral program when I came across Zoë Ayres' book, Managing Your Mental Health During Your PhD: A Survival Guide. Aside from my interest in researching the topic, Ayres' book has encouraged me to reflect on how my own working practices continue to affect my wellbeing and mental health. Since discovering Ayres' (open access!) book, I have recommended it widely to my peers within and outside of my program. In this book, Ayres addresses several of the challenges described above, offering a critical reflection of the system of academia and a toolkit of strategies for graduate students to advocate for their wellbeing during doctoral study.

Ayres' book is divided into four sections. Part I, Defining the Problem, contextualizes the topic of mental health within doctoral education, framing mental health as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon and highlighting how several different factors within graduate study—including the academic research culture—can challenge individual wellbeing. In Part II, Mindset Matters, Ayres explores individual aspects of mental health and strategies doctoral students can engage in to advocate for their own wellbeing. This section considers how implicit expectations and well-intentioned but misguided forms of institutional support can negatively affect wellbeing and prevent doctoral students from feeling a sense of belonging. Instead, it makes the case for self-care and offers productivity strategies to counter feelings of guilt and exclusion. Part III, Environmental Stressors, shifts focus to critique the many institutional factors impacting doctoral student wellbeing. These institutional factors include systemic bias and discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, and other aspects of identity, supervisor-supervisee relationships and varying communication styles, and myths surrounding the often stressful practices of writing for publication and pursuing careers within and outside of academia. In Part IV, Seeking Help, Ayres unpacks myths about stigma surrounding mental health and shares specific resources for doctoral students to begin to seek mental health support.

A major strength of Ayres' book is the difficult balance it achieves in focusing on individual practices and institutional challenges. On the one hand, it acknowledges that individual self-care should not be the sole solution to improving graduate student wellbeing, drawing attention to systemic problems and environmental factors within graduate study. At the same time, it provides contextualized practices and strategies for graduate students to begin to enact and advocate for their wellbeing in the face of these external factors. These strategies range from setting realistic goals and deadlines and communicating with peers and supervisors to negotiate healthy working boundaries, to periodically resting and taking breaks from work, embracing "failures" as normal steps in the doctoral learning experience, and regularly celebrating all achievements, big and small. In my experience, I have found the chapter on supervisor-supervisee relationships particularly helpful in thinking about how to communicate effectively with different faculty mentors' complex working styles. In addition, Ayres' suggestion to utilize "golden hours" (specific times in the day or week when we feel most efficient or focused) and "scary hours" (specific times in the day or week dedicated to especially challenging tasks) has begun to alleviate my struggle to manage multiple long-term projects.

Although primarily for an audience of graduate students, Ayres suggests that doctoral supervisors may also benefit from reading the book in learning more about how their mentoring and teaching practices contribute to graduate student mental health as well as how they might better advocate in their local and wider contexts for graduate student wellbeing. Each chapter includes specific implications for doctoral programs and universities to enact policies and practices supporting doctoral student mental health and wellbeing. For example,

> *Ayres suggests building doctoral student wellbeing into the curriculum by modeling and discussing realistic working practices and time management, listening to student concerns, and signposting resources within the university.*

> *Additionally, to promote supportive supervisor-supervisee relationships, Ayres recommends providing mentorship training for supervisors and encouraging student-advisor agreements initiating explicit conversations about forms of support and communication.*

*Finally, to challenge the current academic research culture, Ayres suggests graduate programs go beyond being transparent about the publication process and academic job market to explicitly value doctoral work besides publications and to prepare students for more than just academic jobs post-graduation.*

While these larger suggestions may seem more difficult to implement, I can attest to their immediate benefit. In my first year of doctoral study, one of my courses involved a week-long time-tracking assignment, where my peers and instructor collected and collaboratively analyzed data on how we spent our time. The discussion this practice generated has continued to foster conversations among my peers about the importance of realistic planning and healthy work-life boundaries.

Overall, Ayres' book highlights the importance of recognizing and demystifying unclear expectations that can negatively affect doctoral student mental health. One approach to doing this is individual and interpersonal—graduate students can practice reflexivity toward their own experience and support one another through community and dialogue. Another approach to doing this is institutional—graduate programs should make transparent and support the academic socialization of their students. Offering an in-depth exploration of both individual practices and institutional factors shaping individual experiences, Ayres' book is essential reading for doctoral students at any stage of their educational journey.

**Carlo Cinaglia** is a doctoral candidate in Second Language Studies at Michigan State University. His research draws on narrative inquiry and discourse analytic approaches to examine identity issues related to student investment in language learning, pre-service teacher agency within language teacher education programs, and graduate student wellbeing and academic socialization. He is also interested in qualitative research methodology and ethics in applied linguistics scholarship more broadly. Carlo has taught undergraduate courses in Linguistics, TESOL, Spanish and ESL. Currently, he mentors pre-service language teachers completing their teaching practicum and coordinates a peer mentoring program for graduate students focused on academic socialization and wellbeing.


**References**

Ayres, Z. J. (2022). Managing your mental health during your PhD: A survival guide. Springer Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-14194-2

Berg, M, & Seeber, B. K. (2016). The slow professor: Challenging the culture of speed in the academy. University of Toronto Press. https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442663091

Calarco, J. M. (2020). A field guide to grad school: Uncovering the hidden curriculum. Princeton University Press.

Cinaglia, C. (2023). Navigating the first year of doctoral study: Developing a researcher identity and other lessons learned outside of the program handbook. In B. Yazan, E. Trinh, & L. J. Pentón Herrera (Eds.), Doctoral students' identities and emotional wellbeing in applied linguistics: Autoethnographic accounts (pp. 148-171). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003305934-13

Yazan, B., Trinh, E., & Pentón Herrera, L. J. (Eds.). (2023). Doctoral students' identities and emotional wellbeing in applied linguistics: Autoethnographic accounts. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003305934

# Looking for my niche

A poem by
Francesca Marino
University of South Florida

Sometimes I wonder
whether I'll remember

those busy days
feeling compressed
like a .zip file,
trying to cross off items
from my to-do list

my schedule as packed
as highways at rush hour,
my minefield-like calendar
keeping reminding me

to reply to unread emails
to apply for something
I'd better apply for
if I want to stay "on top"
to meet a bunch of other busy folks
with similar minefield-like calendars
to do things to add to my CV
just like what others are doing
to persist (even at low battery)
to eat (if I've time)
to say "no" (the next time)

Sometimes I wonder
whether I'll remember

those sleepless nights
spent by computerlight,
my coffee brewing— again,
my partner sleeping alone— again,
my eyes struggling to stay open,
my brain struggling to find a word

to express myself in a language
which often makes me feel
like a preschool child

to be myself in a language
which is often as tight as a wetsuit
while I'd need
more comfy clothes
to let my thoughts run free


***
If I were the Reviewer 2
of this current chapter
of my life,
I'd tell myself
that it definitely needs
some serious editing
and additions
like

balancing work
and the rest of my life
taking care
of myself
respecting
my fragile body

taking the time
I need
learning to say "No"
when I am tired

giving back
the love I am given
calling my brother
and asking how he is

'Cause I'll remember

those sunsets at the beach
clapping for the Sun going down,
those walks in the woods
observing how trees
talk to the sky,
how ducklings
follow their mom

those coffees with friends
talking about things
which are not good
for publication,
those nights dancing reggaeton
in some club downtown,
and those pizza nights
at Ben and Lia's place


I'll remember
those moments
I am present and centered
those moments
I can find
a *niche* of my own
in a minefield-like calendar

We have been told
how to establish and occupy
research niches
Nobody has ever taught us
how to carve out
some niche of happiness
for ourselves

but that's what we'll remember
at the end of this all.

**Description**

"Looking for my niche" is an intimate poem intertwined with digital illustrations which mirror my personal odyssey through academia and the raw emotions which accompany the journey. I delve into the turmoil of my experience in academia, encompassing the uncountable sleepless nights and restless hours spent working, the relentless pressure of deadlines, the constant fear of missing out things, and the persistent feeling of inadequacy as a multilingual writer/speaker, among others.

This first half of this poem explores those toxic and harmful habits of academic file, including workaholism, which I firmly believe should not be hidden nor normalized. I do acknowledge that there is also so much beauty to be found in academia, such as building strong friendships with our peers, developing fruitful relationships with professors who guide us along the way and help us grow both professionally and personally, collaborating with fellow scholars, expanding our intellectual horizons, and working on impactful research. While these positive aspects are undoubtedly worth celebrating, I intentionally focused on the challenges that may overshadow these brighter sides. In this regard, my poem contributes to the ongoing debate on mental health in academia.

When I hit rock bottom, I found myself asking, "Can my life be better? What truly makes me happy?" I had to place my life under review to understand that the moments that become cherished memories are the ones that truly matter ("what we'll remember"), at least to me. As such, aiming for both physical and mental well-being, I realized that I should celebrate the importance of being present and learning to say 'No' to say 'Yes' to what matters, the need for embracing moments of lightheartedness and boredom, and the transformative power of relationships and Nature. Those are things I am still learning myself. This personal transformation is also conveyed by the conscious shift in the color palette of the illustrations throughout the poem, transitioning from colors like red to softer tones such as pink and light blue, indexing calm and balance. We may not always be able to halt the rush, but finding a balance is the key. All ecosystems depend on balance.

Through this creative exercise in my second language, I seek to remind myself of the importance of finding my own rhythm and space as well as replacing self-blame with self-care. Within my lines, I hope the reader(s) might find echoes of their own experiences and shared challenges, along with the inspiration to build *their own niche*.

**Francesca Marino** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Linguistics and Applied Language Studies (LALS) program at the University of South Florida, Tampa, FL. Her research interests revolve around multimodality from both a discursive and pedagogical perspective. Francesca's work has appeared in journals such as Discourse, Context & Media, Discourse & Society, ELT Journal, and Multimodal Communication.

# Diversity among Graduate Students at AAAL: A Survey Report

GSC DIVERSITY SUB-COMMITTEE

*By Chia-Hsin [Jennifer] Yin (The Ohio State University), Nasiba Norova (University of Massachusetts Boston), Brittany Finch (Michigan State University), Yixuan Wang (University of Georgia), John Odudele (University of Alaska Fairbanks), and Carla Consolon (The University of Oregon)*

**Introduction**

The diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) culture is deeply bonded to the American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL). The Diversity Subcommittee, Graduate Student Council (GSC), AAAL, conducted a diversity survey to assess and advance greater inclusivity within the AAAL graduate student community. Thirty-three graduate student participants responded to the survey. This Diversity Report will demonstrate their genuine responses and feedback even though a relatively small portion of the population has responded. First, in the Demographic Landscape (Survey Part 1 Results) section, we will provide an overview for the diversity landscape in terms of graduate student respondents' institutional and personal backgrounds, showing their differences in geographical, academic, and demographic features. Second, in the section of Rating of Experiences (Survey Part 2 Results), we will analyze graduate students' views towards the GSC's efforts in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity (DEI) values in practice. In addition, we will show their experiences, thoughts, and suggestions for the GSC events and AAAL conferences, such as webinars, graduate student socials, networking workshops, academic niche workshops, and graduate student roundtables. Finally, in the section of Experiences and Suggestions (Survey Part 2 Results), we will relate the findings from the data to our AAAL commitment to DEI for all the graduate students as reflecting the insights from the graduate student members - who we are, what we value, and our aspirations for DEI. Accordingly, this paper provides the report and recommendation on how to sustain and facilitate our DEI values for the AAAL GSC.

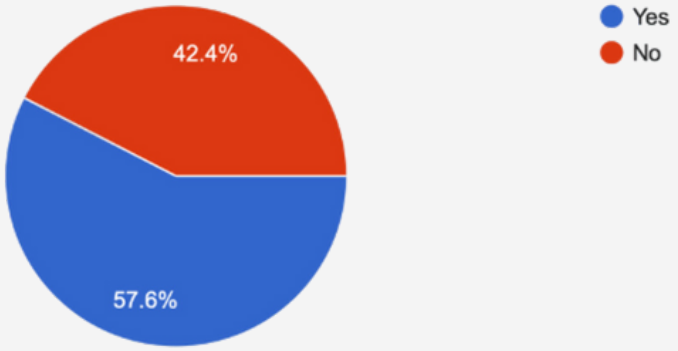
**Demographic Landscape (Survey Part 1 Results)**

The first section of the survey addressed institutional and individual characteristics pertaining to the geographical distribution of the students' institutions, types of educational institutions, and areas of research. We also requested students to disclose their demographic information, such as level of study, age, gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin, sexual orientation, religion/faith, immigration status, familial status, generational education, and disability/service status. There were mixed proportions across these areas among the 33 generated survey responses.

***Institutional characteristics***

The geographical distribution of the institutions displayed national and international concentrations. While national distributions indicated the predominance of the Midwest, Southwest, and Northeastern regions, international distributions showed affiliations from countries such as Canada and the UK. The survey also showed that most of the students (60.6%) receive funding for attending the AAAL conference from their universities, while almost a quarter of them (24.2%) use their personal funds. A mix of personal funds coupled with conference volunteering was also an alternative option for a few students (3%). Lack of financial assistance has been a major hindrance for over 57% of students to attend the conference (Figure 1). Finally, research areas indicated that students' predominance of Second language studies, Composition and second language writing, multilingual education, literacy and cultural studies, and education.

Figure 1
Distribution of Lack of Funding Preventing AAAL Attendance among Participants




***Individual characteristics***

Students' level of study showed that most respondents are enrolled in doctoral programs (93.9%), while those at the master's level appeared at 6.1%. Among these graduate students, almost two-thirds (72.7%) of them were first-generation graduate students, and almost a third of them were second-generation graduate students (27.3%). Additionally, students between 25-34 years of age comprise the main age group in the survey results. Last but not least, 81.8% of respondents identified themselves as women, cis-women, and/or females, and 18.2% as males. Given the limitation that a relatively small portion of the AAAL graduate students responded to the survey, it is noted that the AAAL GSC is not represented only by these two gender identities and the AAAL GS Diversity subcommittee will continue to support the LGBTQIA2S+ graduate students in the AAAL. Figures 2 and 3 below describe the distributions of age and gender in the data.

**Figure 2**
*Age Distribution among Participants*

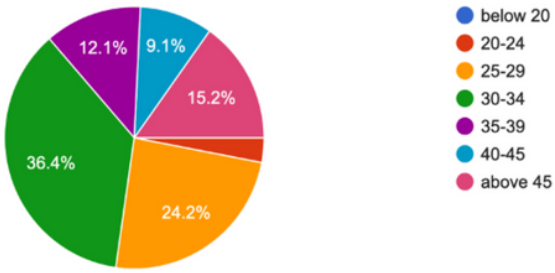
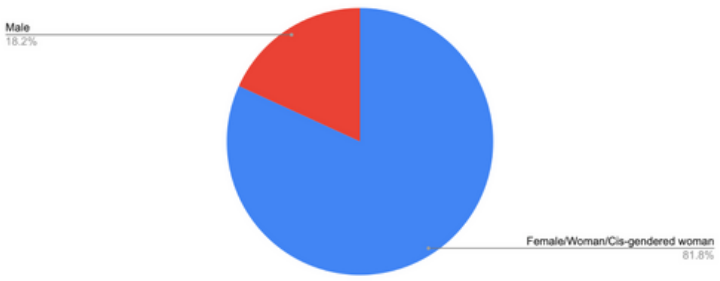
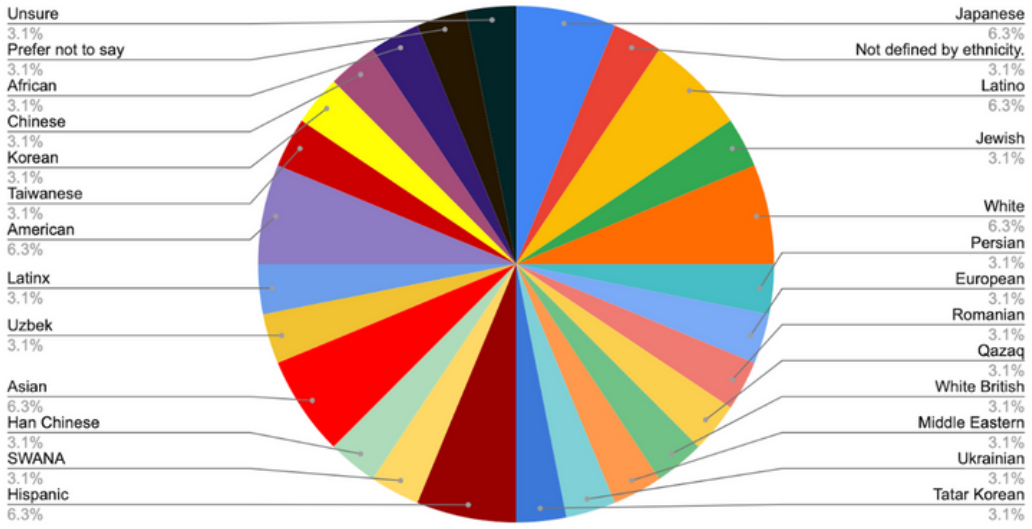



**Figure 3**
*Gender Distribution among Participants*



Race-wise, the reported ethnicity spread across varying categories as shown in Figure 4. According to respondents' self-report, 3.1% students responded "unsure", 3.1% preferred not to say, and 3.1% answered "not defined by ethnicity". In addition, they self-identified as African (3.1%), Chinese (3.1%), Korean (3.1%), Taiwanese (3.1%), American (6.3%), Latinx (3.1%), Uzbek (3.1%), Asin (6.3%), Han Chinese (3.1%), SWANA (3.1%), Hispanic (6.3%), Japanese (6.3%), Latino (6.3%), Jewish (3.1%), white (6.3%), Persian (3.1%), European (3.1%), Romanian (3.1%), Qazaq (3.1%), white British (3.1%), Middle Eastern (3.1%), Ukrainian (3.1%), and Tatar Korean (3.1%). Notably, we intentionally do not combine each identified category because apparently one ethnic group may not always go subordinate within another and it is unnecessary to do so as well unless they are reported based on their home geological continents. For example, 40.5 % of survey takers revealed that their ethnic region is Asia (self-identified as Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Uzbek, Han Chinese, Japanese, Jewish, Persian, Qazaq, Middle Eastern, and Tatar Korean). 22% showed that the ethnic region is America (self-identified as American, Latinx, Hispanic, and Latino). 15.6 % presented that their ethnic region is Europe (self-reported as White, European, Romanian, White British, and Ukrainian) and 3.1% is Africa (self-reported as African). Even so, in some cases, this way does not interpret every group fully, such as SWANA. Collectively, it is demonstrated that the AAAL graduate students are truly diverse as reflected in the self-reported ethnic identity.

**Figure 4**
*Distribution of Ethnicity of the Participants*




With regards to students' immigration status, results show that the international student population outweighs domestic students with 63.6% versus 36.4%. The survey shows that apart from being graduate students, the respondents are also caregivers for their family members (39.4%) and identify themselves as parents (24.2%). Further, nine students out of 33 reported having disabilities, and two students preferred not to disclose this information. Lastly, almost half of the respondents expressed that they have been practicing religion(s), while four students preferred not to answer this question. Figures 5, 6 and 7 below capture the percentages of students with different abilities and those who reported providing care for their family members and identified themselves as parents.

**Figure 5**
*Distribution of Students with Different Abilities*

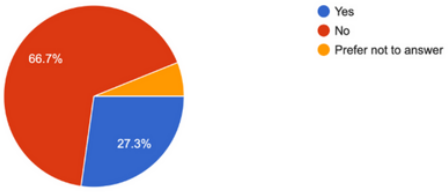



**Figure 6**
*Distribution of Caregiver Students*

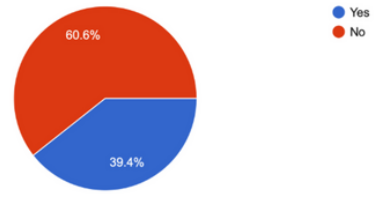
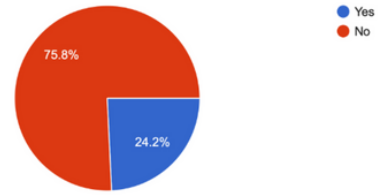



**Figure 7**
*Distribution of Parent Students*




**Rating of Experience (Survey Part 2 Results)**

The second section intends to reveal graduate students' attitude toward the GSC's efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusivity (DEI). The response results illustrated that overall graduate students in the AAAL community have had a positive experience with GSC-organized events. More than half of the respondents (66%) indicated that they would strongly agree or agree that the GSC supports members from diverse backgrounds, their values of DEI (75%), and fosters communications among diverse members (63%). The satisfactory rate remains at a similar level from responses to questions regarding the GSC's effort to address students' needs at different career stages (63%), provide opportunities for graduate students and junior scholars to connect (63%), and create networking opportunities among students (69%). The satisfactory rate is slightly lower in responses to questions that are related to GSC's efforts to address needs of students with families (45%), reflect research expertises in events sponsored by the GSC (54%), and address the needs of LGBTQIA2S+ students (54%).

Overall, the respondents have expressed that the events hosted by the GSC were beneficial for future professional development (72%), valued mentorship between professors and graduate students (69%), and reflected the needs of graduate students (63%). The Diversity Survey responses collected help the GSC better understand how its events and actions have improved graduate student members' experiences at the conference and about the AAAL GSC's DEI practices generally. With the implications from the data, the GSC can better continue to provide support and resources that create and maintain an inclusive community for members from diverse backgrounds. Meanwhile, this report also helps the GSC understand areas that need further attention and actions to address members' concerns.

**Experiences and Suggestions (Survey Part 3 Results)**

The third section of our survey focused on the experience of our members at the conference and at GSC events. These questions were formatted in a way that invited members to discuss their responses to the events and opportunities provided by AAAL in the previous year and how these experiences could be improved in the coming years. First, AAAL graduate student members enjoyed attending the webinars above all. A main theme echoed by members for future webinars was preparing for the job market, both for academic and non-academic careers. Webinars were closely followed by the networking and social events that the AAAL GSC held in the previous year. Of note, the mentor/mentee program, Conference Connections, which provides student members the opportunity to be paired with senior scholars to discuss all aspects of academic life, continued to be well-received. In fact, members expressed a desire to continue this mentorship even after the conference. In addition, members enjoyed attending the Graduate Student Roundtable which began at the 2023 AAAL conference. While respondents hold a rather positive attitude towards these aspects of AAAL, improvements can always be made to continue to grow with our members and make these events more accessible, especially in assisting those with diverse backgrounds.

> *With regards to increasing accessibility and making AAAL more equitable, a main theme was decreasing the financial burden of graduate student members and supporting differently-abled scholars.*

Specifically, members mentioned that there is a need for more accessible events for families and non-traditional students (e.g., more notice prior to events and not having events on the first and last days of the conference). Members also relayed that creating space for neurodivergent scholars would improve the conference and GSC events.

The responses of the survey are helpful in guiding the GSC in its efforts to improve the conference and GSC events for its members. We will continue to use the GSC events and the conference to promote mentorship, networking, and support for in-progress research, as well as improving the experience for non-traditional student members, members with families, differently-abled scholars, and neurodivergent scholars.

**Final Remark**

Every year, AAAL renews its commitment to see diversity thrive inside and outside the organization. In the past few years, there have been several efforts to better understand the needs of the members, and to be better informed about the diversity that is already part of AAAL. Nonetheless, the work on diversity is always ongoing and the need for it stretches into all the corners of our organization. As such, with this report, we intend to build a more culturally, socially, religiously, and professionally inclusive community by reporting the AAAL graduate students' experiences and sharing insights about who they are, what they value, and what they aspire to achieve in terms of the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the field of Applied Linguistics.

## Webinar Recording Available

On September 18, 2023, the AAAL GSC Event Planning sub-committee hosted the first webinar of the 2023-2024 academic year. The webinar, titled "**Things I Wish I Knew in my Early Years as a Graduate Student**," featured three presenters: Dr. Dan Isbell from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Emma Chen from Western Washington University, and Dr. Woongsik Choi from Illinois State University. Sudhashree Girmohanta, a member of the AAAL GSC event planning committee, served as the moderator. The presenters shared their experiences from their PhD journeys and discussed what they wished they had known earlier, focusing on three key topics: navigating academic requirements, maximizing growth opportunities, and balancing graduate work and study. They also provided answers and advice in response to various questions posed by early-stage graduate students during the Q&A session. The webinar recording is available on the GSC's YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/gTq94EDnNX0?si=DJGVTZMbomzAaKQH

GSC
EVENT PLANNING
SUB-COMMITTEE

# Voices From the GSC Members

AAAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

## SUDHASHREE GIRMOHANTA

As a newcomer to the GSC Event Planning sub-committee, my initiation involved orchestrating our first speaker series this academic year. The process was a true team-building experience, where we bonded over common objectives and harnessed each other's strengths. It was heartening to witness how effective communication, well-defined roles, and unwavering support propelled us to a successful event. This journey not only made our speaker series shine but also deepened our team connections, underlining the power of collective effort. I'm immensely thankful to be part of this fantastic and supportive team, and I eagerly anticipate future learning opportunities from one another.

## AYAKO HIASA & MYSSAN LAYCY

We joined Social Media as we believe we can bring something to the table. So far, we have been reposting AAAL announcements on GSC accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Our role is also to develop our web page and resources, such as blog posts and interview videos. Crafting posts- choosing the right emojis- is fun and challenging! We have also met a great team of dedicated members of the AAAL GSC social media subcommittee from and with whom we are working and learning. We pride ourselves that our work is integral to the development of the graduate student community.

## SARAH HOWARD

As a new doctoral student in Applied Linguistics, I feel very fortunate to be one of the new members of the AAAL GSC and a co-editor for the Newsletter Sub-Committee. In this role, I have gained experience working collaboratively to review student submissions on relevant topics within our field. I have greatly enjoyed working alongside my peers, focusing on developing the articles rather than criticizing them. Additionally, I have received an insider's perspective on analyzing article writing in a collaborative manner. Not only has this organization been fantastic for professional development, but it has also been a great networking opportunity with students from different universities and disciplines. I am greatly looking forward to learning more about AAAL GSC and our future events!

## NASIBA NOROVA

I am currently pursuing my Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics at the University of Massachusetts Boston and have been actively involved in the JEDI sub-committee for the past seven months. As a Hijabi Muslimah, a mother, a transnational emerging scholar of color, and a cis-gender woman educator, I bring a unique perspective to the committee's efforts. Our committee has undertaken various projects, including designing a survey questionnaire, collecting responses from graduate students, and writing a report based on the survey results. We also assist other sub-committees in their decision-making process regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and principles. As a member of the JEDI sub-committee, I am responsible for checking guest speakers' identities, research interests, and contributions to graduate students' growth based on our committee's criteria. When I joined the GSC organization, I wanted to bring my expertise as a mother and Muslimah to the team. One of my primary goals was to raise awareness about Ramadan which we will observe during the AAAL2024 conference. With the help of our team, we have successfully included Ramadan-related questions in the conference registration form, and we are currently in talks with the conference team to make AAAL 2024 in Houston Ramadan-friendly. As a mother of three, I am committed to elevating Global South scholars, scholars of different faiths and religions, and other parenting scholars. I have several projects in mind that will help achieve these goals, and I am excited to work on them in collaboration with the committee.

# Call for Proposals for the AAALGrads Newsletter (Spring 2024)

We are looking for writers to contribute to the Spring 2024 issue of the AAALGrads Newsletter. This issue has the theme of "Thinking Otherwise, Acting for Change," the same theme as the main conference. This theme encompasses advancements in technology but is not limited to it; it also includes recent changes in the field and broader society, such as post-pandemic-related issues and threats to human rights. We believe that graduate students are also experiencing these changes and reacting to them. This is a broad topic that can be interpreted in many different ways, including changes in the field of applied linguistics, societal diversity, human rights, socio-economic environments, and other factors that affect graduate students' lives.

When submitting your proposal, please include at least 1 sentence of rationale for how your proposal relates to the theme. Although we feel that many different submissions could be at least tangentially connected to these topics, we will also consider submissions not directly related to the theme, if space allows. Please consider submitting a proposal for any of the formats listed below. If selected, your work would be published in mid-March (prior to 2023 AAAL Conference).

**Possible Submission Formats**

We extend our call to include Feature Articles, Resource Reviews (e.g., books and technological tools), Creative Corner pieces (e.g., poetry, art, and video), short “how to” or “what I wish someone had told me” blurbs for the Professional Development Corner, and opinion pieces on topics affecting the AAALGrads community. Please refer to the provided examples for each submission format, but note that submissions are not limited to the presented examples. Additional examples can be found in past issues of the newsletter.

- ***Feature Article.*** A feature article should be 750-1,500 words. It should address and critically develop a question or idea relevant to the AAALGrads community. Feature articles can report on empirical research, take a theoretical perspective, or share completed projects and administrative or service work.

- ***Professional Development Corner.*** Blurbs for the Professional Development Corner are 500-1,000-word “how to” or “what I wish someone had told me” reports by advanced graduate students. The format can take several shapes, such as, but not limited to: a short narrative of a successful strategy, a “do’s and don’ts” list, or a flowchart. The goal of this newsletter section is to give graduate students adequate support and guidance as they navigate their graduate careers. In that vein, please maintain a professional tone and positive outlook. Do not refer to institutions, departments, or individual people by name.

- ***Resource Review.*** A resource review should be about 500-1,000 words. It should critique material (e.g., books, textbooks, technological tools, or a website) that might be helpful to graduate students. You are expected to have read and/or used the material before you write your review. For your proposal, please include a brief summary of the resource and your opinion of its helpfulness for graduate students.

- ***Creative Corner.*** The Creative Corner is a section designed to showcase the creativity and diverse experiences of graduate students in our field. In addition to short essays, submissions in this section may include poetry, visual art/photography, and/or a high quality video related to graduate student life. In your proposal, please be sure to describe the submission format (e.g., 25 MB .mp4 video). Reflections on personal experiences are encouraged. Taking a small step to acknowledge the current changes at the AAAL 2024 conference, we are pleased to announce that the Creative Corner now accepts submissions in languages other than English. If you choose to submit your work in a language other than English, please indicate the language used for the final submission and provide a brief explanation in English. Text-based creative submissions (poetry/essays) may be up to 1000 words. All submissions may be accompanied by a description of no more than 500 words.

- ***Trending Topics Forum.*** This forum gives you the opportunity to share your opinion on current issues, events, or topics affecting the AAALGrads community. Opinion pieces allow you to take a stance on a topic, share personal experiences, or issue a call to action. In your proposal, please be sure to describe the relevance of this issue to members of our community. Submissions to the Trending Topics Forum should be 500-1,000 words.

**Guidelines for Proposals, Submission, and Timeline**

Your proposal should...
- be approximately 300 words
- provide your name, department and institution, degree, and area of study
- identify the type of submission (feature article, Professional Development Corner, resource review, Creative Corner, or Trending Topics Forum)
- include an overview/description of your submission
- confirm your ability to commit to the timeline (provided below)

**Proposals will be collected through this Google Form and are due by Saturday, January 20, 2023 (In your time zone). You can submit a proposal if you are a current grad student or recent graduate. You do not have to be a current AAAL member.**

| Tentative Timeline (Please note that this timeline may be subject to change.) | |
|---|---|
| Saturday, January 20, 2024 | Proposals due (In your time zone) |
| Saturday, January 27, 2024 | Authors notified of acceptance |
| Saturday, February 3, 2024 | First draft of manuscripts due (In your time zone) |
| Thursday, February 8, 2024 | Editors provide feedback to authors on first drafts |
| Thursday, February 15, 2024 | Revised drafts due |
| Thursday, February 22, 2024 | Editors provide additional feedback if necessary |
| Thursday, February 29, 2024 | Final drafts of manuscripts due. Authors provide short biography and headshot. |
| Monday, March 4, 2024 | Editors return final draft with proofs |
| Wednesday, March 6, 2024 | Authors respond to proofs |

**The issue is expected to appear the week of March 13-17 (prior to AAAL Conference).**

**For questions or inquiries, please reach out to the newsletter co-editors at aaalgrads@gmail.com.**

## GET IN TOUCH WITH US!

AAAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Twitter / @AAALGrads
Facebook / AAALGrads
Instagram / @AAALGrads
www.aaal-gsc.org
aaalgrads@gmail.com

AAAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

# Save the Date

MULTILINGUAL MATTERS

## Multilingual Matters

**Graduate Student Roundtable & Social Mixer**

***Friday, March 15, at 4:30 pm (Houston Time)***

**Hyatt Regency Houston**

# Conference Roommate Finder

**Get excited for our upcoming March 2024 conference! Hotel accommodations are in high demand and filling up rapidly. If you're interested in finding a roommate to share the cost, the GSC provides a supervised platform for roommate search discussions. Simply click the link to access our convenient roommate finder.**