MOVE-STEP STRUCTURE AND PERSUASION STRATEGIES IN BUSINESS/START-UP PLANS WRITTEN BY ENGLISH-MAJORED UNDERGRADUATES: ANALYSIS OF AN EMERGING GENRE AT A VIETNAMESE UNIVERSITY

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โครงสร้างอัตถภาคและอัตถภาคย่อยและกลยุทธ์โน้มน้าวใจในแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นที่เขียนโดยนักศึกษาปริญญาตรีเอกภาษาอังกฤษ: การวิเคราะห์ประเภทผลงานเขียนปรากฏใหม่ที่มหาวิทยาลัยเวียดนาม

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การเขียนแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นเป็นงานที่มอบหมายให้เขียนสำหรับนักศึกษาธุรกิจในแวดวงการเรียนการสอนในเวียดนาม แผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นที่เขียนเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ ซึ่งไม่เป็นที่นิยมในชุมชนวิชาการภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ (EFL) ในระดับอุดมศึกษา ถือเป็นประเภทผลงานเขียนที่ปรากฏใหม่ วิทยานิพนธ์นี้ได้รับแรงบันดาลใจจากผลลัพธ์ที่ได้จากการวิเคราะห์ความต้องการเบื้องต้น และมุ่งหวังที่จะให้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับองค์ประกอบของประเภทผลงานเขียนนี้ในหมู่นักศึกษาในมหาวิทยาลัย วิทยานิพนธ์นี้มุ่งหวังที่จะ (1) ระบุส่วนประกอบทั่วไปของแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นสำหรับการสร้างกรอบโครงสร้างแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้น โดยการตรวจสอบแนวปฏิบัติการเขียนแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นหลายประเภท รวมถึงแนวปฏิบัติที่ออกแบบมาสำหรับนักศึกษาที่มีจุดประสงค์ทางการสอนในหลักสูตร (แวดวงการสอน) และแนวปฏิบัติที่ออกแบบมาสำหรับผู้ประกอบการในแวดวงวิชาชีพ (2) ศึกษาอัตถภาคและอัตถภาคย่อยของแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นของนักศึกษา โดยใช้กรอบโครงร่างตามหลักฐานที่กำหนดขึ้นในวัตถุประสงค์ข้อ 1 (3) ระบุกลยุทธ์การโน้มน้าวใจที่ใช้ในแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นของนักศึกษาที่เก็บรวบรวมมาจากสถานที่วิจัย

แผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นของนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรีสาขาภาษาอังกฤษจำนวน 70 คน ซึ่งลงทะเบียนเรียนหลักสูตร Start-up ความยาวประมาณ 3,000 - 5,000 คำ ได้รับการวิเคราะห์โดยใช้กรอบโครงสร้างตามหลักฐาน ซึ่งกำหนดขึ้นจากแนวปฏิบัติการเขียนแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นจำนวน 53 แนวทางที่รวบรวมจากแหล่งต่างๆ เพื่อวิเคราะห์อัตถภาคและอัตถภาคย่อย และกรอบโครงร่างที่รวบรวมไว้สำหรับกลยุทธ์การโน้มน้าวใจ ตามด้วยการสัมภาษณ์กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่เป็นนักศึกษาเขียนแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นจำนวน 10 คน และการสัมภาษณ์รายบุคคลกับอาจารย์จำนวน 5 คน การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลดำเนินการโดยใช้ Excel สำหรับคำถามวิจัยข้อ 1, Atlas.ti และ GSEQ 5.1 สำหรับคำถามวิจัยข้อ 2 และ 3)

ผลการวิจัยเผยให้เห็นกรอบโครงร่างตามหลักฐานของแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้น ซึ่งประกอบด้วยองค์ประกอบโครงสร้าง 21 องค์ประกอบ โดยมีองค์ประกอบความถี่สูง 10 องค์ประกอบที่ระบุว่าเป็นแกนหลักของแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้น โดย 1 องค์ประกอบเกี่ยวกับรูปแบบ และอีก 9 องค์ประกอบเกี่ยวกับเนื้อหาของแผน นักวิจัยใช้กรอบโครงร่างตามหลักฐานเพื่อระบุโครงสร้างอัตถภาคและ

อัตถภาคย่อยของแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นของนักศึกษา ซึ่งประกอบด้วย 8 อัตถภาค (1 อัตถภาคใหม่) ในบทสรุปผู้บริหาร 9 อัตถภาค (1 อัตถภาคใหม่) ในธุรกิจ 4 อัตถภาคในข้อมูลทางการเงิน และ 12 องค์ประกอบที่นิยมใช้ในเอกสารประกอบ สำหรับกลยุทธ์การโน้มน้าวใจที่ใช้ในแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้นของนักศึกษานั้น ความเป็นรูปธรรมและหลักฐานเป็นกลยุทธ์ที่นิยมใช้มากที่สุด รองลงมาคือ ความเป็นเชิงบวก ความชอบ ความน่าเชื่อถือ ความมุ่งมั่นและความสม่ำเสมอ และกลยุทธ์อื่น ๆ อีก 6 กลยุทธ์ แต่ในบรรดาการโน้มน้าวใจแบบอริสโตเติล 3 ประการนั้น พาทอสเป็นคำที่ใช้บ่อยที่สุดเมื่อเทียบกับอีก 2 ประการ คือเอโทสและโลโก อาจารย์ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ทุกคนยอมรับว่าใช้โลโกเป็นจุดเน้นในการโน้มน้าวใจ ในขณะที่ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ที่เป็นนักศึกษาก็ยืนยันว่าชอบใช้ความเป็นรูปธรรมและหลักฐานเป็นกลยุทธ์ในการเสริมข้อโต้แย้งเพื่อโน้มน้าวใจกลุ่มเป้าหมาย ตรงกันข้ามกับการมีอยู่ของกลยุทธ์การโน้มน้าวใจของนักเรียนผู้เขียนแผนวิสาหกิจเริ่มต้น มุมมองของอาจารย์ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์เผยให้เห็นว่าประสิทธิภาพของกลยุทธ์ดังกล่าวไม่สูงนักเพราะหลักฐานดูเหมือนไม่จริงและไม่แม่นยำ บางครั้งหลักฐานถูกเก็บรวบรวมไว้บนอินเทอร์เน็ตโดยไม่ได้ดัดแปลงใด ๆ

มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีสุรนารี

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ปีการศึกษา 2566 ลายมือชื่ออาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา _____

NGOC THI NHAM: MOVE-STEP STRUCTURE AND PERSUASION STRATEGIES IN BUSINESS/START-UP PLANS WRITTEN BY ENGLISH-MAJORED UNDERGRADUATES: ANALYSIS OF AN EMERGING GENRE AT A VIETNAMESE UNIVERSITY. THESIS ADVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. ISSRA PRAMOOLSOOK, Ph.D., 220 PP.

Keyword: Move-step analysis, Business/start-up plan, Persuasion strategies, Genre analysis, ESP

Writing a business/start-up plan (BSP) is a typical assignment to business students in pedagogical settings. In Vietnam, the BSP written in English, a business genre not popular among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) academic communities at tertiary level, is considered an emerging genre. Motivated by the results gained from the preliminary needs analysis, this thesis seeks to shed light on the composition of this emerging genre among university students. It aims to (1) identify typical components of a BSP for BSP framework formulation by investigating multiple types of BSP-writing guidelines including those designed for students with pedagogical purposes in a curriculum (pedagogical settings) and those designed for entrepreneurs in professional settings; (2) investigate moves and steps of the students' BSPs (SBSPs) using the evidence-based framework (EBF) formulated in the RO1; (3) identify persuasion strategies used in the students' BSPs collected at the research site.

Seventy texts ranging from 3000-5000 words/text written by English-majored undergraduate students who enrolled in a Start-up course were analyzed using an evidence-based framework (EBF) formulated from 53 BSP-writing guidelines collected from different sources for move-step analysis, and a compiled framework for persuasion strategies, followed by focus-group interviews with ten student writers and individual interviews with five teachers. Data analysis is implemented via the usage of Excel (RQ1), Atlas.ti and GSEQ 5.1 (RQ2-3).

The results revealed an EBF of a BSP which includes a collection of 21 structural elements with 10 high-frequency elements identified as the cores of a BSP, 1 regarding the format and the other 9 regarding the content of the plan. Using this EBF, the researcher identified a move-step structure of students' BSPs which includes 8 moves (1 newly identified) in Executive Summary, 9 moves (1 newly identified) in The Business, 4 moves in Financial Data and 12 most popular elements in Supporting Documents. Regarding persuasion strategies used in the SBSPs, CE (Concreteness and Evidence) was the most popular strategy employed, followed by PO (Positivity), LI

(Liking), TR (Trustworthiness), CC1 (Commitment and Consistency) and the other 6 strategies, but among three Aristotelian appeals of persuasion, *pathos* was the most frequently used compared to the other two appeals *ethos* and *logos*. All the teacher interviewees acknowledged the usage of *logos* as the focus of persuasion while the student interviewees also confirmed their preferred employment of CE as a strategy to strengthen their arguments to persuade their target audience. In contrast to the presence of student writers' persuasion strategy in the BSPs, teacher interviewees' perceptions reveal that the effectiveness of such strategy was not high because the evidence seemed unreal and inaccurate, sometimes the evidence was collected on the Internet without any modification.

มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีสุรนารี

School of Foreign Languages
Academic Year 2023

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Attitudes toward behavior
AW	Academic writing
BE	Business education
BSP	Business/start-up plan
BW	Business writing
EBSP	Entrepreneur business/startup plan
EE	Entrepreneurship education
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELM	Elaboration Likelihood Model
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
HSM	Heuristic-Systematic Model
(V)HE	(Vietnamese) Higher Education
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
NR	The New Rhetoric
SBSP	Student business/start-up plan
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
SN	Subjective norms
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
VC	Venture capitalists'
VGCL	Vietnam General Confederation of Labor

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter brings into light an overview of the present study on an emerging genre written for the purpose of professional practices. The chapter starts with the background information of the study including the context of English-major programs in Vietnamese universities, the importance of business education in higher education, and the relevance of entrepreneurship education in this context. The study research site is also introduced. The rationale for the study is then presented, which includes a preliminary needs analysis conducted through an online questionnaire survey and the overall aim to investigate the use of business/start-up plans (BSPs) in the Vietnamese higher education context. The research objectives and questions are then outlined, which focus on the components of a BSP according to the guidelines available in both pedagogical and professional settings, the move-step structure of the students' BSPs, and the persuasive strategies used in the BSPs. The significance of the study is then discussed in terms of its contribution to both theoretical and pedagogical knowledge, and the scope and limitations of the study are presented. Finally, relevant terms are defined to ensure clarity and consistency throughout the study.Background of the study

1.1 Background of the study

1.1.1 English-major programs in Vietnamese Higher Education (VHE)

In Vietnamese universities, the English language is introduced both as a subject (for non-English majored students) and as a discipline (for English-majored students). In non-English major programs, English is not always compulsory for students to be admitted to university, but it is a requirement for students from disciplines other than English language studies such as laws, engineering, economics, medicine, etc. to graduate from university after obtaining a certain level of English assessed by accredited international organizations (e.g. TOEIC, TOEFL, IELTS, etc.). During their study at university, they are also required to enroll a number of English courses and get a pass for each course to complete their program.

In English-major programs, in order to get admitted, students need to meet a range of enrollment requirements typically and specifically prescribed by each individual university. They need to prove their ability to the field by achieving a certain level of enrollment subjects group (most popular one is English, Mathematics and Vietnamese Literature) either at the national high school examination (which is the combination of the former high school graduation examination and university entrance examination, starting from 2015) or through high school study records (*Decision 3538/QĐ-BGDĐT*, 2014). After the admission, English-majored students take part in a wide range of English courses, starting with fundamental skills such as Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. At higher levels, along with the courses to foster the skills, they are provided with more linguistics courses and will be oriented towards professional development. Most of the English-major programs in Vietnam offer disciplines (specific areas of study within a larger academic program as a major) for students to develop their future career based on their English language background, typically including English Teaching Methodology, Translation/Interpretation, and Business. When a student registers a specific discipline, s/he will enroll in specific courses in the field. After university, English-majored students obtain a BA (Bachelor of Arts) degree in English and can work as teachers of English, translators/interpreters or employees for companies and organizations where they can serve with their command of English. Some of them apply for Master's and later Doctoral programs to become researchers or simply to earn a better position at work. Because of an enormous demand of human resources who can work and communicate in English, English-majored graduates have higher chances than those from other disciplines in finding a (good) job after they finish their university programs. They have more opportunities to be employed with reasonable or even high salary right after their graduation. Though they barely have expertise in a specific field, they can get training from the employers after being hired. That fact proves a significant impact of English on career development and professional advancement of a student after his/her university graduation.

Realizing the significance of English as a global language in supporting Vietnamese global competitiveness, since 2004, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) has emphasized quality improvement of Higher Education (HE) to get sufficient well-trained workforce by insisting both theory and practice should be applied in

professional education for students to take advantage of hands-on experience and enhance their professional skills (Kim et al., 2016). In 2013, MoET issued "Project 2020" to create a reform for Vietnamese learners' language learning. The project aims at motivating Vietnamese students to study English in order that by the year 2020 a majority of Vietnamese students graduating from colleges and universities are able to confidently use English as a means of communication in various international working contexts. Specifically, the project targets,

> by the year 2020 most Vietnamese youth whoever graduate from vocational schools, colleges and universities gain the capacity to use a foreign language independently. This will enable them to be more confident in communication, further their chance to study and work in an integrated and multi-cultural environment with variety of languages. This goal also makes language as an advantage for Vietnamese people, serving the cause of industrialization and modernization for the country (MOET, 2008, quoted in Nguyen, 2017).

In order to do so, the project focuses on language development starting from high school level and it is expected to boost the country's economy by making foreign languages (English, in particular) one of the Vietnamese's advantages. However, after years of implementation, the project is found to suffer a number of issues, i.e. low level of English among college freshmen, short hours of learning (Saigoneer, 2018), lack of free qualified learning resources, advanced technology support, and a supportive teaching and learning community (Edmett et al., 2017), shortage of competent teachers in Vietnam, and lack of modification of pedagogical approaches in practice (Nguyen, 2017). The project was approved for a budget of 9,400 trillion Vietnam dong, but after trillions of dong spent, teaching and learning English in Vietnam still have not gained expected achievements (Nguyen, 2017). It was reported in 2018 that under 20 percent of college students could manage to reach intermediate level (B1) as required, and that B1 standard prevented thousands of students from graduation (Saigoneer, 2018). Due to not much achievement harvested, the project has been expanded to 2025 for a renewed focus on resource creation for learners, aiming at the whole population rather than high school leavers only, despite the fact that the project is considered extremely ambitious (Edmett et al., 2017; Nguyen, 2017; Saigoneer, 2018).

1.1.2 Business education in Higher Education (HE)

The term *business education* (BE) has been defined differently according to the views of different scholars on the objectives and the role of BE. Gidado and Nebo (2015) introduce BE as "a total sum of skills, knowledge and aptitudes which are needed for successful promotion and administration of a business enterprise" (p. 2), providing well-equipped human resources to contribute to turn enterprises into a better version. According to Chinasa (2012), BE is viewed by some schools of thought as education for business teachers for secondary and post-secondary education in order to enhance students' and other business trainees' business skills and competencies. Another school of thoughts view BE as education for business which prepares students to handle their own careers in business. Titiloye and Muhammad (2018) refers to BE as the study of courses related to technologies to acquire necessary practical skills to work effectively either in the role of employees or employers of an enterprise. BE is described as a program aiming at getting students' mind, brain, and physical body ready to positively contribute to societal development.

BE is beneficial not only for the recipients to acquire necessary skills and experiences to be able to meet the needs of the future workplace but also for workplace management and business owners. On one hand, it carries a goal of education 'for' business (Edomwonyi & Osarumwense, 2017) as it aims to equip students with job-related skills, knowledge and attitudes to improve themselves for better performance at work in order to contribute to the growth and development of the society as participants of the business system (Edokpolor & Muritala, 2018; Gidado & Umoru, 2022; Oborah, 2006; Tiwari, 2012). On the other hand, its second goal addresses education 'about' business to provide them with requisite attributes to become smart consumers of products and services (Oborah, 2006) and with essential background knowledge to understand the phenomenon for continuous learning (Edokpolor & Muritala, 2018). Furthermore, BE is assumed to help educate students 'through' career learning process during their lifetime. BE is considered a utilitarian education because it equips learners with sufficient preparation to be employed or self-employed after graduation (Oborah, 2006). It is even emphasized to train graduates to possess necessary skills and knowledge for their participation in entrepreneurial ventures, making them job creators rather than job hunters, and enabling them to be

self-employed (Oborah, 2006; Okolocha & Ile, 2012). This kind of training is called entrepreneurship education.

1.1.3 Entrepreneurship education and Higher Education

The concept of *entrepreneurship* has become more powerful and popular in business world with various working definitions without any universally accepted one. In Wilson (2008), entrepreneurship is defined as "the pursuit of opportunities beyond the resources you currently control" (p. 2). A more specific definition refers to entrepreneurship as "the willingness and the ability of a business minded individual to identify the areas of needs of people, look for resources to match these needs, combine these resources in the most optimum way, bears the un-insurable risk and established a successful and profitable venture" (Olokundun et al., 2017, p. 2). In other words, entrepreneurship is the effort of spending time making new things while accepting financial and social risks for a good harvest of money and personal independence (Achado, 2014, cited in Okolie et al., 2014). According to Neck and Greene (2011), the concept of entrepreneurship is wrapped in the word "process". It is "a process of identifying an opportunity, understanding resource requirements, acquiring resources, planning, and implementing" (p. 61). Entrepreneurship is assumed to be associated with growth, creativity and innovation (Okolie et al., 2014; Wilson, 2008). Another definition of entrepreneurship provided by the European Commission on Enterprise and Industry emphasizes one's ability to transfer ideas into actions; that is, an individual is able to make use of initiatives to create, innovate, while taking risks, and manage a project properly to achieve certain goals (Okolocha & Ile, 2012). Other definitions regarding entrepreneurship generally mention the pursuit of investment opportunities in an environment for the production of a new product or service accepted by the community (Aruwa, 2004, Selvarajah & Meyer, 2011, cited in Olokundun et al., 2017).

In terms of education and training, entrepreneurship education (EE) is referred to as an intended intervention by an educator in a learner's life for the purpose of strengthening the entrepreneurial qualities and skills for the learner to overcome real business challenges (Olokundun et al., 2017). EE is expected to raise awareness and promote understanding among students of the initiation and management process of a new business (Falade, 2013) and provide them with required skills regarding the ownership and management of a venture (Okolie et al., 2014). EE

is tailored to prepare students who are interested in business creation, innovation and development for successful ventures, self-reliance and economic emancipation (Olokundun et al., 2017). Neck and Greene (2011) refers to EE as various experiences that help students improve their ability to anticipate and deal with societal changes to seize opportunities. EE is not about business creation only. Neck and Greene (2011) also mentions entrepreneurship as a method of teaching. In this role, entrepreneurship teaches students beyond knowledge of understanding, knowing and talking. Students are required to practice by learning through doing. They are forced to use, apply and act upon how they view the entrepreneurial world. They learn to develop their entrepreneurial competencies referred as the concepts, skills and mental awareness used when starting and running a business (Alberti et al., 2004), in order to integrate knowledge, skills and experience for the preparation of a new venture. EE puts their emphasis on imagination, creativity, and risk-taking in business (Jones & English, 2004). EE indeed plays a crucial role in developing business skills among university students.

EE is reported to be pioneered by Shigeru Fijii in 1938 at Kobe University in Japan (Alberti et al., 2004) and in 1947, the first course in entrepreneurship in the United States was initiated by Myles Mace at Harvard's Business School, attracting 188 of 600 MBA sophomores (Katz, 2003). The course then was launched at various prestigious institutions such as Stanford, Northwestern, and the University of Chicago (Jones & English, 2004). In the USA, in 1994, over 120,000 students took part in entrepreneurship and small business courses (Katz, 2003). In 1999, courses in entrepreneurship were offered by 170 American universities (Jones & English, 2004). Entrepreneurship programs have been widely offered by universities and institutions all around the world due to the growing demand to develop overseas. According to Hotcourses Abroad (https://www.hotcoursesabroad.com/study/training-degrees/australia/entrepreneurship-courses/loc/9/cgory/d13-3/sin/ct/programs.html), entrepreneurship programs are offered specifically by 3 institutions in Africa, 66 institutions in Asia, 77 institutions in Australasia, 224 institutions in Europe, and 445 institutions in North America. At the moment, entrepreneurship programs and courses are introduced by 388 universities all over the USA, 75 universities and organizations in Australia, and 137 institutions in the UK. In Australia, among 75 universities and organizations offering entrepreneurship courses, 18 institutions hold courses regarding business development, business plans and business start-up. In Asia, a number of top

universities offering EE include National University of Singapore (Singapore), Tsinghua University (China), Indian Institute of Technology (India), Korea University (South Korea), the Chinese University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong). In recent years, EE in Asia has seen increased attention and investment due to the growth of technology and the rise of the gig economy. It is obvious that EE is becoming more and more popular in universities around the world.

The importance of EE in VHE has been emphasized by Decision No. 1230/QĐ-BGDĐT issued on March 30, 2018 regarding carrying out the government Project Decision No. 1665/QĐ-TTg for the wide implementation of EE before 2020. In response to the national project, most of universities and colleges are developing entrepreneurship programs. The globalization and the demands of the new technology era bring curriculum developers in Vietnam a lot of opportunities thanks to the interest, participation and support of a number of international experts and donors to develop the domestic EE. However, the study by Ho et al. (2019) reveals that, in addition to multiple advantages gained, in order to boost EE, Vietnamese universities and colleges have to face enormous pressure because various challenges remain. The lack of professional lecturers on EE and the students' passive mindsets as a result of Vietnamese historical development are the biggest obstacles for the EE developers to prepare a strong future labor force for the society. Besides, in terms of forms of EE, there still lacks of guidance from the Ministry of Education regarding how to start EE at tertiary level. Therefore, the consistency among EE programs is barely witnessed. Last but not least, EE awareness among students and instructors is not high and they express various perspectives on EE, both positive and negative. Overall, there are a variety of concerns about EE development in Vietnam that should be taken into account on the way to implement any innovation in education.

1.1.4 The research site

The university in focus of this current study is run under the supervision of Vietnam General Confederation of Labor (VGCL). VGCL is the sole trade union center in Vietnam originally founded by labor forces and working class to serve as a political social organization protecting their rights and benefits, making the working class grow bigger and bigger in all aspects on the way the country is developed to socialism. VGCL's functions have been expanded during the industrialization and modernization of the country, besides being a representative of and protecting all the legal rights and

benefits of workers and employees; managing, supervising and inspecting all the activities done by governmental organizations, to educate workers and employees raising their awareness of their own benefits and making them fully understand that their benefits are closely related to the social and community ones (VGCL, 2016).. The education based on that principle brings workers and employees an improvement of work ethics, labor disciplines, working styles together with the autonomy in self-development, skills and expertise enhancement to meet the needs of the country on the way of industrialization and modernization. Such construction of strong labor forces will help build a united economical system which ensures a bright future for the development of the nation.

The university in context of the present research, following VGCL's guidance, pursues a goal of "training, retraining, fostering and enhancing professional levels and skills for the city's functional labor force [....] to directly serve the development of human resources among workers to contribute to the construction of the Vietnamese working class" (quoted from the website of the university). The goal is expected to help one hundred percent of the university students get a job after their graduation by its commitment of training and enhancing professional knowledge and proper working attitudes and manners among the students in order for them to be recognized as international employees accredited by international organizations. The students are strictly trained not only about the expertise and skills but also about ethics, especially about professional manners at work and in community to make sure they can become qualified individuals working with devotion and effectiveness that all companies and organizations long to possess.

This current research is conducted in the Faculty of Foreign Languages, targeting the English major program, a four-year program categorized as English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The English Language program aims to provide students with a foundation of professional knowledge and skills in order to help them be able to engage in multiple activities at work or in research after their graduation. English majored students are equipped with sufficient knowledge of political qualities (applying knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, fundamental legislation, and national defense education in life), work/social ethics and good manners along with their responsibilities as devoted citizens of the society. They are expected to perform as office staff in domestic and foreign enterprises, as interpreters/ translators/ tour guides/

travel coordinators for agencies in multiple fields. Besides, they can work as teachers of English for language centers or study further to get Master's/ Doctorate's Degrees and teach English at higher levels, e.g. in universities. To complete the program, English majors have to complete a total of 141 credits including:

- General knowledge (39 credits)
  - political science (11 credits)
  - social science (4 credits)
  - natural science (4 credits),
  - (second) foreign languages (15 credits)
  - soft skills (5 credits)
- Disciplinary knowledge (102 credits)
  - fundamental knowledge (50 credits)
  - specialized knowledge (45 credits)
  - graduation (7 credits)

They start undertaking their elected discipline (English Language Teaching or Business) when they are in the third year. In the Section of English Language Teaching, students study language-teaching courses, i.e. Teaching Methodology, Psychology, Teaching Practices, Action Research, and experience their Teaching Practicum in high schools in town. In the Section of Business, students enroll in business-related courses such as General Business English, Office Communication, Commercial Correspondence, Business Translation, English for Marketing, English for Business Administration and Business Start-up. They spend their internships in factories or companies to gain experience and expertise of the field. They are expected to apply business knowledge and skills they have learnt to work at domestic and international agencies, factories and companies with their English command. For their graduation, students belonging to either of the disciplines can choose to write thesis or complete a certain course.

Business Start-up is the course which students of the Section of Business can enroll in to complete the four-year program instead or writing a thesis in their final academic year. The course aims to help students identify characteristics of small and medium-scale firms, understand entrepreneurship in different forms, define entrepreneurial process and apply what they have learnt to starting up a business, naming a brand or raising funds, etc. This course provides an opportunity for students to get acquainted with activities and processes of building and managing a business

venture through practical, hands-on experience from their teachers in the combination with the lessons in the textbooks. During the course, students are assessed through a number of tasks, i.e. written tests, reflection papers and group presentations. Besides the tasks of the process evaluation, at the end of the course, they are to submit a business/start-up plan for the final examination which covers 50 percent of the overall score of the course assessment. The first course started in the academic year 2017-2018, and then revised in the year 2020-2021. The business/start-up plan used to be an individual work, but since the course revision, it has been a project written in groups, around 3000-5000 in length, describing their intention and preparation to run a business venture by applying what they have learnt from the course into practice. The plan is an evidence for teachers to evaluate students' business knowledge regarding thinking, planning, funding, etc. while making a business plan. To assist their plan writing, they are provided with a protocol that consists of a set of guidelines with guided questions describing the detailed structure of the plan, a plan template elaborating writing conventions and penalties, and a set of evaluation criteria. Their plans are assessed by their teacher in charge (30%) and an external examiner (70%), and the final score for this assignment is the total of both.

1.2 Rationale of the study

The current study aims to investigate the BSP as an emerging genre in an EFL context. The rationale of the study is justified by the needs raised from the students' voices and the research gaps identified from the literature.

1.2.1 Preliminary needs analysis: Online questionnaire survey

In order to find out the problems that business EFL students are facing in writing a BSP - an emerging genre among academic Vietnamese communities, an online questionnaire was conducted for both teachers and students who are/ used to be involved in the Start-up course at the research site. The questionnaire conducted in English contains fifteen questions (14 multiple choice and 1 open-ended) primarily targeting the problems the teachers and students encounter during the course, through which the investigation of this genre can approach some solutions to deal with the problems and ease the teaching and learning process. The questionnaire includes aspects related to their perception of the Start-up course, of the writing the BSP as it is a part of the assessment, of the helpfulness of the guidelines and teacher's tutorials, of the difficulties they encountered, of their satisfaction after the completion of the

BSP and their recommendations for the improvement of the course. Before the questionnaire was delivered, it was consulted with two researchers, one is a discourse expert researcher and one is a researcher holding a PhD on English Language Studies, to make sure the questions matched the study objectives and to strengthen its reliability and validity.

Forty-five students and five teachers from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the research site, were reached after the survey was delivered. The results were analyzed according to percentage counting of the Google form. The data revealed that 100 percent of the teachers and students perceived the Start-up course as challenging or really challenging but interesting. Regarding the writing the BSPs, they all agreed that it is (really) challenging but interesting; however, more elaborate responses came from the students. Some of them added some more details perceived of the writing the BSP, e.g., "beyond my expectation", "we need more explanation and tutorials", "more detailed models or examples". They expressed that they had to face something they had never experienced before and barely had any resources of the context to refer to. Their confusion is in line with Jones and English (2004) who claim that many students became lost and unmotivated when they worked on their business plan. In the question regarding the guidelines provided in the course, all the teachers and the students confirmed that the guidelines are helpful or partly helpful, but the students still found they are "confusing" and "complicated". When the difficulties of the writing the BSPs were mentioned, 60 percent of the students emphasized the challenges of writing the content of the plan; 25 percent found the organization of the BSP challenging for them, and 15 percent decided the problems were related to vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and mechanism. Meanwhile, 100 percent of the teachers believed that students struggled with the content of the plan. When they were asked whether they were satisfied with the final version of the plan (which they submitted to the teacher in charge), only 52.9 percent of the students felt satisfied because they had tried their best. Others would be partly satisfied or dissatisfied because they had not finished the writing or they thought they would have been better supported by the teacher in charge. However, 62 percent of the teachers were not really satisfied with their students' submission. In their opinion, some students did a great job but some students did not. They believed that the students' writing skills should have been improved before the course, which could help improve the quality

of the course and the BSPs. The students, on the other side, suggested the course should provide “more references”, “more examples”, “more detailed instructions” and everything should be “simplified”, in order for the students to fully comprehend the content and write the BSPs better.

Besides the questionnaire survey, the researcher had a quick survey regarding the existence of the Start-up course and the BSPs in English in universities around HCMC. Though Start-up courses are popular in universities, almost all of them are in Vietnamese. As far as the survey could reach, the Start-up course and the BSP is currently included in the EFL curriculum of one university, while another university is planning to offer this course in the very near future but it does not have a guideline for students.

To sum up, there are multiple obstacles that undergraduate students of the Start-up course have faced when they are writing the BSPs. First of all, there are needs for more detailed instructions and teacher tutorials that help them overcome their confusion before and during their writing. Secondly, they need more examples and models; however, there is still a lack of such references in academic communities because the BSP is an emerging genre in Vietnamese contexts.

1.2.2 Research gaps

Scholars have shown their interest in exploring genres of writing by undergraduate students across disciplines. The investigation of student writing practices for professional preparation categorized as apprenticeship genres has received a lot of attention and is expected to assist students to get ready for the real business world after graduation.

Research on teaching writing through genre-based approach has explored a number of student writing genres; however, written products by university students whose purpose is to show their acquired knowledge and skills, categorized by Swales (1996) as ‘occluded’ genres, are difficult to be accessed (Gardner & Nesi, 2013). This limitation prevents business writing from being well researched, particularly in Vietnamese contexts at tertiary level. Ho et al. (2019) confirm that foreign language skills are of top requirements by enterprises in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 but are the major challenges for university students in order to achieve successful entrepreneurship. Therefore, the current study is conducted in an English-majored

community to look into whether language skills/language proficiency really counts in the development of a convincing BSP.

In business discourse, business language is deemed as specific "functional style" by the Prague School (Mautner & Rainer, 2017). A characteristic of business language is conventionality; that is, the communication in business contexts tends to stick to standard formats, procedures, scripts and formulation (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020) and they are expected to be followed strictly (Vásquez, 2013). Moreover, in order to ease students' entry to the workplace, the activities they are involved in business writing classes should be as reflective of the real business tasks as possible. Their generic awareness and discipline-specific writing skills should be enhanced. As can be seen, various studies have explored linguistics features and generic structure of business genres such as annual reports (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020), business case reports (Le, 2013; Nathan, 2013), and advertisements (Bhatia, 2005), but there seems inadequate attention having been paid to BSPs though the writing of a BSP as a simulation for business writing can be a beneficial task that students may have to deal with in the future. While there are a number of articles regarding the convention of a business plan in different fields and disciplines, e.g. life science startup/clinical program (Conrad et al., 2019), medicine and health areas (Cohn & Schwartz, 2002; Wassinger & Baxter, 2011), food and drink industry (Ahn et al., 2014; Pisoni & White, 2002), space ventures (Barnett, 2000), science and engineering (Servo & Hauler, 1992), the components of a BSP vary and limited studies on structural framework, especially move-step structure, have been proposed. Besides, different studies have been conducted on the relation between the writing of a BSP with EE (Fregetto, 2005; Okolocha & Ile, 2012; Zimmerman, 2012), with the start-up process (Gately & Cunningham, 2014), or on the systematic approach to writing and rating a BSP (Hindle & Mainprize, 2006), but the existing scholarly literature has also found limited research in linguistic dimension, especially in EFL contexts, examining this kind of business writing simulation.

As mentioned before, the students surveyed in the needs analysis of the current research encounter multiple obstacles in writing their BSPs. Besides, even though a lot of them feel satisfied with their compositions, their teachers do not. They still find their students' writing problematic. It shows that there is a mismatch between the students' and teachers' assumptions of the quality of the student BSPs.

Furthermore, the transition from academic writing to business writing may have caused a number of obstacles to undergraduate students. In the study of workplace writing by Faigley and Miller (1982, cited in Schneider & Andre, 2005), specific business and technical formats are expected to be taught in university writing courses, besides other aspects such as brevity, grammar, mechanics, organization, etc. This view reported from 200 workers from various occupations confirms that the undertaking research on the writing of a BSP and its formulation is likely to be helpful for students to become more proficient and confident at work in their future.

In Vietnamese contexts, the BSP is not new among the first language communities. That is, the BSP has been developed popularly in business courses conducted in the Vietnamese language. However, this genre is barely identified in EFL settings, and for this reason, this genre is labelled as "emerging" in this current research. The generic composition of this genre at both micro and macro levels is still unfamiliar among most of the stakeholders involved i.e. students, instructors, and course designers. Besides, as far as the researcher can reach, research on move-step structure of the BSP in VHE is not yet to be presented. Meanwhile, the development of a BSP is believed to be a challenge for not only non-native EFL students but also the native ones because the composition requires the writer to cultivate a considerable amount of knowledge other than a good command of English, including the master of lexical sources of the field, disciplinary expertise and even genre awareness in a specific setting. Therefore, the necessity for a move-step structure to be drawn up in order to facilitate students' writing process and minimize the difficulties within is recognized.

Feasibility is deemed an essential element of a BSP, and the ultimate goal of a BSP is to convince its audience to agree with what is written inside. In order to do that, the adoption of linguistic features e.g. lexical and grammatical devices plays the key role in the success of a BSP and should be thoroughly considered by the writer. As can be seen, the persuasion of a certain proposition lies in the fact that the employment of language means is intentionally determined by the speaker/writer (Van Dijk, 1993) in order to moderate or strengthen an argument, then the attitude and the behavior of the counterpart may be changed. However, unlike other genres, in order to get the highest efficiency, persuasion in business genres is believed to be implicit and tentative, instead of being imposing and pushy, to leave space for free decisions

(Vogel, 2018). Therefore, the language strategies a writer uses to compose a convincing BSP, persuading the audience into the plausibility of the business idea, is worth attention. Unfortunately, this issue has not been researched in the literature.

The investigation of persuasion strategies in the current thesis is grounded in the critical role that effective communication plays in the success of business/start-up plans (BSPs). Persuasion is a fundamental aspect of business communication. However, despite its importance, there is a noticeable gap in comprehensive research specifically focused on the persuasive techniques utilized in student business/start-up plans (SBSPs) within an educational context.

Persuasion strategies encompass a wide range of rhetorical techniques that aim to enhance the credibility, emotional appeal, and logical soundness of a presentation. Understanding these strategies is vital for a number of reasons:

- *Educational Relevance*: In academic settings, students are often required to present business/start-up plans as part of their coursework. Mastery of persuasive strategies can significantly impact their ability to communicate ideas effectively and achieve higher academic performance. Specifically, understanding how to structure each move and step in their SBSPs - such as establishing a compelling executive summary, detailing a robust business model or a convincing product/service introduction, presenting a vigorous marketing plan, and professionalizing financial statements - can greatly enhance their persuasive capabilities.
- *Professional Preparedness*: For students aspiring to enter the business world, the ability to craft and present persuasive BSPs is crucial. This skill not only aids in securing funding and support but also enhances their overall competency as future business leaders. Each move and step within a BSP, such as articulating a clear value proposition and demonstrating financial viability, requires the use of persuasion strategies to ensure that their plans are convincing to stakeholders.
- *Gap in Existing Literature*: While there is extensive research on persuasion in general communication and marketing contexts, there is limited focus on how these strategies are specifically applied in SBSPs. This study aims to fill that gap, providing a detailed analysis of the rhetorical moves and steps, and the specific persuasive techniques employed by students. By analyzing how students use persuasion in each component, e.g. utilizing

logical arguments in the financial plan, this research is expected to address a significant gap in the literature.

- *Improvement of Pedagogical Practices*: By identifying the strengths and weaknesses in students' use of persuasion, educators can tailor their teaching methods to better support the development of these skills. This can lead to more effective instructional strategies and ultimately, better-prepared graduates. For instance, teaching students how to effectively use persuasion regarding emotional appeal in the product/service introduction and in the marketing plan, or how to enhance credibility in the management board can significantly improve their SBSPs.
- *Impact on Stakeholder Engagement*: Effective persuasion is critical for engaging various stakeholders, including investors, partners, and customers. Understanding how to employ persuasive strategies can improve the overall impact and reception of business/start-up plans. Each move and step - such as crafting compelling arguments in the business introduction or presenting convincing evidence in the market analysis - plays a vital role in capturing and maintaining stakeholder interest and support.

Overall, linking these persuasive strategies with the move-step structure of BSPs highlights the integral role of rhetoric in each component of the plan. By investigating how students employ these persuasive strategies within each move and step of their SBSPs, this study aims to provide comprehensive insights that can enhance both pedagogical approaches and practical business communication skills.

The current study, hence, firstly examined multiple BSP-writing guidelines drawn from multiple sources representing diverse pedagogical and professional settings to identify the common components that they share. After such investigation, a framework for a proper BSP, so-called an “evidence-based framework” (EBF), was developed. This framework with common components of a BSP served as a tool for consistent and more reliable analysis of the data in context because it could offer a number of typically used terminology of this framework which can lead to shared understanding among audience and between the audience and the writer. The framework then was used to analyze the move-step structure of the BSPs collected from the research site. Last but not least, linguistic features regarding persuasive strategies that the students use in their BSPs were investigated to see how the writers

make their own BSPs convincing. The findings were expected to bring crucial implications in theoretical and pedagogical aspects.

1.3 Research objectives

The objectives of the current study were to explore BSPs as an emerging genre by identifying typical components a BSP should have and how a BSP is drawn up to persuade its stakeholders. Specifically, the current study aimed to:

1. identify typical components of a BSP for BSP framework formulation by investigating multiple types of BSP-writing guidelines including those designed for students with pedagogical purposes in a curriculum (pedagogical settings) and those designed for entrepreneurs in professional settings;

2. investigate moves and steps of the students' BSPs (SBSPs) using the evidence-based framework (EBF) formulated in the RO1;

3. identify persuasion strategies used in the students' BSPs collected at the research site.

1.4 Research questions

In accordance with the three aforementioned objectives, three research questions were formulated, as follows:

1. What are typical components of a BSP synthesized from guidelines designed in pedagogical and professional settings that can be used to formulate an EBF?

2. What are the moves, steps and their structure of the SBSPs identified using the EBF?

3. What are persuasion strategies used by the students when composing the SBSPs?

1.5 Significance of the study

The BSP is an emerging genre in Vietnamese contexts, and the investigation of this genre will offer considerable significance both theoretically and pedagogically.

1.5.1 Theoretical significance

By investigating the typical components of a BSP and what moves and steps were used to write a BSP, the present research can enrich the literature regarding ESP genre analysis. The findings of the first question introduce a framework to analyze the components of a BSP as an emerging genre. From the development of such a

framework, based on the data collected and analyzed, the research proposes a move-step structure of the BSP which can serve as another framework for further studies of this genre in the future. Nonetheless, the findings from the second question are able to confirm that the move analysis by Swales (1990) can be extended to explore this new genre as well. In addition to the framework generation, the research also offers new insights on the production of this genre in a Vietnamese context, which has not been paid much attention to in academia. Regarding the investigation of persuasive strategies, the research results sheds light on concerns regarding how a BSP is drawn up convincingly. The identification of persuasive strategies that were used in the BSP composition contributes to the understanding of rhetorical strategies and language means

Overall, the results of the current study serve as an informative source of reference for further studies of this genre in various contexts other than an L2 context in Vietnam, which may be also beneficial for even those in English L1 settings.

1.5.2 Pedagogical significance

While the issue of how and how much business writing skills should be taught for students as preparation at university for their working life after graduation is still under debate (Szanajda & Ou, 2017), and the fact that students' writing skills tend to be perceived as more satisfactory by the students' themselves other than what is evaluated by their teachers as confirmed by Bacha & Bahous, 2008 (cited in Szanajda & Ou, 2017), the current study can raise awareness among the stakeholders in pedagogical settings of this emerging genre. It is beneficial for not only students and teachers but also for designers of a Start-up course.

For students, first of all, the findings from the first and second questions were to help them develop a business plan with little or without stress and confusion of writing an unfamiliar genre. Students of any programs that include writing a BSP will be able to save time and energy by avoiding redundant parts and irrelevant steps. Learning how to write a BSP effectively and being aware of the writing context of this specific genre may also assist students to develop their critical and creative thinking as well as problem-solving skills. The contribution of the study to the enhancement of students' business writing skills is to help them establish effective communication which is a key factor in the success of a BSP. As a result, potential impacts on student learning outcomes such as improved business planning skills, better communication

skills, or increased confidence in entrepreneurial endeavors can be created. Regarding the solutions to the writing obstacles identified from the needs analysis, the findings support students with "simplified" step-by-step instruction, meeting their needs of a detailed model and examples of how to compose a BSP. Moreover, the findings from the third question provide students with strategies to make their plan attractive and persuasive, which is beyond their expectations. Ultimately, the results can also raise awareness of the importance of effective communication in BSP development among the students.

For the teachers as the course instructors, being aware about the components and the move-step structure of a BSP is advantageous to support their students to deal with such a new and challenging genre in business writing. The present research serves as a credible source of reference that they can use while providing English instructions for their students during their business writing learning process. They will be able to support their students with explicit instructions on the moves and steps of the BSP, which allows their students to build a foundation of the genre and reinforce their understandings of composing strategies. Learning about the persuasive strategies is also helpful for the instructors to refine their supplementary documents including teaching materials, writing exercises and hands-on practices.

For a designer of a Start-up course, the findings of the study have brought a great help for them to reassess the course protocol. Based on the frameworks to be proposed by the study, they can review the guidelines and provide students with more specific questions as well as concise and effective instruction. The frameworks also served as a source for them to revise the assessment rubrics with relevant requirements for students' writing. Furthermore, in order to make the writing the BSP less challenging to students, they can incorporate relevant references related to theories of persuasion, persuasive strategies and other planning practices into the course materials.

Finally, the results of the current study are able to be applied to other universities of similar contexts where the BSP exists in their curriculum or may be adopted in the future. The frameworks will make it easier and less time-consuming for the program developers to construct a protocol for a Start-up course and what instruction they should build to help their students write convincing BSPs. Also, the

findings from move-step analysis can help them anticipate students' writing problems in order to get them well-prepared before composing a challenging BSP.

1.6 Scope and limitation of the study

The scope of this study was limited within a single setting of VHE at a university in Ho Chi Minh City. The research collected and analyzed data from a sample of business plans written by students in the university's English-majored business program. The scope of the study was also limited to the fact that the data were drawn from the time frame of three academic years, starting from 2019-2020 (when the program was revised) to the current academic year 2022-2023. The study used a text-based (mixed-method) research design, including a review of literature and analysis of documents (and interviews). Potential limitations of the study lie in the nature of the study of a single community in VHE settings, thus a minimal level of generalization.

1.7 Definition of key terms

In order to maintain the consistency in the present research, important terms will be defined as below.

Business/start-up plan (BSP)

In the literature, the term "business plan" can refer to a plan written by a student or an entrepreneur, proposing a start-up plan or a plan for an established enterprise. Another less popular term which serves more or less the same purposes is "start-up plan". In the current research, the official term "business/start-up plan" is used throughout the research under the abbreviation "BSP". A BSP is a written document proposing the creation and operation of a business venture with detailed description of the present outlook and future possibilities of the organization (Honig & Karlsson, 2004).

In the current research, an EBSP (entrepreneur business/start-up plan) refers to a BSP composed by an entrepreneur in real professional settings. An SBSP (student business/start-up plan) refers to a BSP composed by a student in pedagogical settings. From the Methodology Chapter onwards, the term SBSP is primarily used to refer to the plans collected from the students at the research site which are used as the data for the present analysis.

Professional and pedagogical settings

Professional settings refer to the environments and situations where people engage in work or other professional activities. These settings can include workplaces such as offices, hospitals, schools, and factories, as well as other professional contexts like conferences, meetings, and training sessions. In professional settings, individuals are expected to follow certain norms and standards of behavior, communication, and performance in order to achieve their goals and contribute to the success of the organization or project they are involved in.

Pedagogical settings refer to educational environments and situations, such as schools, universities, or training programs, where teachers or trainers deliver instruction to students or learners. These settings focus on the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are essential for personal, academic, or professional development. Pedagogical settings may include various forms of instruction, such as lectures, workshops, discussions, projects, or assignments, and they may involve different types of learners, such as children, teenagers, young adults, or professionals. The primary goal of pedagogical settings is to foster learning and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills from the teacher or trainer to the learner.

Move and Step

A move refers to a unit of discourse that serves a specific function or purpose in a particular context. Besides carrying its own function, it also contributes to serve the overall communicative purposes of the genre it belongs to (Biber et al., 2007). A step refers to a smaller unit of discourse that serves a specific function within a move. It is often used to describe the sub-components of a move that help to achieve the overall communicative goal of the move.

In the current research, a "move" refers to a major rhetorical or structural unit within a business/start-up plan (BSP). Each move represents a distinct communicative purpose, designed to achieve a specific goal within the overall narrative of the document. Moves are essential building blocks that guide the reader through the logical flow of the presentation, ensuring that all critical aspects of the business are covered comprehensively. For example, the Move “Company Overview/Business Description” provides detailed information about the business, offering readers a clear understanding of the company’s background and context within the industry. A "step" is a sub-unit within a move, representing a specific action or element that supports

and elaborates on the broader purpose of the move. Steps provide detailed information and contribute to the overall effectiveness and coherence of the move. They are the finer details that, when combined, fulfill the communicative intent of the move. For example, in the Move "Company Overview/Business Description", there are multiple steps such as mission statement, legal structure, current position/status, etc.

Persuasion strategies

Persuasion strategies refer to "techniques or methods for changing people's beliefs or attitudes" (Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1997). Other equivalent terms can be listed as persuasive strategies (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020a; Lulu & Alkaff, 2019; Yang et al., 2019), persuasive techniques (Romanova & Smirnova, 2019), persuasive language (Labrador et al., 2014), persuasive elements (Mustafa et al., 2012). They all refer to the way a language is used (with or without support from visual aids) to present one's ideas, highlight important points and enhance the weight of an argument in order to convince the listeners/readers. In this current research, "persuasion strategies" is used as a term describing linguistic features used in the (S)BSPs functioning as means to persuade the audience of the (S)BSPs into the feasibility and possibility of the plans.

Emerging genre

In the context of this thesis, an emerging genre refers to the evolving forms of business/start-up plans (BSPs) and student business/start-up plans (SBSPs) as they adapt to contemporary pedagogical and professional settings. The investigation of BSPs and SBSPs within an Evidence-Based Framework (EBF) reveals how these documents are transforming in response to new educational practices and the dynamic nature of the business environment.

1.8 Summary

This chapter provides a background to the research topic, highlighting the English major programs in Vietnamese Higher Education, Vietnamese student writing in English and genre-based approach, business education in Higher Education, entrepreneurship education and Higher Education, and the research site. The rationale for the study is then discussed, with preliminary needs analysis through an online questionnaire survey used to justify the need for the research. The research objectives and questions are presented, followed by the significance of the study in both theoretical and pedagogical contexts. The scope and limitation of the study are outlined, and key terms are defined.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter demonstrates an extensive exploration of the literature relevant to the research topic, delving into three interconnected areas of study: Genre and Genre Analysis, Business Writing (BW) and Business/Start-up Plan (BSP), and Persuasion to build a solid theoretical foundation, identify gaps in existing knowledge, and develop a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding these subjects. Regarding the examination of Genre and Genre Analysis, this section focuses on the fundamental elements that constitute a genre and explores how genres are identified based on their distinct characteristics, moves, and steps and delves into three major approaches to genre analysis: the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the New Rhetoric Tradition, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The second section investigates BW and BSP by firstly outlining the characteristics of BW, highlighting its importance in professional and pedagogical settings, secondly exploring the various genres that exist within the realm of BW, distinguishing between business genres in the abovementioned settings, and finally investigating the BSP as a genre, looking into its role and significance both in the business world and university contexts. The third section examines the intricate concept of Persuasion, a crucial aspect of business communication, through analyzing elements that contribute to effective persuasive communication and reviewing various theories of persuasion, by which valuable insights into the cognitive processes that underlie persuasive communication can be obtained. Besides, various persuasion strategies used in business communication are compiled from previous studies, offering a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge on persuasion across diverse communication contexts. The last section goes through VHE contexts to synthesize writing problems among Vietnamese students, which provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities surrounding writing and communication in the Vietnamese academic environment.

2.1 Genre and Genre Analysis

2.1.1 Definition and characteristics of Genre

Genre is a conventional way to do things and it has been widely viewed as goal-directed or purposive (Askehave & Swales, 2001). As an early description of genre, Swales (1990) defines genre as “a class of communicative events, the members of

which share some set of communicative purposes" (p. 58). According to Martin (1997), genre is "a system of staged goal-oriented social processes in which social subjects in a given culture live their life" (p. 13). In Richards and Schmidt (2002), the term *genre* is described as "a type of discourse that occurs in a particular setting, that has distinctive and recognizable patterns and norms of organization and structure, and that has particular and distinctive communicative functions" (p. 224). In Bhatia (2004), genre is referred to as "language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communication goals of a disciplinary or social situation" (p. 23). Hyland (2008) refers to genre as "a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations" (p. 544). Unlike *register* which is described as a general kind of language attached with a domain of use (e.g. scientific register, legal register, etc.), according to Biber et al. (2007), genre is termed in the reference to "a culturally recognized message type with a conventional internal structure" (e.g. a biotechnology research article, or a business memo) (p. 8). Later, Biber and Conrad (2009) develop that the linguistic analysis of the genre perspective focuses on the conventional structures used to construct a complete text within the variety (e.g. the conventional way to begin and end a letter).

Despite different definitions of genre, they are supposed to share a lot of common ground. First of all, a genre is viewed as a recognizable communicative event with a set of typical communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by members of the community it regularly occurs (Bhatia, 2004). A *communicative event*, according to Swales (1990), is conceived as an occasion in which language plays both a significant and *essential* role and, at the same time, as an event which comprises not only the discourse itself and the participants but also the role the discourse plays and the historical and cultural environment in which it is produced and received. The occurrence of communicative events of a specific genre class vary from the extremely common to the relatively rare and the formation of a class with few instances must be accompanied by its prominence within a relevant culture. The formation of a genre class is actually determined by the shared set of *communicative purposes* among the communicative events other than the similarities of forms and substance or a recurring rhetorical situation (Miller, 1984; Swales, 1990). Such purposes are identified by the established members of the discourse community and hence constitute the rationale of the genre which consequently shapes the schematic structure of the discourse while making influences and constraints on the choice of content (the intention one would like to express) and style (the lexico-grammatical resources one can adopt to add discoursal values to the formal features) (Bhatia, 2004; Biber et al., 2007; Swales, 1990).

The established members of a specific professional community will be able to express deeper knowledge and understanding of the use and exploitation of a genre than apprentices, new members or outsiders. Therefore, Bhatia (2004) asserts that although genres are recognized as highly structured and conventionalized constructs, the expert members of particular discourse communities often take advantage of generic resources to show both private and organizational intentions within the concepts of socially recognized purposes; and they exploit genres to create new forms and patterns to respond to novel rhetorical contexts, turning this world of discourse into a more complex and dynamic with hybrid, mixed and embedded forms instead of the pure ones.

However, despite the typical association with recurring rhetorical contexts and the characteristic of conventionalization, genres are not static but continually change and develop (Bhatia, 2004). Rhetorical contexts indeed recur, but they may not recur exactly the same as before though they may carry some overlaps. Besides the overlaps that may occur across disciplinary boundaries, there are variations within a discipline as well. Furthermore, the analysis of genres is no longer a mere textual investigation but involves the employment of various tools for comprehensive interpretation, e.g. ethnographic techniques, computational analysis, cognitive procedures, etc. Another essential feature of genre investigation is the nomenclature of genres in the discourse community (Swales, 1990). Genres may be assigned with a specific name; however, the name can be perceived and interpreted in different ways by different members of the discourse communities. Each of the genres has its own integrity identified by a combination of textual, discursive and contextual factors (Bhatia, 2004), but exemplars or instances of genres vary in their prototypicality (Swales, 1990). Genres are deemed to be reflections of disciplinary and organizational cultures, "focusing on social actions embedded within disciplinary, professional and other institutional practices" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 23).

One essential element of genre analysis is the concept of *discourse community*. Swales (1990) defines discourse communities as "socio-rhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals" (p. 9). Such discourse communities are characterized by the familiarity of their expert members with the genres used for the achievement of those common goals, which contribute as the basis for the shared communicative purposes. Therefore, Swales (1990) claims that genres belong to discourse communities rather than any individuals, any groups or other kinds of wider speech communities. A discourse community is identified as it owns a broadly agreed set of public goals. It has participatory mechanisms of

intercommunication among its members and uses such mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback. Meanwhile, it continues to develop discoursal expectations which involve relevance of topics, the form, function and arrangement of discoursal elements and the roles of texts in the operation of the discourse community. That is to say, in a discourse community, genres are how things get done and language is a means to achieve them. Besides owning genres, a discourse community also utilizes some specific lexical items which is special/technical and known to wider speech communities, e.g. the development of community-specific abbreviations and acronyms.

Based on the definitions and characteristics of genre and discourse community, the BSP in the current research is considered as a genre. The BSP is written by English-majored students targeting a number of audiences in academic settings including peers, instructors and examiners. Besides, the student BSP collected from the research site can be considered as a "mock" BSP which is embedded with characteristics of a real BSP in professional settings. That is to say, other potential audience of such student BSP may include business consultants, capital investors or bankers. The researcher is going to elaborate the characteristics of the BSP as an emerging genre in a later section.

2.1.2 Genre studies and three approaches of analysis

Genre analysis (GA) was initiated in the 1970s and 1980s as part of discourse analyses with an emphasis on the organization of the discourse (Biber et al., 2007). Bhatia (2004) argues that GA is "the study of situated linguistic behavior in institutionalized academic or professional settings" (p. 22). Bhatia et al. (2008) assert that GA provides a grounded description and elaboration of language use in academic and professional contexts to seek answer to the question: 'Why do professionals use the language the way they do?' and further explain that in order to seek answer to the question, the analysis of a genre is not a mere investigation of linguistic descriptions of texts or genres; instead, it needs the examination of both text-internal and text-external factors that contribute to the production and the reception of the generic artefacts. In this section, the researcher is going to review three broad approaches to genre. They are Systemic Functional Linguistics which describes content patterns as schematic structures (Eggins, 1994), the *New Rhetoric* tradition developed in North American composition contexts, and the English for Specific Purposes approach which segments discourse into moves and steps (Swales, 1990).

2.1.2.1 The Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Genre in SFL perspective is viewed as "a staged, goal-oriented social process" (Martin, 1992, p. 505). It emphasizes the character of different genres which is purposeful, interactive and sequential as well as the systematic connection between language and context (Hyland, 2004). Genre is deemed a social process because it involves interaction between members of a culture to achieve it; it is goal-oriented because it has evolved to achieve things; it is staged because the meanings are created in steps, and in order to reach their goals, writers may have to take more than one step. Hyland (2004) concludes that SFL studies have emphasized the significance of the purposes of genres and of elaborating the rhetorical structures that have evolved to serve such purposes. That is to say, genre is analyzed in the link of social purposes and text structures which are recognized as situation action and linguistic actions (Martin, 2009). Eggins (2004) describes SFL as "social semiotic", a view developed by Halliday (1978), and proposes four main theoretical claims about language in SFL perspective: language use is functional; its function is to make meanings; these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged; and the process of using language is a semiotic process which makes meaning by choosing. Indeed, these four points of language use (being functional, semantic, contextual and semiotic) are included in the description of the systemic approach as a functional-semantic approach to language. Halliday (1978) suggests three main *functions* that language is expected to serve: functions for relating experience (ideational), creating interpersonal relationships, and organizing textual information.

Because the SFL approach to genre has been driven by a commitment to language and literacy education, assisting teachers to consider linguistics as a practical tool for their classroom use, SFL makes efforts for a provision of a framework aiming to help explain the use and composition of genres at all educational levels instead of only at the post-secondary one. Actually, for SFL theorists, genres are the representation of groups of texts which share discourse patterns and are characterized in terms of broad rhetorical patterns such as *narratives, recounts, arguments,* and *expositions*; or they are defined by internal linguistic criteria such as *job applications, film reviews,* and *recipes* (Hyland, 2004). Hence, according to SFL perspectives, genres are the rhetorical structures essential to a variety of forms of communication in a culture.

2.1.2.2 The New Rhetoric (NR) tradition

Similar to SFL, NR or the "North American" School of genre studies (termed by Freedman and Medway, 1994, as cited in Herrington & Moran, 2005), emphasizes the context and the social nature of genres. According to NR perspective, genres are conceptualized and defined as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (Miller, 1984, p. 159). They focus more on the situational contexts of genre occurrence and on the social purposes or the actions performed by the genres in such situations rather than on their forms. In essence, Hyland (2004) points out that NR places more emphasis on the dynamic quality of genres, and the ways they promote and exhibit variation, which can aid in developing further insights of the concept and how meanings are negotiated. NR views genres as more "flexible, plastic, and free" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 79) than what SFL can allow although they still follow conventions and regularities. They are embodied as forms of action which are open to change and subject to negotiation (Hyland, 2004). However, genre theory developed in the NR tradition was shaped within L1 disciplines, and Miller (1984) argues that "a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish" (p. 151). Genres are analyzed under a number of perspectives which deal with the investigation of how people learn to write what they write other than those which focus on texts. Therefore, the frequently-used analysis approach of genres in NR involves ethnographic rather linguistic text-based methods (Hyland, 2004; Hyon, 1996). A noticeable argument by NR is that genres are perceived to be impossible to be taught in classroom. Classroom genres are assumed by some NR theorists to be different from those in real world contexts in terms of multiple aspects including goals, roles, learning methods and even types of evaluation. Therefore, genres are not able to be transferred to the writing classroom as they are not static but variable and shifting according to contexts. Furthermore, the classroom is deemed an inauthentic context for the acquisition of understanding of writing while learning needs the involvement of community activities without being removed from the local cultural and historical contexts. This view prevents the researcher from adopting NR in the current study on the BSP, an emerging genre written by students in classroom.

2.1.2.3 English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

The ESP view was broadly recognized by a seminal work by Swales' (1990) book entitled *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Setting,* in which move analysis was developed according to a top-down approach as categorized by Biber et al. (2007). The analysis starts with the development of an analytical

framework which is then applied to segment texts into discourse units (so-called 'moves') and describe move types according to their functional/communicative distinctions they serve in the target genre. In ESP perspectives, genre is seen as a class of structured communicative events within specific discourse communities whose members share social purposes (Swales, 1990). Such purposes serve as the rationale of a genre and determine the genre structure as well as the choice of content and style of the genre (Hyland, 2004). ESP targets non-native English speakers in academic and professional contexts with the aim of providing assistance to enhance their writing which can lead to a broader access to career opportunities, positive identities and life choices; therefore, it deals with a cross-cultural and L2 dimension of writing which is the missing point of SFL and NR (Hyland, 2004). ESP researchers pay more attention to the elaboration of formal characteristics of genres rather than to the specialized functions of texts as well as their related social contexts (Hyon, 1996). This focus is represented in a number of studies using *structural move analysis* to depict organizational patterns of multiple genres, e.g. research articles, medical abstracts, business letters, university lectures, research presentations, grant proposals, job application letters, etc. ESP studies are concerned, but not exclusively, with written text, and the reason for that focus of genre analysis lies in the availability and the portability of written text (Dudley-Evans, 1994).

ESP approaches to genre are characterized by two features: one is the focus on academic and research English (including occupational English) and the other is the purpose for application of genre analysis (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). Though the basis of ESP is a commitment to research-based language education through needs analysis and genre analysis, and to revealing the impact of social contexts on language use and how learners control over them, ESP is assumed to draw from an eclectic theoretical foundation (Hyland, 2004). That is, like NR, ESP adopts notions of dialogism and contextual situatedness, but it is also based on SFL understandings of text structure and applies SFL principles of pedagogy. Hence, Hyland (2004) claims that ESP is more linguistic than NR and more role-oriented to social communities than SFL. However, besides sharing the view that linguistic features are linked with social contexts and functions, and that explicit teaching of relevant genres provides access to disadvantaged learners (which is different from NR view), ESP and SFL differ in important ways. The first difference is their applied target audience, who are supposed to be economically and culturally disadvantaged school-age children in Australia (SFL) and linguistically disadvantaged advanced-level non-native speakers of English in British and U.S. universities (ESP) (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). This distinction leads to

implications for how these two approaches perceive and analyse the target genres. For example, SFL focuses more on pre-genres while ESP pays attention to genres in academic disciplines and professional settings. Another difference is the different types of contexts that the two approaches locate genre. While genre is positioned within "context of culture" in SFL, it is placed in more specifically defined contexts called "discourse communities" in ESP in which their communicative purposes are clarified (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). The location of genre within discourse communities allows ESP to focus on context and communicative/rhetorical purpose, shifting the pedagogical purpose of ESP approaches to "a more pragmatic, acculturation-motivated pedagogy" instead of the "more overtly political, empowerment-motivated goals" of SFL genre-based teaching (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 44) so that non-native English students can receive a benefit of a wider access to academic and occupation opportunities.

Because the current research aims to investigate rhetorical structure of the BSP as an emerging genre written by English-majored undergraduates, the adoption of a linguistic approach applied for non-native English students at tertiary level is necessary. Therefore, the employment of ESP tradition over SFL and NR approaches is expected to bring significant pedagogical implications to the teaching practice in VHE contexts.

2.2 Business Writing (BW) and Business/Start-up Plan (BSP)

In this section, the researcher is going to explore the realm of Business Writing (BW) and its pivotal role in crafting Business/Start-up Plans (BSPs). The presentation will progress from a general overview to more specific aspects. First, the researcher presents the fundamental characteristics of BW and the various genres within BW. Following this, the focus will narrow to examine BSPs as a distinct genre and review previous studies related to BSPs, providing a detailed understanding of their importance and application in business contexts.

2.2.1 Characteristics of BW

The context of business communication recently has witnessed a fundamental change process due to the occurrence of three trends: the rapid development of technology (particularly in digital area), the change of business structures and the globalization of business world (Louhiala-Salminen, 2009). These changes not only influence what but also how business communicates. Technological developments have changed business communication from the dominance of letters as the primary genres of written business communication into the high frequency of

emails used all over the world. Email has taken over the tasks done by letters, faxes and other tasks from other media such as in-person interaction.

In recent years, there have been a number of strong arguments of locating HE academic writing within the students' disciplinary contexts, among which is the belief that a full insight of the role and dynamic of such writing can only be obtained once it is investigated as a social practice that shapes and is shaped by the beliefs, values and ideologies of the original disciplinary context where it is created (Bazerman & Prior, 2003). Literature review has revealed that writing for business is usually perceived as knowledge display or initiation to professional life, writer positioning, epistemological performance, individual or collaborative endeavor, or deemed as a qualitative or quantitative orientation (Gimenez, 2016), as presented in Table 2.1. Actually, disciplinary writing, from a cognitive perspective, requires students to apply theoretical knowledge previously acquired from classrooms (e.g. theories, methods, models) to solve problems and make decisions in an analytical and evaluative manner; therefore, it tends to be problem-solving orientated and is expected to provide opportunities to initiate students into the real business world. Hence, students are expected to master various skills such as interpretation, integration and synthesis from multiple sources of information to support and elaborate their claims. The expectation of such skills, somehow, is similar to the writing demands of the workplace. However, the fact that students are only asked to write with the aim of displaying their knowledge of a certain topic to their instructor and examiners in academic settings is completely on a contrary to the requirements at the workplace by which writers are expected to explain or present new/unfamiliar things to assist others to make their decisions, draw conclusions or solve problems. This fact is a reflection of Zhu's (2004) classification of assignments according to students' roles in business writing: "write for experts" and "write as experts". Nevertheless, the results in Nathan (2013) reveals business student writers' failure to understand that their task performance in the role of experts can fulfill other purposes besides knowledge demonstration. This perception is, again, opposite what is expected in workplace writing (Flowerdew & Wan, 2006; Zhang, 2013). In short, the literature has confirmed two main purposes of writing in academic business settings: the first is 'knowledge display' (in general academic tasks) and the second is professional initiation (in discipline-specific tasks) (Gimenez, 2016).

Table 2.1 Conceptualization of discipline-specific writing in the business literature

Dimensions	Conceptualization of writing	Summary	Examples
Knowledge	Writing as knowledge display or initiation to professional life	Writing enacted for students to show acquired knowledge (to experts) or initiation in professional life (as experts)	Nathan (2013), Smart et al. (2012), Zhu (2004a, 2004b)
Writer positioning	Writing as (writer) positioning	Writing enacted to position students as academic and professional writers	Zhu (2004a)
Epistemology	Writing as epistemology performance	Writing as reflection of the belief that knowledge is constructed by means of text-oriented epistemological performance	Hyland (2011), Mathison et al. (2014), Zhang (2013)
Collaboration	Writing as individual or collaborative endeavor	Writing theorized as an individual task, often in connection with knowledge display, or a collective construction, normally in relation with professional topics and genres	Bremner (2010), Bremner et al. (2014)
Orientation	Writing as qualitative or quantitative orientation	Writing as key in qualitative orientated disciplines, or as less crucial in quantitative orientated disciplines	Annous and Nicolas (2015)

(cited in Gimenez, 2016)

A significant characteristic of BW that should be noticed is its nature of being transactional: it has impacts on all stakeholders; it aims to inform and normally propose a course of action; therefore, it must be "clear, complete, coherent, concise, and compelling" besides being well-organized and visually effective (Vásquez, 2013, p. 99). In fact, in business contexts, employers are supposed to have no time for multiple drafts. That is why they are assumed to master grammar and know how to write well right at the first time, with little or without supervision. Eustace (1996) mentions two key points to which writers need to pay attention to improve the effectiveness of BW: structure and the use of language. He also points out that, in BW, content is more important than length because some rule such as "one side of A4" is just a reduction of word counts without bringing an improvement of what is written inside (p. 53). Thus, graduates are supposed to be aware that their writing skill must be advanced enough as it is essential for their career development and their business operation success.

Though BW is typically characterized by its own integrity and is distinctive from academic writing (AW), both types still share some common characteristics. Vásquez (2013) summarizes a number of similar and different characteristics between

AW and BW, through which BW is seen as more challenging for students in order to meet the needs of the twenty-first-century workplace. On the one hand, similarities between the two styles involve the requirements of clarity, logical organization, convincing manner, necessity for a purpose of writing, familiarity with readers and general use of regular vocabulary and grammatical rules. On the other hand, differences are found in writing purposes, structures, formats, contexts, readership and tones. While the purpose of AW is normally "write to learn", primarily for students to display their knowledge and perception of what has been taught (Smart et al., 2013; Vásquez, 2013), BW aims to convey some concrete facts, offer recommendations and guide the audience to perform a specific action. It is obvious that different forms of BW such as memos, contracts, reports, etc. are presented according to a typical structure with more apparent formats including bullet points, tables, graphs, etc. deliberately designed to facilitate easy skimming and scanning. Meanwhile, AW follows a strict prescription by the instructor with a shared structure (normally introduction, body and conclusion) without or with little consideration of visual appeal. Though both styles need to be convincing, BW targets a wider variety of readers such as managers, employees, technicians and engineers, agencies, stockholders, lawyers, etc.; therefore, the contexts usually vary and so does the tone. AW, on the contrary, primarily focuses on convincing instructors or examiners who are deemed to be more expert at the topic and, by their evaluations, will reflect how well a student understands a concept or argues a viewpoint; thus, the contexts and tone are supposed to remain among different academic genres such as essays, research papers or exams. BW, in general, is considered to be more condensed and concise than AW.

The BSPs collected in the current research originally belong to AW genres because they are written by undergraduate students as a requirement for the fulfillment of a course. However, they also belong to BW because the nature of a BSP is to serve the purposes of business communication. The elaboration of the BSP as a genre is going to be presented in the later section of the current chapter.

2.2.2 Genres in BW

The literature has witnessed a number of studies working on different genres of BW, ranging from those in professional settings to those in pedagogical settings, which share similarities but also differ in communicative purposes within their existence.

2.2.2.1 Business genres in professional settings

Business activities are conducted via language. Language is a means through which all production processes are organized and mediated. Hence, language in any forms - spoken or written - is deemed as central to any work performance in business contexts. This kind of language is categorized as language *doing* business, found in emails, reports, meetings, negotiations and phone calls (Nelson, 2000). According to Bhatia (1993), the most essential factor in genre identification is the communicative purpose which the genre is meant to serve. Orlikowski and Yates (1994) argue that genres in a community can be recognized by either or both of communicative purpose (which, according to Miller (1984), is not based on an individual's drive for communicating but constructed and reinforced within a community) and common aspects of form (referring to various features of communication such as structural features, communication medium, and language or symbol system). Some genres are so distinctive in their forms that their representative is easily identified; meanwhile, other genres can be more distinguishable by the communicative purpose or both characteristics of purpose and form (Orlikowski & Yates, 1994). In business contexts, in fact, the production of communicative practice is involved in the integration of multiple, different and interacting genres instead of a single one. It is represented in the recognition of two types of interactions among genres which are supposed to be rarely homogeneous and clearly separate. The first is genre overlap which means the involvement of more than one separate genre within a communicative action (e.g. a meeting often includes oral presentations or a minute) (Bhatia, 2005; Orlikowski & Yates, 1994), and the second is genre interdependence under the notion of "genre system" which refers to the interaction of related genres within a specific setting, e.g. a job ad is followed by letters of application which in turn are followed by phone calls or emails setting up interviews (Bazerman, 1994). Consequently, the investigation of a community's communicative practice must include the examination of a set of genres.

Another important characteristic of genres is the fact that they are seriously influenced by culture. Regarding the impacts of cultural aspects on genres, Bhatia (1993) argues that in a majority of genres, local cultural constraints are unlikely to influence the essential move-structure of a particular genre but very likely that they have significantly interesting implications for the recognition of certain moves and even in the employment of certain non-discriminative strategies for the achievement of specific intentions. Such constraints are specifically important for genres adopted in business transactions than anywhere else. For example, in

advertisements, cultural taboos in the use of numbers, colors and shapes are popular, representing in the way people in India avoid zero and other numbers ending in zero, or number 7 is shunned in Ghana, Kenya and Singapore, or number 88 has been considered offensive in England (Aman, 1982, as cited in Bhatia, 1993).

There are a wide variety of genres identified in business settings regarding different business areas. Devitt (1991) identifies 13 genres operating within the communicative practices of the tax accounting community between tax accountants or communication with clients, and reference to or comment on existing tax law (as cited in Nickerson, 2000). She also describes 3 types of intertextuality: referential (referring to the use of or reference to other texts), functional (referring to how a network of texts is formed within a community) and generic (referring to the type of text available to the profession; their evolution into genres and the subsequent formation of these genres into a set of established genres recognized by the profession concerned). Recently, promotional genres have become the most versatile and rapid developing discourse area thanks to the application of new technology in mass communication which leads to massive information explosion, and the irresistible nature of advertising and promotional activities in business. Bhatia (2005) proposes a list of common examples of promotional genres which include *advertisements*, *promotional letters*, *job applications*, *book blurbs*, *company brochures*, *travel brochures*, and others. He postulates that these genres tend to have a high degree of overlap in communicative purposes of promotion (of a product/service to a potential customer) that they are intended to serve, leading to various levels of generalization and the formation of a closely-related discourse colony although they may exhibit subtle differences in their realizations. Vásquez (2013) provides a list of different genres in BW including letters, e-mails, work orders, memos, contracts, sales materials, company brochure, manuals, presentations, reports, proposals, and business and marketing plans.

2.2.2.2 Business genres in pedagogical settings

Unlike the abovementioned genres in professional settings in real business world, business genres in pedagogical settings refer to those written by students, normally at the advanced level in university because students at this level are assumed to be preparing their first steps into real workplace environments. Nesi and Gardner (2012) propose a classification of 13 genre families (groups of genres) of student writing in higher education based on the BAWE corpus including case study, critique, design specification, empathy writing, essay, exercise, explanation, literature survey, methodology recount, narrative recount, problem question, proposal and

research report. The genre families are classified into five groups according to their social functions, i.e. (1) demonstrating knowledge and understanding, (2) developing powers of informed and independent reasoning, (3) developing research skills, (4) preparing for professional practice, and (5) writing for oneself and others. According to the purpose of ESP, the genre families belonging to BW serve to prepare for professional practice. The most noticeable genres which seem to be close to professional workplace writing are "apprentice genres", including *problem question, proposal, design specification* and *case study.*

Within business courses, the study by Zhu (2004) proposes nine genre types of writing assignments in business courses, among which genres that are more specifically connected to the business discipline, namely business genres, are *case analysis, business report, business proposal, design report,* and *business letter and memo*. Among the business genres, the BSP is included in the category named business proposal, sometimes it is labelled as "marketing plans". Such business genres are described to have strong problem-solving and decision-making orientation and majority of them require team work. Students then are expected to use their understanding of business principles and analysis of information which is available in course materials or deliberately collected for the assignment fulfillment to solve business problems or provide recommendations for business decisions. With the aim to initiate students into the business world, the business genres function to let students practice and sharpen their skills to prepare for their performance as real business professionals. Due to the nature of such business genres to require students to perform a dual identity of both an institutional role and a professional role, the genres hence represent both pedagogical genres and professional genres, in which some can be more pedagogical (e.g. case analysis) while others can be more professional (e.g. business report, business proposal, etc.)

Though the existence of business genres in professional and pedagogical settings is of equal significance and they share common features, there has been a strong argument that there is a mismatch between what teachers/instructors perceive as important and are trying to teach and what businessmen expect to see. Forey (2004), in her research on the interpretations of business texts by different stakeholders (including EFL teachers and business people) through the investigation of how they view the meaning making happening in the texts, points out the differences in the views of the two group members on the language used in written English workplace texts. The findings claim that the business informants prefer something more business-like, more informal, easy to read and less time-

consuming. Because conciseness and clarity are the essential features of workplace writing, the business informants perceive the texts in a pragmatic manner while the business teachers focus on linguistic features. That is, the business informants tend to respond more directly to the ideational (the content) rather than the interpersonal aspects of the texts. Their concerns are also related to the layout and style which can influence the amount of time it takes to comprehend a text. Meanwhile, the teacher informants who are in charge of teaching and establishing good writing practices would judge the appropriateness of the language use of the text which is deemed to be the 'content' of their lessons. Therefore, the teacher informants and others outside the workplace settings tend to be concerned about linguistic choices whereas business informants seem to be more practical in considering how language constructs meaning. The results in Forey (2004) somehow confirm the study by Puvenesvary (2003, as cited in Zhang, 2013) as the business practitioners (banking officers) are concluded to highlight time constraints as one of the criteria for them to assess students' business texts (besides power relationships between readers and writers as well as workplace culture). Moreover, the professional readers tend to notice how language errors and visual appeals, rather than linguistic proficiency, in the texts influence the corporate image while teachers of English for business are more concerned with students' writing accuracy of language and formats in accordance with their fulfillment of the test requirements. The studies are likely to confirm that a business genre is interpreted and perceived differently by different readers from different settings.

Besides the investigation of different interpretations between readers upon the same genre of BW discussed in Forey (2004), in order to obtain fuller insights of writing practices in business, Zhang (2013) conducts a study which provides an interesting distinction between student writers' business writing practices and those of business professionals, and at the same time reveals diverse impressions of business professionals on the students' business texts in international business contexts. Though both students and business professionals share preference on mutual intelligibility over native-likeness, the differences between their texts are perceived by students as being due to the ways of thinking rather than language. The majority of differences lie in the way they use the language, for example, business professionals are found to prefer positive presentation of information and tend to revise students' negative message positively. They also tend to use boosters to describe their own qualifications and skills, remove boosters when describing those of readers, emphasize mutual benefits and target different types of customers, all of which aim to serve pragmatic effectiveness; meanwhile, students seem to be attached to textbook

teaching in their realization of speech acts while acting in professional practice. However, the study also reveals the diversity among concerns of the business professionals on the same piece of writing and different preferences for more or less personal writing tone. The diversity may be explained by the fact that the business professionals are active in different industries, which leads to their different concerns on the texts, and due to different perceptions of management styles at workplace that makes their different opinions on the writing tone. The study by Zhang (2013) also discloses a gap still between the classroom and the profession as the students are figured out to lack a thorough understanding of genre knowledge which is an integration of all the formal, process, rhetorical, and subject-matter dimensions. They are found to be "particularly weak regarding the nuances or connotations of words and expressions, perspectives and thematization, certain procedures of genre production and distribution, and proper selection of information for inclusion in their texts" (Zhang, 2013, p. 153). Moreover, the Business English students, in order to perform more professionally, are suggested to assume the mindset of a business practitioner to produce professionally appropriate texts through the consideration of relevant rights as well as obligations of parties in the situated transactional context. Interestingly, besides the confirmation of business practitioners' pragmatic view of texts in their professions as in Forey (2004) and Puvenesvary (2003, cited in Zhang, 2013), the study concludes the similarity of business professionals to language teachers in the way they are also concerned about the quality of students' language with a large proportion of their comments relating to concerns with the linguistic code. Overall, the interesting results from the previous studies consequently lead to the potentiality of the current study to explore the perceptions of different stakeholders (readers and writers) of the BSP, which is identified as a business genre.

2.2.3 BSP as a Genre

Starting a business can be an exciting and challenging endeavor. One of the key components of a successful business is a well-crafted business plan. The researcher is going to present the characteristics of the BSP in real business world and in pedagogical settings.

2.2.3.1 The BSP in business world (professional settings)

A business/start-up plan (BSP) is a written document proposing the creation and operation of a business venture with detailed description of the present outlook and future possibilities of the organization (Honig & Karlsson, 2004). It is a document typically prepared by an entrepreneur (hereafter called Entrepreneurial Business/Start-up Plan or EBSP), describing both internal and external factors related

to a business start-up (Hisrich et al., 2013). Hindle (1997) defines a BSP as "the formal argument used to secure, from prospective investors, resources for a proposed entrepreneurial process" (cited in Hindle & Mainprize, 2006, p. 2). It is an essential guide contributing to efficient operation and management, serving as an information resource that facilitates the business-related decisions, motivation and performance measurement (Vestal, 1988). Other definitions are provided in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Other definitions and explanations of a BSP

Author (s)	Definition and explanations
Hisrich and Ramadani (2017, p.19)	"A key aspect of developing a strategy at each level (the enterprise level, the corporate level, the business level, the functional level, and the sub-functional level) is establishing goals and objectives. Goals need to be challenging and yet obtainable with effort. They need to be measurable so that the results can be evaluated and performance appraised. In order to accomplish the goals established and implement the strategy, a business plan is often created as it is an effective tool for providing the direction to the entrepreneur."
Entrepreneur Magazine (2020)	"A business plan is also a road map that provides directions so a business can plan its future and helps it avoid bumps in the road. The time you spend making your business plan thorough and accurate, and keeping it up-to-date, is an investment that pays big dividends in the long term."
Schwetje and Vaseghi (2007, p.1)	"A business plan, in principle, can be seen as a document that commercializes your business idea as a whole towards potential investors and stakeholders. A business plan is successful if you succeed in conveying to the reader the most significant opportunities and growth capacities of your company realistically."
Burns and Dewhurst (1990, p.4)	"The document that helps the entrepreneur to crystallize and focus the ideas and aids him on measuring the performance of the business is called business plan. The business plan that is included in this document identifies the need of professionalism in the information technology area where enterprises can outsource their information technology developments; in specific on the development of a web presence."

The plan is expected to tell a story about the creation of a business by convincing the audience about the feasibility of its future (Lawrence & Moyes, 2004). It constructs diverse scenarios that may influence the business so that accurate analysis can be conducted to convert business ideas and opportunities into real successes (Honig & Karlsson, 2004). It plays the role of an *analytical tool* when showing an entrepreneur a holistic picture that contains reasons for starting the business, anticipation of their business success and potential problems they may face. A BSP can serve as a an *action plan* by helping the owner break down the seemingly insuperable obstacle of starting a business into smaller, less intimidating pieces of tasks, examine each piece and deal with it (Lawrence & Moyes, 2009). It is also an invaluable tool as a *road map* - "a blueprint, a statement of goals and hopes, a compass, and a guideline to planned action" (Haag, 2013, p. 20) - to keep the entrepreneur focused without losing sight of their objectives and goals. Besides, a BSP can be used to raise fund from outside sources such as investors, banks, grants, government agencies, friends and family. The plan is a *financial tool* convincing its

fund sources about the writer's vision and that the business is worth their financial support (Ahn et al., 2014; Conrad et al., 2019; Lawrence & Moyes, 2009). Apart from financial sources, the plan also needs to convince other audience who could be key employees to be hired, directors, advisors, suppliers, customers, friends, family members and even the writer themselves that the idea can be fruitful. It then serves as a sales tool to get people involved in the business (Lawrence & Moyes, 2009). After some time of business implementation, the plan can be used as a *benchmark* to re-evaluate progress and set the goals for the future (Hormozi et al., 2002). Based on the purpose of the plan, the writer should be identified as a new business owner, a start-up founder looking for outside finance sources, existing business owners raising funds for expansion, or an entrepreneur who wants to foster the success of their company (Hormozi et al., 2002).

A well-written BSP can benefit a number of stakeholders. For an entrepreneur, writing a BSP is deemed an expression of entrepreneurial intentions (Honig & Karlsson, 2004; Olokundun et al., 2017). By writing a BSP, an entrepreneur can identify their own business and product(s); clarify and modify their objectives and action plans to accomplish such objectives; anticipate and possibly solve potential issues even when the problems have not happened; back loan application and/or raise equity funding; support their communication about their idea if they have to look for business assistance or consultation; determine the worthiness of their business for sale or legal purposes, conduct analysis on the current market and target customers; and even set agreements between partners (if any) (Ahn et al., 2014). Though no plan is 100% accurate to the real happenings, a successful plan assists an entrepreneur to quickly adapt to the changes of the environment, the society and the market. Sending their plan to reviewers, i.e. an accountant or an attorney, also helps an entrepreneur avoid problems, delays or rejection from investors especially in law and tax-related areas. Moreover, a good plan in hand helps an entrepreneur avoid a lack of resources (Hindle & Mainprize, 2006). Through planning, they can control financial resources during the process of entrepreneurship. For investors who always expect a high level of expertise and professionalism from the business they opt to fund, a convincing plan is able to not only successfully transfer the business owner's initiative but also display the entrepreneur's competences via a number of detailed, thorough discussion on what should be done for the business implementation (Haag, 2013). An impressive plan which handles both the expected and unexpected positives and negatives during the operation of a business would save the investors' time to choose which business to put their money into. Though

the relationship between writing business plans and entrepreneurial success is still questioned, business plans are still taught in schools and encouraged by business development centers because, even though they may or may not bring positive effects on success, they are unlikely to bring negative ones (Welter et al., 2021). Furthermore, under a number of certain conditions, business planning is likely to beneficial to the stakeholders (Brinckmann et al., 2010).

The plan structure is not universal but exists in various formats that are different in length or depth, from a one-page template to a full-length traditional model. Based on a specific purpose of the plan, the components of the contents will vary. For example, if the plan primarily aims to raise money, the content will emphasize the financial section with detailed information for the reviewers to see their potentialities. Alternatively, if the plan is primarily used to facilitate managing and measuring activities, a number of benchmarks should be included to make sure comparison of actual performance can be made (Vestal, 1988). A BSP can perform with one aim or multiple aims for the operation of a business during the first years. Though each plan is unique, a set of common elements can be found among a collection of samples of this genre, i.e. executive summary, business description, marketing plan, financial plan, etc.

2.2.3.2 The BSP in university contexts (pedagogical settings)

In university contexts, the BSP is a type of assignment besides other writing tasks required in business courses (hereafter called Student Business/Start-up Plan or SBSP). It is a genre existing under the term "business proposal" (Zhu, 2004) referring to multiple types of assignments, i.e. business/start-up plan and marketing plan, which share the same purposes. In an SBSP which is similar to an EBSP, students are expected to propose strategic planning, operational strategies or only marketing strategies for a new or existing business venture. Generally, students are requested to provide a holistic description of the business/marketing situation, identify the goals and/or objectives of the company or the marketing situation, and propose working strategies to obtain the goals/ objectives (Zhu, 2004). The purpose of this genre is to get students acquainted with the business world by providing them with an opportunity to function as a real entrepreneur and sharpen their skills needed to deal with real-world tasks. The SBSP is generally a team project because the ability to work cooperatively is the key characteristic that is valued in business courses (Davidson & Worsham, 1992, cited in Zhu, 2004).

The SBSP functions as an evidence of students' dual roles: as learners (the institutional role) to display the knowledge they have learnt from the

curriculum and as business people (the professional role) to perform their professional qualifications and readiness as an entrepreneur (Zhu, 2004). The SBSP serves as a representative of both academic writing and discipline-specific writing when students are placed into a context in which they are expected to display acquired knowledge as student writers, and at the same time play the roles of business professionals to write to their business audience and adopt real business strategies. This kind of practice indeed helps ease a student's entry into the real business world. Therefore, the expected audience of the SBSP may include those of both the pedagogical and professional genres. Regarding the audiences of the pedagogical genre, the SBSP is expected to aim at three groups. The first group is students studying the same course. They can be their groupmates, who will proofread their peers' composition to make comments, correct mistakes or suggest more ideas for a better "product" before their submission to the teacher in charge. They also can be the students of the next batches of the course who are looking for writing models to complete their task. The second group is the teacher in charge of the course who can also be the assessor of the students' group work at the end of the course. The third group is the examiners who are assigned to assess students' work at the end of the course besides the teacher in charge. Hence, for communication with the audience of the first genre, the writers aim to display their business knowledge to persuade their peers to approve their ideas, then pass the course through the assessment of the teacher in charge and the examiners assigned to test them. In terms of the audiences of the professional genre, according to Zhu (2004), the SBSP is expected to attract three primary potential groups. The first group is the management consultants who will read the plan to spot the problems that the plan might be involved in and suggest some solutions. After that, the plan is expected to be sent to a number of venture capitalists (the second group) or/and a loan officer of a bank (the third group). These two groups are those who will make a decision, after reading the plan, to invest their money into the project or offer the business owner some loan. Therefore, in order to persuade the audience of the second and third groups, the plan should be well-written and convincing enough to make them interested in the project and willing to give money without or with little hesitation. The communication with the audiences of the second genre enables the writers to express their dreams or their expected future by putting their imagination into words. On the way doing so, they will learn to adopt strategies to make their plan plausible.

Because of the efficiency and impression that a SBSP is expected to make on its audience, the SBSP is recommended to "show" rather than to "tell" in

order to conform with the business communication style - "to communicate efficiently with great impression" (Zhu, 2004, p. 125). That is, the academic writing style only, which is deemed to include pages of words, may not be effective in creating impression on the audience. Instead, the addition of visuals such as color graphics and pictures (the professional style) is the key element that can gain and keep the audience's attention while conveying multiple layers of meaning. Moreover, persuasion strategies are critical characteristics of the SBSP because, in order to persuade multiple stakeholders to accept their business ideas, the writer have to prove that the plan is feasible within all the resources they have. Zhu (2004) also mentions two crucial elements involved in business persuasion including consistency and plausibility, and confirms that the emphasis on persuasion is an essential component of business genres.

The existence of a BSP is deemed to be highly associated with the performance of a business and makes contribution to the development of the firm (Hormozi et al., 2002). Therefore, the development of a SBSP - a "mock" EBSP - as a business simulation in university contexts should be identified as one of the most important features of entrepreneurship courses. As Haapasalo and Hyvönen (2001) state that "people learn from their experience" (p. 262), writing a BSP can be categorized as one form of experiential learning through which students' business knowledge is created. Learning is experiential in the way students are directly involved in the real phenomenon being studied rather than only thinking about it (Haapasalo & Hyvönen, 2001). Therefore, writing a BSP can be an experience that enrich students' business knowledge when they put themselves into the cases of prospective entrepreneurs. By writing a BSP, students can understand the nature of a business with a product/service, the customers, the competitors, the human resources and management, the production and marketing methods, the financing and other essential aspects of that proposed business (Hormozi et al., 2002). Writing a mock BSP is playing as a teaching strategy linking formal education and meaningful work experience. This kind of experiential learning is an evidence of a good collaboration between school and industry which is believed to lead to effective entrepreneurship education. Fregetto (2005) confirms that the writing of a business plan as a business simulation does reinforce some essential business skills such as financial and marketing skills among students besides teaching them the impact of good team performance. Okolocha and Ile (2012) also suggest that using business plans as teaching strategies in entrepreneur education helps develop students' entrepreneurial competences to become self-reliant and self-employed. The study

by Ferreras-Garcia et al. (2019) also confirms that the development of a business plan, regardless of a real or a fictitious type, has a positive impact on the perception and attainment of entrepreneurial competences among students related to information, decision-making, improving company's competitive position and critical assessment. Business planning, therefore, is considered a critical component of EE.

In the current context, the Section of Business is a branch of the English Language program in the Faculty of Foreign Languages, targeting to bring business background knowledge to EFL students. The SBSP is a new genre (so-called "emerging") appearing in this academic community (an EFL context), not to mention in other similar academic communities in universities around Ho Chi Minh City and other regions in Vietnam. In this academic community, it is composed of four sections: the executive summary, the business, the financial data, and supporting documents.

2.2.4 Previous Studies of the BSP

Because the BSP is an emerging genre in EFL higher education contexts, the studies on the production of a BSP is underrepresented in the literature. The researcher, hence, is going to provide a brief review of the investigations of the BSP in previous studies.

Vesper and Vesper (1993) discussed the production of a BSP and how to use it for a team writing assignment in classroom. The article presents the uses of the BSP, a detailed description of the context of using the BSP as a term project in an introductory course in business communication in the University of Washington with a thorough explanation of how to grade students' works and a prediction of weakness and risks. The project is conducted among self-selected teams of junior or senior business students following principles for writing proposals and reports. Besides the final BSP, students are required to submit six additional assignments which include a memo to the instructor regarding the information of topic selected, an inquiry letter to an actual businessman for the assistance with the topic, two computer-generated graphs of numeral data, a progress report, an oral presentation in front of class members acting as investors, and an appreciation note to any supporter for the plan. The contents of the BSP are not clearly stated but recommended to be obtained from the U.S Small Business Administration (SBA) and other firms. Students are allowed to imagine and create information related to the BSP without being evaluated of the authenticity but the persuasion instead. The emphasis of the grading is on the form and presentation with 40% on Ideas, 40% on Organization, 10% on Style and Mechanics, 5% on Appearance and 5% on Something extra. Each section is provided with specific questions to guide the grading. Though the BSP is confirmed as a

challenging task for the students but is also concluded possible because it can provoke creative thinking along with informative, analytical, and persuasive writing, which is the biggest strength of the assignment. The students are expected to think and function as entrepreneurs in the development of a BSP. However, the instructor has to help them overcome uncertainty which can appear right at the early stage of the development by providing them with examples and outlines, at the same time remind them of the possibility of uncertainty as a part of learning and creativity. Vesper and Vesper (1993) also accept the flexibility in instructors' judgment of the BSP, which focuses on the form and presentation rather than on the business validity because, in the real business world, venture capitalists often hire consultants to help them evaluate the business merits of the BSP. The article serves as a reference for the employment of the BSP as a term assignment in any curriculum. However, the guidance protocol without a specific description of certain components of the contents will lead to a wide variety of the products in forms and styles, which will cause a number of challenges in grading the plans and helping students identify a well-crafted sample. Besides, the limitation of time constraint with six additional documents along with the fulfillments of other courses during the term will be a considerable time-consuming challenge for students; therefore, it is deemed to be advisable to have a detailed move-step instruction for them to save time and energy.

Olokundun et al. (2017) carried out a descriptive study to examine the influence of entrepreneurship educators' competence on the enhancement of university students' commitment to writing business plans as an expression of entrepreneurial aspiration and intention. The data collected from a survey with 600 university students selected by purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques in four institutions in Nigeria was analysis through SPSS to seek answers to hypothesis. The study confirms that entrepreneurship educator's competence, especially experience and skills, has impacts on entrepreneurship students' commitment to learning, particularly in writing business plans.

Dal Mas et al. (2021) investigate the application of a BSP (as a knowledge translation tool to facilitate business process management) in a public initiative co-financed program designed for potential entrepreneurs and conducted by the local government of the Region Friuli Venezia Giulia in the northeast of Italy and the European Social Fund. The program aims to help potential entrepreneurs to assess their business ideas and acquire knowledge because of the intervention of different professionals. A qualitative multi-case study approach is adopted to analyze 40 finalized BSPs for new business ventures selected according to the completeness of

the BSP, the complexity of the project, the state of the project at the time of the interview and the entrepreneurial team. The data analysis was performed through Nnivo, using an *in vivo* coding approach. The findings reveal a four-section structure of a BSP, including (1) the entrepreneurial project with detailed business idea, the team members and the legal entity selected for the project, (2) the product/service provided per se and the related marketing plan, (3) the external business environment and the competitive scenario, and (4) the forecast budget. The study confirms the value of the BSP development in acting as a bridge for knowledge translation process of business management. The development can help aspiring entrepreneurs explicate their business ideas in a more intelligible manner to others and more mindful of how it should be done to get the message across. Besides, the description of the product/service and a marketing plan help the integration of entrepreneurial competences with the development of the business. Next, the need to analyze the business environment entails a thorough understanding of market trends, competitors, opportunities and threats. The last value is the development of the forecast financial statements that helps entrepreneurs transfer their initiatives into numbers. Therefore, the functioning as a knowledge translation tool of a BSP is identified according to four manners as below:

(1) externalizing the tacit business idea to an explicit form, embedded into a written document;
(2) translating the entrepreneurial idea into the needed skills and competencies required for its enactment;
(3) connecting the temporal dimensions therein, taking advantage of the stakeholders' ideas and past experience; and
(4) explicating the financial resources needed according to the business idea's features.

(p. 13)

The fact that this study was conducted in a specific research context prevents the results from a mass generalization. Furthermore, cultural aspects which may influence the results seem to be ignored. Therefore, further investigation based on this study is recommended.

Yüksel (2022) carries out research on variations of perceptions and experiences of students who study entrepreneurship and develop BSPs in higher education in Oman by gender and by program (discipline). The study is conducted through a survey with 562 students from multiple disciplines including Medicine, IT, Business, Engineering, Nursing at public and private higher education institutions. There

is no strict form from the guidebook for Entrepreneurship Module by the Ministry of Higher Education, but the most common includes a cover sheet, a table of contents, an executive summary, an organizational plan, a marketing plan, and a financial plan. The grading may vary between components, but the main areas are a written BSP and an oral presentation. The results show that, regardless of gender and program, financial management is agreed as the most difficult section of a BSP while the most preferred aspects of developing a BSP are teamwork and the creation and renovation of revenues. The least preferred are financial management, business entitlement, and fundraising. Furthermore, bigger team size negatively affects the perceptions/experiences of the students. Regarding the gender differences, males prefer to work individually for a BSP development, are more ready to start up with the BSP as it is their dream, more willing to sell the BSP and ask for higher price, more likely to ask for help from others and prefer business people than friends, compared to females. The study also points out that students are not persuaded about the necessity of the BSP and they are not well supported with materials and lectures which are not learner-friendly with little guidance for non-business students to prepare a BSP. However, the study does not provide a thorough discussion on the differences in the BSP development among disciplines as well as lack an insightful explanation of the different experiences and their influence on the BSP development.

While the literature of business writing witnesses a lack of studies working on the rhetorical structure in BSPs except other business genres such as promotional genres of sales letters, job applications, advertisements, etc., the brief review of the limited previous studies regarding the BSP as a genre reflects a lack of research on how to develop a BSP in details to assist students' writing process regarding linguistic dimension. Furthermore, the previous investigations of the BSP have not identified generic characteristics of the BSP genre, as well as have ignored the creation of a fixed structure of the genre. Besides, a close investigation on SBSPs is also underrepresented, which leads to the shortage of theoretical and pedagogical support for classroom teaching in business writing. The current research is then expected to seek answers to the above problems.

2.3 Persuasion

2.3.1 Definition and characteristics

The concept of *persuasion* has attracted attention from scholars in literature from various perspectives, e.g. rhetoric, communication studies, psychology, sociology, political science, and linguistics (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020). In

social interaction, persuasion is a fundamental process concerning the changes in attitudes and behaviors of people involved in the context (Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015). Persuasion is once defined and universally accepted as "human communication designed to influence the autonomous judgments and actions of others" (Simons, 1976, p. 7). Persuasion is deemed an attempt to alter a person's behavior in a manner, or get them to accept an alternative viewpoint concerning values, attitudes and belief that they have never embraced before (Introduction to Public Communication, n.d.). O'Keefe (2016) argues that the concept of persuasion should embed five common features: successful attempt to influence, intention to influence, freedom on the persuadee's part, communication (the medium of language), and a change in the mental state of the persuadee. Therefore, in O'Keefe (2016), persuasion is defined as "a successful intentional effort at influencing another's mental state through communication in a circumstance in which the persuadee has some measure of freedom" (p.4).

Regarding persuasive discourse, Halmari and Virtanen (2005) refer to persuasion as "linguistic choices that aim at changing or affecting the behavior of others or strengthening the existing beliefs and behaviors of those who already agree, the beliefs and behaviors of persuaders included" (p. 5). The reasoned action theory explains that persuasive messages can change beliefs, which consequently affects attitudes, intentions and finally behavior (Yzer, 2013). However, Pelclová and Lu (2018) argue that persuasion does not necessarily change but confirms a person's political preferences or consuming habits, and also strengthens one's belief, knowledge and ideology, e.g. the preference for a specific coffee brand. Besides, as their further explanation, it introduces differences in viewpoints and allows members of different communities to consider other systems of beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors that differ from theirs.

The study of persuasion rhetoric traces its origin back to the proposal of the Classical Rhetoric model by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020), which is attached with three persuasive appeals to the audience: (1) *ethos* - the ethical appeal (referring to the "credibility and attractiveness of the speaker's character mediated by the voice of the persuader"); (2) *pathos* - the emotional appeal (referring to the "feelings, attitudes and values of the audience"); and (3) *logos* - the logical appeal (referring to the "rationality of the audience based on evidence and reference from the real world") (p.3). Killingsworth (2005) claims that these three appeals are closely connected with the key elements in communication, i.e. the speaker (the author), the audience, and the message and, at the same time, argues

that Aristotle's "appeals" may not be appeals at all but rather "mode of persuasion", "means of persuasion" or "proof" (p. 2). The Modern Rhetorical model also claims that the Aristotelian triad has overestimated the significance of logical evidence, then the relationship between the speaker and audience is considered "unidirectional and manipulative" (Ede & Lunsford, 1984; Mulholland, 1994, cited in Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020; Hogan, 2013). The Modern Rhetorical, therefore, revises persuasion as "a dialogic, dynamic and interpretative process in which the audience plays a decisive role [...] and the speaker may assume various roles to address multiple audiences" (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020, p. 3). As can be seen, strong arguments really matter but are not the secret of persuasion. According to Conger (1998), the success of persuasion lies in the incorporation of different factors which are not less important, including the persuader's credibility and their eloquence to put a win-win position for the both parties, the connection with the audience at the right level of their emotions, and the medium of vivid and appropriate language that keeps the arguments alive. He further elaborates that persuasion is a process which involves establishing credibility, listening to audience's concerns to find the common ground with them, reinforcing the position the author is holding using vivid language, and connecting emotionally with the audience. Therefore, the existence of audience is a must in the definition of persuasion, defining the interactive and dynamic nature of persuasion, and influencing the choice of linguistics strategies to make the text persuasive.

2.3.2 The effects of message features on persuasion

A person's daily activities are surrounded by thousands of persuasive messages which aim to influence their decision to buy a product, to persuade them to vote for a politician, or even simply to invite them to a party. The persuasion of each message received is mediated by persuasive linguistic features which distinguish the study of persuasion in communication from that in other fields, e.g. psychology. Indeed, how messages are designed to establish a great impact and achieve desired outcomes is the key question that is worth much attention in persuasion research. The construction of persuasive messages is achieved through different features. In Shen and Bigsby (2013) and O'Keefe (2016), three essential elements that contribute to the persuasion of a message are presented as *content*, *structure* and *style*.

Content refers to what the message is about, including the topic, the theme and the story being told. What makes the coherence of the content is the support of evidence and whether or not the opposing opinions are mentioned and/or addressed. Supporting evidence is categorized as *statistical evidence* (presenting statistics, e.g. frequencies or percentages), *testimonial evidence* (supporting the claim by the usage

of one's personal experience, eye-witness account, or personal opinion), *anecdotal evidence* (a personal interpretation or opinion toward a target, often subjective), and *analogical evidence* (comparing one idea/ situation to another, useful when dealing with a novel topic). Among the four, statistical and testimonial evidence are considered strong types and more widely used than the other two. The study by Allen and Preiss (1997, cited in Shen & Bigsby, 2013) even claims that statistical evidence is more pervasive than the testimonial in terms of the persuasive impact. Besides the evidence, whether a message is persuasive or not depends on whether it is *one-sided* or *two-sided*. That is, a one-sided message never refers to or acknowledges the existence of the opposing opinions while a two-sided does. A two-sided message can be *non-refutational* (no provision of counter-argument against the opposition), or *refutational* (with provision of counter-argument to claim the superiority in their argument over the opponent). When considering the pesuasive effectiveness between the two types of message (one-sided and two-sided), studies have found inconsistent conclusions of which one is more effective . However, the conclusions tend to become more consistent when other elements of potential moderators are counted, e.g. type of two-sided message (non-refutational or refutational), audience favorability, and type of study (advertisement or non-advertisement). For example, refutational two-sided messages are more persuasive than one-sided counterparts; meanwhile non-refutational two-sided ones are less persuasive than the one-sided (Miller & Levine, 2019; O'Keefe, 2016; Shen & Bigsby, 2013).

Structure of the message is primarily related to how either the data or the argument are presented, e.g. the number and the order of the arguments in the message. There are two features that are related to the message structure including *climax versus anticlimax order* of arguments, and *conclusion explicitness*. Regarding the former, the difference between *climax* and *anticlimax* structure is that in the former, most important arguments are presented at the end of the message but the latter mentions most important arguments on top. These two types of structure barely make difference in terms of overall persuasive effectiveness; however, under different contexts (e.g. within time limitation), the employment of the more relevant structure can help the speaker maximize the intensity of their persuasion. Regarding the *conclusion* and whether it is explicit or implicit for more effectiveness in terms of persuasion, Hovland & Mandell (1952) and O'Keefe (1997) confirm that explicit conclusion will be more persuasive because it will increase source credibility thanks to being frank and forthright while the other may be considered as having something to hide (as cited in Shen & Bigsby, 2013).

Style of message refers to the way information is presented linguistically. Regarding the impact of style on message persuasion, Shen and Bigsby (2013) present four style features examined in the literature, including: *powerful versus powerless language*, *metaphor*, *message framing,* and *coherence markers*. *Powerless* language is recognized by the inclusion of such linguistic features as hedges, hesitation forms, politeness forms and questioning intonations showing the social inferiority of the speaker. On the contrary, the language without the abovementioned features is categorized as *powerful* language. To date, powerful language is proved to be more effective in conveying persuasion in the message by a number of studies in the literature (Areni & Sparks, 2005; Hosman & Siltanen, 2006; Shen & Bigsby, 2013) because it enhances source credibility significantly. *Metaphor* is believed to have a great influence on persuasion and "can structure, transform, and create knowledge; evoke emotions; and change attitudes" (Ross, 1952; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; MacCormac, 1985, cited in Shen & Bigsby, 2013, p. 51). Another stylistic feature, *message framing*, refers to two types of persuasive strategy: gain frame (emphasizing benefits and rewards from compliance of the message advocacy) and loss frame (highlighting the costs and punishments related to noncompliance). The persuasive effectiveness of the two types is debatable among scholars, but O'Keefe and Jensen (2006, 2007, 2009) confirm that there is no difference in the overall persuasive impact between the two; however, the gain frame leads to slight but significant impact on message elaboration than the lost frame. The last message feature that has gained substantial attention in the literature is *coherence markers*, e.g. connectives (because, moreover, hence) and lexical cue phrases (as a result, as a matter of fact, for that reason). Sanders and Spooren (2007) argue that with such complex structure features, the text becomes easier for the readers as there is no need for them to make an implicit connection. However, different types of coherence markers may lead to different persuasive effects in communication. For example, sentences with objective markers convey more persuasion than those with subjective markers within the topic (but those with both or none of them make no difference from those with either of them).

In short, the message features have been confirmed to make significant impacts on message persuasion (O'Keefe, 2016; Shen & Bigsby, 2013). However, further persuasion research is expected to include the investigation of both linguistic features and psychological aspects to fully understand the persuasion process in general and extend persuasion theories. The practical implications can be applied to the provision of guidance for message design and practices of persuasion.

2.3.3 Theories of persuasion

2.3.3.1 The psychology of persuasion

It is easy to see that human nature is impossible to change because people tend to resist any change they encounter. However, if the change is presented in a form that is close to their attitudes, beliefs, and values, they are more willing to pay attention to and accept it. In order to achieve such acceptance, the presenter has to find out persuasion techniques to inspire belief and response from the audience. Long time ago, Aristotle understood that the most important thing in persuasion is to connect with the audience's self-interest. The similar conclusion from the modern persuasion theory also confirms that the key of persuasion is not what the speaker is "selling" but lies on what is already anchored in the audience's head. By echoing the audience's self-interest with phrases keyed to their specific situation and imaginative empathy displayed as an act of reaching out to touch them, the communicator will be likely able to have their persuasive message passed through the wall of resistance.

Cialdini (2007), in his book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, asserts seven key principles regarding how to develop psychology of compliance including *contrast, reciprocation, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority* and *scarcity*. These principles have become the basis of influence strategies not only widely used in daily interpersonal interactions but also effectively applied in business, especially in promotional areas such as marketing and advertising. The application of these key underlying principles has strengthened the implicit persuasion within promotional messages and lead the audience (consumers) to the final decision of making a purchase without any awareness of the technique.

The *contrast* principle comes from people's common perception that "if the second item is fairly different from the first, we will tend to see it as more different than it actually is" (Cialdini, 2007, p. 9). For example, if an object A is lifted first and then a lighter object B is lifted later, then the object B will be perceived as much lighter than it really is. This contrast principle is widely applied in many fields other than weight. An instance indicating this principle application in business is the happenings at clothing stores. Saleswomen tend to introduce more expensive items first, e.g. an expensive suit, followed by a suggestion of a lower-price item, e.g. a necktie. Though the necktie may not be a really cheap one, its price is perceived as much lower than its real value when compared to the price of a suit, which leads to a high rate of closing this deal successfully.

The second principle *reciprocation* refers to a rule when people are under obligation to make the future repayment of favors, invitations, presents or the like. The rule has been found considerably effective and its power also spreads to merchandising fields. A familiar example of the power of reciprocation is the delivery of free samples at supermarket. Not only the delivery of beauty samples but also the provision of some small cubes of food such as cheese or bacon by an always-smiling promotion girl (who still smiles brightly receiving the toothpick returned) will cause a feeling of indebtedness among the receivers who may buy some of the product though they do not really want it. The reciprocation rule, as a result, has governed many situations in social life based on a very basic nature of interpersonal interactions.

The third rule, *commitment and consistency,* is another rule that lies deep inside an individual and leads them with quiet power which states that "once we have made a choice or taken a stand, we will encounter personal and interpersonal pressures to behave consistently with that commitment" (Cialdini, 2007, p. 43). Actually, consistency is always valued and considered a desirable personality trait which is associated with strong mind. Once a person has made a decision on a matter, then the consistency, coming from the commitment that person made earlier, will prevent them from thinking further or making another choice. An illustration of this rule is the usage of this strategy by a salesperson to achieve a large purchase by starting with a small one (so-called the foot-in-the-door technique). A small purchase does not bring a significant profit but it can bring commitment which makes larger transactions flow naturally afterwards.

The fourth principle is *social proof*, which states that the appropriateness of a behavior is evaluated based on the popularity of that behavior among other people. This rule is commonly applied in nowadays online sales especially on social media when the sellers hire many accounts to comment or place (fake) orders under their posts to make other audience believe that similar people want that product, therefore it is good. This perception will likely push them to make a purchase of that hot item. Another similar way to boost sales is hiring a celebrity to "accidentally" mention that they are using the product and talk about its advantages. The mentioning will attract a numerous amount of comments and orders of people of the same fan group (including fake ones, maybe) which are the hooks (as a social proof) for other purchases ("I should buy it because other fans have bought it already"), besides the effect of the celebrity's credibility.

Liking is the fifth principle of influence. In daily interactions, people tend to easily accept requests from someone they know and like. Therefore, a

renowned brand such as Amway has developed their marketing and selling system by individuals who will directly sell their products to their familiar acquaintances. A significant illustration of this rule application in business is the setting of a Tupperware Home Party described in details by Cialdini (2007). The party settings actually involve a lot of influence techniques such as *reciprocation* (partygoers who do not win the warm-up game can reach into a grab bag - another game in which they are blind to the gift they are going to receive - so that everyone receive a gift before their buying), *commitment* (each attendee has to describe in public advantages of the product they possess) and *social proof* (each purchase from an attendee is a confirmation to others that "the product must be good"). The key determinant of the party, however, is the party hostess who has invited her friends to her home demonstration. Within such a setting, intimate elements such as the warmth, the security, the attraction and even the obligation of a friendship contribute to the success of each purchase. The liking rule proves that even though a friend does not really need a product, they are unlikely to say no to a friend. Furthermore, even a friend's name only mentioned in an introduction as "Ms. A has brought this product and she suggests I call you" may contribute to the success of a deal. Other components of the liking rule include physical attractiveness, similarity, compliments, familiarity, condition and association. The liking rule, indeed, establishes a considerable advantage for communicators (e.g. a car salesperson) who can set a good impression on their audience (or customers) because most people are unlikely to be able to separate the affect liking from their real purchase.

The next principle of influence is the obedience to *authority*. Normally, people are trained (from birth) to obey proper authority and it is right to do so. This training appears everywhere, at school, at home, in legal documents, in religious instruction and so on in almost all cultures. The training makes people believe that they will encounter a bundle of bad returns even after death once they disobey a command from a higher authority. Therefore, a person's decision on a specific behavior performance is significantly influenced by the information from a recognized authority. Because people rely on such information in almost all cases and it leads them to proper reactions, they normally follow a process of mindless obedience without further thinking. A typical example of such mindless obedience is the automatic obedience among health-care staff to doctors' orders due to their respected authority in that setting. This rule is witnessed to be popular in TV commercials in which actors are asked to play the roles of doctors talking and giving advice regarding the product advertised. The elements related to such an authority include titles, clothes (specifically designed for a profession) and trappings (finely

styled and expensive clothes, jewelry and cars, etc.). The combination of these elements as symbols of authority will contribute to increase the chances of compliance even without the genuine substance of authority.

The last principle that influences a person's behavior is *scarcity*, which refers to the fact that "opportunities seem more valuable to us when their availability is limited" (Cialdini, 2007, p. 179). People are much influenced by the thought of losing something (rather than gaining things of the same value), and this thought tends to affect their process of making a decision. This principle becomes a technique to boost sales when customers are publicly announced of a limited number of products available for sale. Even when the limited-number information could be fake news, it still confirms its power in convincing the customers of the high value of the products which is built actually by the scarcity of the item. A similar tactic is the "deadline" strategy when customers are allowed to buy a certain product within a limited time range. It can be illustrated by common Flash Sales on big sales platforms like Lazada or Shopee. Indeed, the power of scarcity comes from two sources. The first one targets a person's desire to have shortcuts to make a quick and correct decision on a specific product. The second targets their hate to lose freedom to make a choice. Therefore, by increasing scarcity, sellers make customers' freedom threatened, then their mode of reactance is turned on. Then, their reaction against the interference is their bigger desire to possess the item and more effort to grasp it than before. The tendency to desire what is inhibited and then to perceive it as much worthier than ever is not limited within a certain field or a certain area but has been widely witnessed in social and other business activities.

The abovementioned influence principles can be applied in writing a BSP and may be able to affect persuasion outcomes directly and indirectly. In terms of direct impact on general project construction, BSP writers may apply the principle of *commitment and consistency* to present their long-term goals, their responsibility, devotion and persistence in building and running the project besides the relevance, logic and close-knitted connection among their abilities in the field, the data they demonstrate, and the planned activities they draw up, etc. They may justify the foundation of their business based on the assumptions, needs and behaviors of a number of citizens (*social proof*) or based on the lack of such a business around the region they target (*scarcity*). They may explain their foundation of the business by giving an ethical reason, e.g. for the sake of poor people, for nature preservation, etc. that can touch the readers and raise their empathy to approve the project as an encouragement (*reciprocation*). Their explanation of the project may include

information of some regulations/laws/rules to elaborate the reason why they have to perform a specific action (*authority*). As to *contrast* principle, it is quite difficult to apply this rule in the plan construction generally, but they may mention another similar project with a substantial scale of investment as a model and then refer to their own feasible project with the same purpose at a smaller scale, which may ease the readers' decision-making process. Last but not least, the *liking* principle may be the most likely to be applied in the BSP development because it is not difficult to see that a beautiful, neat and well-organized BSP can win the readers' affection easily.

Overall, the application of the principles to the persuasion of the feasibility of the plan acts as the core element to directly convince the readers to perform an action upon the approval of the project. However, the degree of persuasion can be enriched indirectly through the usage of the abovementioned principles in developing marketing strategies and promotional campaigns which appear in the marketing plan of the BSP. The fact is that all the principles are able to be embedded in constructing marketing strategies and enhancing sales. This employment is likely to show a clear picture regarding the plausibility and possibilities of the project proposed; therefore, it tends to bring more compliance from the readers with the project as successful persuasion outcomes.

2.3.3.2 The Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) focusing on a voluntary action (e.g. voting for a politician) was developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), who witnessed that the action that a person might take is not decided by their attitude toward an action or a behavior (cited in Jones & Simons, 2017). In the construction of their theory, they concluded that the determining factor to predict a behavior is *intentions*, which is the combination of *attitudes toward behavior* (AB) and *subjective norms* (SNs) (Dainton & Zelley, 2019; Dillard & Shen, 2013; Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; Hale et al., 2002; Jones & Simons, 2017; O'Keefe, 2009, 2016). AB includes *belief* and *value* as two primary components. Beliefs are what people individually consider as "true or probable" (Jones & Simons, 2017), often starting with "*Somebody* (e.g. *I, we*) believe that….". It may not be a fact, but it is likely to convey a high probability. Values refer to the judgements about the worth of things around (both positive and negative) which are believed to be the guidance of a person's life, e.g. a woman agrees that the advertised car is beautiful and fashionable (*belief*), but she thinks buying such a car is a waste of money (*value-negative*). SNs refer to a person's evaluation of how they are expected to do by people they highly value and how much they are willing/motivated to comply to that expectation. Therefore, behavioral

intentions, according to TRA, is shaped by the influence of both factors: personal (attitudinal) and social (normative) (O'Keefe, 2009).

However, the critics of TRA argued that there are other predictors of behavioral intentions, i.e. *moral obligations*, *self-identity*, *affect*, and *prior behavior* (Hale et al., 2002). *Moral obligations* refer to what a person believes as right or wrong regarding a volitional behavior. They are not the attitude toward the behavior or the perceptions of how others significant expect one should behave. They are inner beliefs which may construct one's lifestyle and decide their behavior. *Self-identity* addresses one's need of defining themselves. For example, a celebrity voluntarily joins a planting-tree campaign because environmental aspects are the key components for them to build their identity concept. *Affect* may influence TRA via anticipated affective outcomes and one's mood state. Anticipated affective outcomes, e.g. anticipated regret - anticipated negative affect, may refrain an individual from performing a behavior while mood states "appear to moderate relationships between TRA components [...] but do not appear to enhance the ability to predict intentions or behaviors independently of TRA components" (Hale et al., 2002, p. 274). Meanwhile, *prior behaviors* act as key predictors of behavioral intentions and behaviors without being dependent on components of the TRA. The literature has witnessed a number of studies proving the impacts of these factors on the predictions of behavioral intentions. However, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) hold a position that those without an explicit mention in the TRA are considered *external* variables that make indirect impact on volitional behavior via AB and SNs (cited in Hale et al., 2002; Madden et al., 1992). The application of this framework can be for a systematic consideration of which message theme should be focused in a persuasive campaign (O'Keefe, 2009).

As a matter of fact, the TRA, according to Yzer (2013), is a tool for providing message content. However, Yzer (2013) confirms that the TRA is not designed to identify which strategies will change the beliefs in the message. Fishbien and Ajzen (2010) also state that,

> Selection of appropriate primary beliefs is perhaps our theory's most important contribution to behavior change interventions. The theory offers little guidance as to the specific strategies that will most effectively bring about the desired changes in behavioral, normative, or control beliefs. Such guidance must come from outside our theory.
>
> (p. 367)

As a result, the TRA cannot be applied to identify effective persuasive strategies used in writing a BSP. Nevertheless, it can help explain the reasons why

some strategies are employed based on the writers' intentions, moral obligations, self-identity, etc., through which a thorough interpretation of the data will be likely to be presented. Therefore, the TRA is planned to be applied in the current research.

2.3.3.3 The Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen in 1991, actually performs as an elaboration of the TRA as it offers the third predictor of behavioral intentions - one's perceived control over the behavior (Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; O'Keefe, 2009). This variable refers to whether the person perceives the performance of that action as easy or difficult (the opportunities of performing a behavior) (Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; O'Keefe, 2009) and their belief regarding the possession of requisite resources (Madden et al., 1992). The theory has raised awareness of an obstacle that a persuader needs to address. For example, a persuader must understand that they may not be successful if they only emphasize the advantages of physical exercises for a woman who believes that exercising is good and the others significant around her believe she should do, but she finds a lot of challenges related to having no possession of requisite equipment, living far distance from the gym, leading a busy schedule or suffering from bad weather prevention; then the persuader should find ways to tackle the last issue of challenges. This additional variable of perceived behavioral control has both direct impacts on behaviors and indirect impacts on behaviors via intentions (Madden et al., 1992). Madden et al. (1992) further explain that "the more resources and opportunities [for performing a given behavior] individuals think they possess, the greater should be their perceived behavioral control over the behavior" (p. 4).

In their comparison between the TRA and the TPB, Madden et al. (1992) tested two hypotheses which both were supported by the data. The first is that perceived behavioral control included would significantly contribute to the enhancement of the prediction of intentions and target behavior. The second is that the enhancement in the prediction of target behavior would be related to the magnitude of perceived behavioral control. From their study, they conclude,

> The theory of reasoned action is applicable when the behavior in question is under volitional control. [...]. However, when the behaviors violate the assumption of volitional control, the theory of planned behavior was shown to be superior to the theory of reasoned action for the prediction of target behavior. In addition, the theory of planned behavior explained, on the average, more variation in behavioral intentions than the theory of reasoned action regardless of the level of control.

(p. 9)

The TPB is supposed to be an elaboration of the TRA, which is suitable for the current study. Therefore, the adoption of the TPB is considered relevant by the researcher.

2.3.3.4 Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) was developed by Richard Petty, John Cacioppo, and their associates in 1986 (Areni & Sparks, 2005; Dainton & Zelley, 2005, 2019; Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; O'Keefe, 2009, 2013, 2016), referring to a "dual process" approach viewing persuasion as a cognitive event; that is, the acceptance or rejection of a message is decided by the mental processes of motivation and reasoning of the targets of the persuasive message. The model depicts information processing on a continuum which includes two routes: the *central (or elaborated)* route and the *peripheral* route.

Centrally routed messages are defined as those with rich information, rational arguments and strong evidence to support specific claims. The involvement of greater elaboration of thoughts with issue-relevant material makes the persuasion which is achieved through the central route more resistant and long-lasting, and also makes the formation or change of the attitude via this way easily called to mind as well as more predictive of behavior (Jones & Simons, 2017). However, this long-term change is argued to happen only when (i) the persuadee must have high motivation to process all the information provided, and (ii) the persuadee must have ability to process the message cognitively; without either of the abovementioned factors (i) or (ii), the centrally routed message is at low value (Areni & Sparks, 2005; Dainton & Zelley, 2019; O'Keefe, 2016). Elaboration motivation can be influenced by a number of factors such as the persuadee's involvement level with the communicated issue, or their "need for cognition" (the degree of their enjoying "thinking hard"). Meanwhile, elaboration ability can be influenced by such elements as the amount of the persuadee's prior knowledge, or the distraction at the persuasive settings (e.g. noise), etc. However, when central-route processes are involved, the strength (quality) of arguments will be likely to decide the success of the persuasion (O'Keefe, 2009). Actually, the quality of arguments needs as much attention as audience's motivation and ability when considering the elaborated route of persuasion. Elaborated arguments are measured and categorized as strong, neutral or weak. It is obvious that each type of elaborated argument decides different reactions from the audience. Strong arguments create a positive cognitive response among persuadees while connecting their beliefs with the persuader's views (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This type

of argument tends to create long-term attitude change (resistant to counterpersuasion as well) that can be predictive of behavior (Bohner et al., 2008). Neutral arguments cannot create attitude change because they produce a noncommittal cognitive response from the persuadees; therefore, the persuadees are to turn to peripheral cues instead. Weak arguments generate a negative cognitive response in the mind of persuadees, preventing attitude change and probably leading to a reverse or boomerang effect which reinforces the opposing viewpoint (Dainton & Zelley, 2005). As a result, it is necessary to understand the audience when constructing elaborate arguments under conditions of high motivation and ability (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

When either motivation or ability is missing from the target persuadee, the elaboration likelihood will be low, then the peripheral route to persuasion will be used. Peripherally routed processes involve less thoughtful consideration and issue-relevant thinking and are engaged with a variety of low-effort mechanism, e.g. mere exposure or the employment of heuristics - a simplifying decision rule (Bohner et al., 2008; Chaiken, 1980) (e.g. "you get what you pay for", or "experts are always right") (Petty et al., 1983). In these instances, target persuadee's conclusions tend to be influenced by other factors such as the speaker's credibility and expertise, length of persuasive messages, mood, or others' reactions to the message, etc. Therefore, attitude changes via the peripheral route are not enduring and cannot be predictors of behaviors. Three primary heuristic principles that gain extensive research attention include the *credibility* heuristic (referring to the persuadee's belief based on credibility of the persuader), *liking* heuristic (the belief based on how well the persuadee likes the persuader), and *consensus* heuristic (the belief based on the reactions of other people to the message) (O'Keefe, 2016).

The two routes do not exclude each other. That is, in order to have a comprehensive view of attitude change, persuasive messages should be scrutinized under both central route and peripheral route when people are seekers and manipulators of information and when they are "cognitive misers" who avoid any difficult intellectual activity (Petty et al., 1983).

The ELM proposes that communication variables can influence persuasion in three ways. First, they might influence the degree of elaboration; then they might play 2 roles (1) as an elaboration enhancer or (2) as an elaboration inhibitor (thus decide central route or peripheral route will be used). Second, they might play a role (3) as a peripheral cue (influencing persuasive outcomes of peripherally routed messages). Third, they might have influence on the valence of elaboration, playing a role (4) as a biasing influence on argument processing, or (5) as a relevant argument.

The ELM suggests that, among the five roles, a given variable can play one or more roles. For example, message length can be considered both as a peripheral cue (as the belief "longer messages have a lot of good reasons to support the view") and as elaboration enhancer because it provokes elaboration motivation to look into the message for more information (O'Keefe, 2016). In the first role of message length, longer messages are more persuasive than shorter ones. However, in the second role, long messages with weak arguments may enhance persuasion among "surfing" target audience who were not involved in thorough investigation but they will inhibit persuasion among audience who looked into the messages in detail. The key concern is, obviously, when a given variable will play this role or another. In this case, the ELM provides a general rule to anticipate a possible function of a given variable. That is, when elaboration likelihood is low, a variable that changes the target's attitude is most likely serving a peripheral cue. When elaboration likelihood is high, the variable influences the target's attitude by either being a relevant argument or biasing elaboration. When elaboration likelihood is moderate, then a given variable acts either as an elaboration enhancer or an elaboration inhibitor. Therefore, it is necessary for a persuader to consider how to adapt to their audience's level of elaboration in order to achieve the highest level of persuasion outcomes. For high-elaboration audience, it is advisable to produce strong arguments. However, for a low-elaboration target, a consideration of which sort of heuristics should be applied to maximize the persuasion effectiveness is worth attention. It is great that a persuader can influence their audience's elaboration and achieve persuasion via central route, but it might be better to interfere their audience's elaboration ability by some distracting factors to strengthen the persuasion.

The present research is expected to identify the persuasion strategies that students use when writing their BSPs and at the same time look for reasons and beliefs underlying such an employment of strategies in order to make relevant interpretation regarding their writing tactics. Moreover, the current study is expected to look into the readers' side to understand their processes of being persuaded by the writers. Regarding this objective, the ELM seems to meet the researcher's need because, based on its principles, the understanding of the readers' central route (which is related to their motivation and ability in processing the messages) and their peripheral route (which is related to heuristic cues) will support evidence regarding which persuasion strategies are more effective. Besides, the components of the ELM go along quite well with three appeals proposed by Aristotle (*ethos, pathos* and *logos*), which seem relevant to the analysis method of the current study. Furthermore,

based on the survey of previous research, a number of similar studies have been conducted based on the ELM (Chen & Yang, 2021; Larrimore et al., 2011; Singla et al., 2022) which brings the researcher more confidence of the adoption of this theory into the current research.

2.3.3.5 Other theories

The Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM) (Chaiken, 1980) and the Unimodel approach (Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999) are close to the ELM, and thus should receive a review here.

Both the HSM and the ELM build on the Yale Attitude Change and Cognitive Response Approaches to offer insight about one's message processing (Perloff, 2003). Both models emphasize the dual processes of persuasion and claim that processing effort is determined by a message recipient's motivation and ability (Bohner et al., 2008; Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999; Perloff, 2003). Moreover, the systematic mode of the HSM is identical to the central route of the ELM as they claim that audience form their judgments by integrating all useful information and carefully scrutinizing issue-relevant arguments. Nevertheless, the ELM proposes a highly comprehensive framework regarding both high elaboration likelihood and a rich diversity of low elaboration likelihood while the HSM provides a limited conceptualization of low-effort (low elaboration) processing but simultaneously proposes more specific assumptions regarding motivational underpinnings as well as detailed predictions of the interplay between the processing modes (Bohner et al., 2008). First of all, the difference between the HSM and the ELM specifically lies in the definition of the HSM's low-effort mode which is narrower and more specific than the ELM's peripheral route which involves in a wider range of low-effort mechanisms (Bohner et al., 2008). Besides, while the ELM views information processing on a continuum, the HSM proposes an interplay of the processing modes, that is, their co-occurrence influences persuasion either interactively or independently (Bohner et al., 2008; Cameron, 2009; Chaiken, 1980; Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999; Perloff, 2003). Another contrast to the ELM is the HSM's definition of specific external criteria determining the extent of processing motivation (so-called sufficient confidence in their attitudes) which include the sufficiency threshold (a degree of confidence a person desires to have) and the actual confidence of that person at a given moment (Bohner et al., 2008). As the HSM proposes, these factors have impacts on the information processing and likely decide one's engagement in systematic or heuristic mode. The last distinction between the HSM and the ELM is the HSM's presentation of three motives guiding the information

processing (accuracy, defense and impression motivation) (Bohner et al., 2008; Perloff, 2003). Accuracy-motivated processing is described to be open-minded while defense-motivated and impression-motivated processing are conceptualized as selective and biased. According to the sufficiency principle, the level of one's confidence in connection with the processing goals is thought to be impacted by the multiple-motive view. Interestingly, the HSM claims that people often prefer the heuristic mode than the systematic path because, in daily activities, they also tend to take shortcuts for decision-making process rather than spend time processing persuasive arguments (Perloff, 2003).

The dual-process models are challenged by the Unimodel developed by Kruglanski and Thompson (1999), which is based on the Lay Epistemic Theory, viewing persuasion as "a process during which beliefs are formed on the basis of appropriate evidence" (p. 89). The *evidence* is defined as relevant information that leads to a conclusion while the concept of *relevance* refers to a prior linkage between general categories, then one's conclusion in a specific case can influence their belief in the other (Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999). According to the Unimodel, there is no distinction between heuristic cues and message arguments because they represent different types of evidence in the persuasive process. The Unimodel does not deny the roles of one's motivation and ability in making influence on the degree of persuasion process, but it denies that the qualitative difference in persuasion processes is due to the adoption of different routes. The Unimodel proposes that there is a underlying uniformity to persuasion process regardless of which type of route is taken (O'Keefe, 2016). The model emphasizes the relevance of evidence to the audience's conclusions as a functional theory of persuasion relating the audience's goals with the persuasive message (Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015).

Since the ELM is applied in the current study, the adoption of the HSM and the Unimodel is relevant to complement the ELM to provide more insights on information processing in persuasive messages. The combination of such theories is expected to bring a fuller understanding of persuasion on the readers' side.

2.3.4 Persuasion in business documents

Persuasion, in business, is commonly considered as a skill to close deals successfully. Sometimes, it is negatively perceived as a form of manipulation to sell products. Persuasion, actually, is a negotiating and learning process which needs training and practicing. In fact, it is a skill which, once successfully constructed, will lead the persuader to their expectation and beyond, not limited in sales and never mistaken for manipulation. Though persuasion can move a persuadee to a position

they are not holding, it indeed goes through multiple steps of preparation by framing proper arguments, presenting precise supporting evidence, and finding a way to make a right match with audience's emotions (Conger, 1998). Therefore, it is considered a challenging and time-consuming proposition. According to Conger (1998), there are four essential steps to go through effective persuasion. First of all, the persuader establishes their credibility. Second, they frame their goal to set common ground with their persuadees. After that, they strengthen their position by the usage of vivid language and strong evidence. The last step is their connecting with the audience's emotions. Connecting with the audience's emotions is seen as an essential element that helps enhance and reinforce both the persuader's credibility as well as the message's reliability (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020).

Persuasion in business genres is normally subtle and implicit (Halmari & Virtanen, 2005) to avoid making the target audience offended or discouraged. It is used to "manifest a writer's professional credibility and, through its acceptance by readers, to make them accept the writer's evaluation and interpretation of the situation of a business entity or a certain segment of the market" (Vogel, 2018, p. 58). Östman (2005) also confirms that only implicit persuasion can be successful in his study of the newspaper language as he claims that some certain elements of language, e.g. phrases, prosodies, and particles, are "specifically geared towards the task of implicit anchoring - so much so that they do not have any propositional content" (Östman, 2005, p. 195). In negotiations, the best negotiator is the best persuader upon their opponent, and they are not necessarily a smooth talker but they are always an accomplished listener instead (Bülow-Møller, 2005). Moreover, negotiators with high commitment language (not hedges, qualifiers or vague categories) tend to gain more advantage and yield less over their opponent, thus achieve higher pay-offs (Bacharach & Lawler, 1981, cited in Bülow-Møller, 2005). In annual reports and other promotional genres, persuasion decides the credibility of the documents. As can be seen, in business, persuasion is an indispensable part of successful communication. Therefore, in order to attract audience, persuasive language is supposed to be "creative and attention-drawing, exploiting language resources to the maximum with catchphrases, emotive words, informal expressions and striking metaphors and comparisons" (Labrador et al., 2014, p. 40).

The BSP, together with other types of proposals, belongs to a category named *persuasive documents* or *deliberative documents* (Kmiec & Longo, 2017). These documents deal with future happenings, with decisions to be made and the possible outcomes of those decisions. They have a declared goal to persuade the

readers to agree with their ideas by providing them with the information needed for their decision making. Thanks to the detailed information, the readers will look into the feasibility of the proposed tasks/activities to see whether they really bring benefits. In order to achieve the readers' compliance, the writers have to implicitly or explicitly express how the project is connected with the readers' concerns. For example, a manager tends to look for such information as an overview of the project, the points indicating the project feasibility, estimated project costs or forecasted financial benefits, project scheduled timeline and evidence of how the team members are qualified with the project (Kmiec & Longo, 2017); therefore, a plan targeting the approval of a manager needs to fully demonstrate the answers to their concerns. Echoing the readers' concerns is among reader-related strategic aspects that persuasive documents should cover. According to Cross's (1991) explanation, what business readers care most are about the impact of the message on their own job function, on their workload and their hierarchical place. They often pick the parts that match their concerns; thus, the message that can answer question "What does this have to do with my job?" can be the fastest instrument to draw the readers' attention. In order to establish credibility for the message and to build faith and belief in the readers to inspire their action, Cross (1991) claims that Aristotle advised the demonstration of the information in the documents must be valid to the readers' logic, emotions or ethical standards. Actually, the writers must understand about the target readers' belief, how the readers view the present state of things, what they value and what they expect from the future (Kmiec & Longo, 2017). Although it is difficult to learn about the readers' preexisting beliefs, it is much better to predict what they are prepared to accept.

Sharing the same tendency with other types of discourse such as academic, religious or technical, persuasion in business is achieved through the interplay of all types of appeal (ethos, logos and pathos) in regard to the enhancement of credibility and trustworthiness of the persuader, the rational demonstration of the vivid data and strong arguments and the evocation of emotions among the persuadees. The literature has claimed that the centrality of ethical persuasive appeal acts as the denominator of the persuasive process (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020). That is, the primary qualities that expose a business writer to a greater chance of persuasion success are their credibility and trustworthiness built through their professionalism, experience and expertise in business. Thus, the writer has to, by any means, express as much of their expertise and professionalism through business activities in their writing as possible.

Besides the expression of the ethical appeal, persuasive documents also have to

provide sufficient demonstration of core elements of a proposal, showing how the project addresses a specific need. They often involve in the presentation of essential data, the review of relevant positions and approaches as well as the discussion of related individuals' expertise and how they are suitable for the tasks assigned. While strong arguments are seen as the key technique to convince readers and push them to act, the data (presented in various forms) also prove their role as a crucial contributor to the rationality and validity of the arguments. Reliable data embed objective statistics and factual proof which are the top priorities in business documents (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020). The attachment of factual evidence and statistics (to support the writer's position) and logical reasoning (to construct strong argument) to audience engagement, personal involvement and reference to authorities is deemed to bring greater effect on business persuasion. Because the ultimate goal of a BSP is to persuade the readers to approve the proposal, a persuasive BSP must resort to implicitness, that is, it needs to be unique enough (but not too different) in order to be distinguished from other similar plans. The technique of maximizing the intertextual gap is recommended in persuasive documents (Halmari & Virtanen, 2005). Besides, the business readers of the BSP are assumed to have little time and they skim the document for their target information, pausing over illustrations sometimes with a hope to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the document. Therefore, Kmiec and Longo (2017) suggest that the illustration for important ideas should be precisely demonstrated to reflect a typical representation within the discipline.

In general, persuasion is an essential element in business documents, and how it is achieved might vary in different genres. In particular, level of persuasion of a BSP depends on a variety of factors, i.e. credibility and trustworthiness of the writer, strong arguments, factual and statistics in data demonstration, accurate illustrations, and the engagement with the readers' emotions. The influence of such factors is the interplay of the three appeals *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*. From these three appeals, there comes a construction of a number of persuasive strategies which the researcher is going to discuss in the following part.

2.3.5 Persuasion strategies

Though the BSP belongs to the proposal genre family which includes purpose, detailed plan and persuasive argumentation aiming at presenting one's ability to make a case for future action (Gardner & Nesi, 2013), it can be seen to share some characteristics of the promotional genre. A BSP does not serve a communicative purpose to sell a product to consumers, but it more or less possesses a characteristic of "selling", which particularly means "selling a business". Therefore, the discourse of

a BSP contains the generic values of “description” and “evaluation” stated in Bhatia (2005) as the denominators of the efforts for product differentiation. Besides a description of a business offering a product/service which is “good, positive and favorable”, a BSP also employs specific uses of linguistic features regarding “product appraisal” (Bhatia, 2005) which evaluates the product in a positive manner, functioning as one of the main persuasive strategies in advertising. The characteristics of a BSP will likely influence the employment of persuasion strategies; thus, the researcher expects to spot relevant strategies to the BSP after a brief review of literature regarding strategies used to maximize persuasion achievement.

Cross (1991) refers to four strategies recommended by Aristotle to achieve persuasion in business writing. They are *echo the reader, sell use, ask for action* and *talk the reader’s language*. Regarding *echoing the reader*, Aristotle believes that connecting with a reader’s self-interest is the best way to successfully approach and influence them because “most people spend 95% of their time thinking about themselves” (Carnegie, 1937, p. 55, as cited in Cross, 1991). The key principle to win a reader lies in what preexists in their mind, so the writer needs to predict their reader’s attitude toward their message and construct an imaginative empathy with the reader’s side and the pressure they may encounter. By addressing the reader’s own concerns and motivation needs (which, in business world, are usually related to status, self-esteem and belonging), the writer will likely find a means of persuasion to show a reader how their idea meets the reader’s needs or solve a problem. For example, an advertiser who can link their product/service to its benefit which completely matches a reader’s requirement will be more likely to convince them to consume the product/service. That benefit can serve as a selling point of the product/service and strongly influences the reader’s reaction to the writing (so-called “*sell use*” technique). However, that strategy may not bring a high likelihood for a reader to react according to one’s expectation. Behavioral studies propose that, in order to increase a high chance for a reader to react the way they are expected to do, it is better to make their decision-making process easier for them by suggesting a desired action. The way the writer *asks for action* prevents the reader from misunderstanding or losing interest in the intended message, which seems to guarantee an expected behavior outcome, rather than leaving an ending unconcluded. This way can bring a sense of ease as well as urgency to push a reader to act upon such a suggestion. Besides, to strengthen the persuasion, the usage of familiar language to a reader really matters. That is, a persuasive message must be close to a reader’s expertise and within their language capacity; e.g. using short words, sentences and paragraphs targeting business readers.

By *talking the reader's language*, the writer will increase a chance for their reader to catch their intended meaning.

Persuasion strategies constructed based on Cialdini's (2007) seven principles have been presented in multiple studies (e.g. Chen & Yang, 2021; Mustafa et al., 2012; Singla et al., 2022). Singla et al. (2022) even compile persuasion strategies into a set of 20 strategies, assigned to be under 9 larger groups: *Authority and Credibility*, *Social Identity and Proof*, *Value and Impact Formulation, Reciprocity, Foot in the door, Overcoming Resistance, Scarcity, Anthropomorphism* and *Emotion*. The presentation of the persuasion strategies in different text and specific domains brings large-scale understanding of persuasion across multiple contexts.

In the investigation of persuasive strategies in business discourse characterizing business reports, Yeung (2007) confirms that the features to achieve the aim of persuasion in business reports include *nominalization*, *impersonality*, and *rational arguments*. The usage of nominalization can remove personal involvement from the narrative of the writing, thus, keeping the tenor of the text impersonal and professional. The impersonality maintains the appearance of objectivity which is typical in professional practice. Rational arguments are presented in the form of objective data demonstration and logical syllogism in the three-step cyclical move. That is, the presentation of objective data often includes statistics to support claims in the reports; meanwhile, the three-step move is often identified in cyclical form, and may vary in the sequence but primarily with the pattern of claim-data-warrant, in which the warrant may be implicit or explicit.

Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. (2020) propose several persuasion strategies used in annual reports based on the three Aristotelian principles of ethical, logical and pathetic appeals (ethos, logos and pathos). Regarding ethical appeal, persuasion is achieved through the *enhancement of the writer's credibility and trustworthiness* by the action of sharing their experience and value and claiming a common ground with the addressee through the usage of self-mentions such as "I" or "we". The mediation of self-reference and self-mention also *creates a sense of community and sharing* which enhances the approval of the readers. Besides, the engagement of the first- and the second-person perspective even allows emotional appeal (pathos) which can help change the stakeholders' attitudes (compared to the impersonal third person). The credibility is also enhanced by the *sharing of personal views and attitudes* through the mediation of evaluative lexis acting as attitude markers, expressing the author's attitudes to and other judgments on propositional information (e.g. evaluative adjectives such as "important", "essential", "key", "major", etc.). Logical strategies

are embedded with a presentation of *figures, dates and names*, under the support of *visual illustrations* such as diagrams, graphs and tables. The demonstration of factual evidence is associated with the utilization of linguistic means such as declarative sentences, simple tenses, and some verb types of action, relation, attribution and identification in order to convey the objectiveness desired. The pathetic appeal, despite the least common frequency in annual reports, still exists to express appreciation, gratitude, praise and other emotive evaluation. While risks and threats tend to be positively addressed, other types of emotion such as humor, fear, hate or irony are avoided. Pathetic strategies are involved in the *evocation of positive emotion through the employment of positively and negatively connoted lexis*. The selection of appropriate lexis, regardless of its positive or negative connotation, can be decisive for the persuasion success. The avoidance of words with negative connotations such as "poor", "old", "slowly", "fail", etc. can be widely witnessed, but negative phenomena can still be expressed positively by various strategies such as *facing a problem* (e.g. "a difficulty has proved our strength", "a difficulty has enabled us to show our resourcefulness", etc.) or *relativizing a problem* (e.g. "there are minor difficulties, but major successes", "the problem is a side effect of a positive development", etc.) (Vogel, 2018). The pathetic strategy also includes the usage of "you/your" to *communicate an atmosphere of community and caring attitude,* emphasizing "an inclusive environment and socially responsible policies, as well as their identification with stakeholders' interests and efforts to maximize stakeholders' benefits" (Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2020, p. 82). Generally, the key persuasive strategy in business discourse is the usage of positive evaluative lexis together with writer's and reader's involvement.

Chen and Yang (2021) introduce a set of generic persuasive strategies and a multi-domain corpus to examine different persuasion strategies people adopt in their requests for multiple persuasion goals and in different domains. They employ the ELM by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) and the HSM by Chaiken (1980). They synthesize and compile a set of theoretical and practical strategies into eight unified categories: *Commitment, Emotion, Politeness, Reciprocity, Scarcity* (allowing people to make decisions based on simple inferential rules) and *Credibility, Evidence, Impact* (allowing people to evaluate the information based on its merits, logic and importance). Their generic taxonomy is expected to be "easily plugged into different text domains, making large-scale understanding of persuasion in language across multiple contexts comparable and replicable" (Chen & Yang, 2021, p. 12649).

The employment of appropriate persuasion strategies in the BSP depends on the characteristics of the writing which is primarily descriptive, involving business-specific discourse and one-way demonstration. The researcher is going to present a compiled framework for analysis of persuasion strategies in the BSP in the next chapter.

2.3.6 Previous studies

Persuasion is no longer a new area for researchers. There are a number of studies conducted on persuasion in business genres, namely business reports, advertisements, marketing, social media, etc. The researcher is going to review the literature to see how much persuasion has been investigated and present a link with the current study which is on persuasion strategies employed in the BSP, an emerging genre.

Mustafa et al. (2012) conduct a study on persuasive features based on Cialdini's principles (2007) in online direct response sales letters to establish credibility and induce sales. The corpus is comprised of sales letters collected from 29 websites which include only text-based or a combination of both text-based and video-based letters as their selling tool. The study found that specific persuasion principles can be adopted in specific moves and steps of the sales letters. For example, for Move A, Setting the scene, the primary principles used are "commitment and consistency" and "social proof". Meanwhile, in order to establish credentials in Move B, the writers use "authority"; and in Move E, Offering incentives, "reciprocity" is preferred.

Labrador et al. (2014) investigate rhetorical structure and linguistic features of persuasive discourse in advertisements of electronic products sold on the internet. They collect a corpus of 100 texts in English (45,491 words) and another 100 texts in Spanish (33,628 words), extracted from website posts of different big retail companies between 2010 and 2011. The study focuses on verbal elements rather than other semiotic aspects, with the dominance of reason, sometimes with emotional appeals, in the language use of the advertisements. The rhetorical structure is identified by a specifically designed computer program called ACTRES Text Tagger to tag the texts with corresponding moves which range from single words to whole paragraphs. They identify two persuasive characteristics included in Move 2 (Describing the product) which are *positive evaluation* and *informal style*, serving the ideational function and the interpersonal function of language. The positive evaluation is spotted through the mentions of product qualities, characteristics and/or properties (in the same sentence or within a paragraph) by using discourse markers emphasizing various benefits of the product, multiple modification of a single noun phrase, expressions of high quantity/degree with positive connotations, a number of non-finite clauses conveying

positive information of the product advertised, and references to familiar physical properties of the product. Regarding the informal style, the use of second personal pronoun *you* and the use of imperatives are the most noticeable, followed by abundance of punctuation marks signaling informal language (e.g. contractions, exclamation marks and ampersand), instances of language play (e.g. puns/catchphrases or alliteration) and different types of reductions (e.g. clipping, lack of auxiliaries in questions or subject omission). The usage of multiple linguistic devices is concluded to help the advertiser to convince their consumers to buy the product; surprisingly, explicit steps of persuasion do not appear in 100% in the texts, compared to objective characteristics.

Romanova and Smirnova (2019) investigate the employment of persuasive techniques in commercial advertising and linguistic devices used to realise them. Eleven persuasive techniques are recognized as features of rhetoric used for the expression of logos, ethos and pathos which are grouped into (1) those are pertaining to logical reasoning (logos), those relating to the emotional component (pathos), and those demonstrating a positive image of the company (ethos). The corpus (approximately 5964 words) includes 1014 instances of persuasive techniques of which 82 refer to logos (8%), 128 pertain to ethos (13%) and 804 to pathos (79%), in which *Seeking common ground* and *Personal involvement* are crucial to most advertisements. Meanwhile, ethos and pathos are usually identified to overlap and are equally deployed in persuasive argumentation. *Appeal to rationality* is considered neutral in its usage to support logical reasoning. *Appeal to benefit* and *Time awareness* are deemed to be the most uneasy persuasion techniques as, to some people, they may sound as an attempt to coerce them into unintended things instead of being a motivation.

Izquierdo and Pérez Blanco (2020) conduct a contrastive analysis of herbal tea promotional texts in English and Spanish to identify informational-linguistic features of the texts, typically the promotional strategies that serve to convince customers to try the product. The study employs Cialdini's (2007) six psychological principles *reciprocity*, *commitment and consistency*, *social proof*, *authority*, *liking*, and *scarcity*. Besides, they interpret their data according to two other effects on the customers which could be rational (making the customers buy the product due to logical reasons), and emotional (making the customers buy the product because they simply like it). The results reveal that marketing statements in the texts appear to rely on 6 strategies to persuade the customers to buy the product, including *enjoying the experience*, *praising the benefits*, *aesthetic appeal*, *social proof*, *uniqueness* and *authority*, which

primarily use descriptive and evaluative language. They are characterized by evaluative adjectives, emotion-related and reason-related lexis, playful language, imperatives, and orality-trigger pronouns.

In short, there are multiple studies working on persuasion strategies in business contexts. However, most of them are conducted in various disciplines such as advertisements, marketing, sales, product page other than the BSP. Besides, most of them employ a quantitative method without a further investigation of the writers' and readers' voices. For example, the research by Izquierdo and Pérez Blanco (2020) was conducted on the strategies used to persuade the customers to buy the product, but the researchers admit the limitation of lacking interviews with both the addressors and the addressees of the text for further understanding of the perceptions from both sides and for seeing whether the researchers' interpretation regarding the persuasion strategies really matches the authors' intentions. While the BSP is addressed in the two studies by Chen et al. (2009) and Fu et al. (2022), they both tackle persuasion in terms of such psychological variables as passion or preparedness instead of linguistic features in the BSPs. To fill the gaps from the previous studies, the current research is expected to investigate the BSP as an emerging genre, examining the rhetorical move-step structure of this genre, and at the same time identifying persuasion strategies the writers use in their texts while listening to both the writers' and readers' voices through interviews to fully develop thorough interpretations of such genre with increasing popularity.

2.3.7 Students' writing issues in VHE

As tertiary institutions in Vietnam are offering a wide range of business courses in order to meet the explosion of demand over the region for a potential high-quality workforce, university students are required to use English as a lingua franca effectively in their study and achieve a certain level of English proficiency at their graduation. However, the mismatch between teaching methodology and expected learning outcomes has caused learners many difficulties in language learning, especially in improving their writing competence. In many writing classes, the teacher is still the center and the interaction initiator of all the activities providing knowledge while the students passively receive the knowledge and imitate what they are supposed to do (Trinh & Nguyen, 2014). Because of exam-driven purposes instead of communication purposes of the teaching methodology, students are often offered a range of grammar-related activities, i.e. unscrambling the sentences, rewriting the sentences without changing the meaning, finding and correcting errors in the sentences, in their writing classes. Besides, they are asked to complete multiple-choice tests in

their examinations for their writing assessments. Regarding a specific writing genre, the primary focus of the product-oriented teaching of English (as a foreign language) here is on the language form, that is, students' works are evaluated on their language knowledge and their ability to adopt a set of conventions from models of that genre (Luu, 2011; Tran, 2007). The teaching process generally includes the provision of topic-related vocabulary and guiding questions for students to brainstorm their ideas and put them into paragraphs instead of helping them realize important features of a genre such as the purpose of their writing, the context of their writing, and the audience they expect to read their writing compositions (Luu, 2011). A disappointing fact is that, though English is one of their compulsory subjects at all study levels in Vietnam, students are normally requested to reproduce the knowledge provided by their teachers or stated in their course-books instead of being brain-stimulated and asked to dig further into the topic or go beyond what they have been taught (Phan, 2011, cited in Nguyen et al., 2018; Trinh & Nguyen, 2014). A majority of them are expected to write grammatical error-free texts without noticing the communicative purposes and audience of their works (Trinh & Nguyen, 2014). Therefore, after many years of language learning, a number of Vietnamese university students still find themselves difficult or unable to reach the standard of academic writing in English. Test results from Educational Testing Service (ETS) also reveal that writing remains the most problematic among the test-takers, compared to the other three (Trinh & Nguyen, 2014).

The significance of acquiring academic writing skills, especially writing in the field of Business as a part of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), is not only beneficial for a student in their learning performance but also for his/her future career (Nguyen & Miller, 2012). Because English is globalized, the use of English in the multiple sections of business areas in Vietnam is inevitable. However, a number of reasons highlighting the lack of qualified Business English teachers in EFL classes prevent students from the mastery of business writing skills including writing fundamental business genres such as memos, letters, reports and proposals (Le, 2013). Besides, regarding teaching writing, most EFL teachers find this skill very complicated to teach, which somehow influences their students' learning outcomes (Nguyen, 2009). As to the contribution of academic practice to students' career access, although it is difficult to decide how much is enough to prepare students before their working life, the role of university education in helping students transfer their academic writing skills in the classroom to workplace writing is insisted. It is important that students, through class activities, can grasp basic conventions of typical workplace writing genres, practice and enhance their writing skills to acquire the knowledge about and the skills to create those genres (Schneider

& Andre, 2005). Therefore, it is necessary to get Vietnamese university students exposed to genre-based approach in classroom practice because this approach, by providing both the content of the genre and the knowledge of the context, is believed to contribute positively to the enhancement of writing skills (Trinh & Nguyen, 2014). Furthermore, some genres are designed to get students prepared for their future professions by having them deal with similar writing (Gardner & Nesi, 2013). Given the benefits through such an activity, students especially Business English majors have a chance to explore the social and cultural context of the language use for that specific genre. The success of their compositions, based on their writing purposes, depends on the acceptance of the discourse community once they put the genre contexts into account (Luu, 2011). Through the exposure to the sociocultural contexts of the genre, the acquisition of the knowledge about the genre and the practice of the genre-related skills before graduation, students can enrich their professional experience and reinforce their confidence in their working life, possibly attaching their positive attitudes towards second language (L2) learning.

Despite the significance of the mastery of ESP writing skills before graduation, undergraduate business students in VHE, especially those who are about to enter a professional working environment after university, still encounter a variety of challenges in their business writing. Though studies on business communication and business discourse are underrepresented in Vietnam, Nguyen and Miller (2012) has revealed a number of discipline-specific writing obstacles that Vietnamese business students have to deal with by listening to their voices clarifying the differences between their writing expectations in class and what they experience through their practice at workplace. The students highlight the importance of classroom instruction which should be contextualized enough for them to understand the genre thoroughly. The students even complain about poor preparation in classroom practice for their writing to real audience in their job so that they can have a sense of the complicated realities they are going to face in writing situations at real workplace. According to Schneider and Andre (2005), they should have been encouraged to investigate the complexities of the audience and context for critical engagement and competent communication at their future workplace. Their writing challenges also come from their confusion to choose appropriate moves, structures and linguistic features to achieve communicative goals. They are concerned about the mismatch between the assessment criteria of the course which is rigid, serious and fixed, requiring flawless writing in terms of spelling, grammar, format or the like, and real workplace writing style which seems to be simpler, more flexible and more informal. However, the

dilemma of whether to follow what the teacher said or to adopt the real writing style they experience from their hands-on practice (e.g. from their part-time job) does not matter to them because they tend to tailor their exam-oriented writing to meet the university requirements (to get high scores). Another difficulty that prevents students from making up good propositional content is their lack of practical knowledge of the products they are expected to write about; hence, their writing tends to fail to achieve persuasiveness among readers. They may find the writing task easy to understand but difficult to perform because they do not know which aspects of the product should be focused and which information should be important to the readers. Regarding the content, they tend to present it in the same order as a formula, but sometimes they attempt to make impression by adding a move to their writing, which, according to Vergaro (2004), violates the established norms and business writing convention, hence creates rhetorical ineffectiveness. The last element that limits the students' business writing is their rare exposure to a diversity of cultures and cross-cultural communication to witness the translation of cultural norms into the rhetorical conventions of business correspondence. Therefore, they tend to treat their readers in the same way and assume that the readers share their values and perspectives. They even pay no care to the cultural elements which form the rhetorical moves. The lack of cultural knowledge and the imposition of their own culture will likely influence their language choice and style which include high degree of formality and deference (through tactfulness and indirectness) as typical values of Vietnamese writing (Phan, 2001). This point is in line with the arguments by Chew (2009) when she investigates the Vietnamese cultural characteristics and their implications in intercultural business communication. She argues that culture is a dynamic force carrying impacts on various dimensions of the business milieu and "the prerequisite to understanding or researching the business discourse of a community is the mastery of cultural and linguistic competence, contingent on a multidisciplinary approach that involves shifting from a central study of discourse to subjects in both business and the social sciences" (p.372). Miller (1984) also emphasizes the importance of cultural aspects in investigating a genre as "a genre embodies an aspect of cultural rationality" (p. 165).

In summary, there still exist a number of business writing problematic issues among Vietnamese undergraduate students which include a lack of students' genre awareness and social contexts of the genre, the insufficient provision of contextualized classroom instruction, the mismatch of the course requirements and the real workplace writing style and few opportunities for students to be engaged in cultural events to witness the impact of culture on business correspondence. These issues are

expected to be addressed in the current study on the investigation of the BSP, an emerging genre in business communication.

2.4 Summary

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive literature review covering three key areas: Genre and Genre Analysis, Business Writing, and Persuasion. It explores the definition and characteristics of genre, along with three approaches to genre analysis. The characteristics of Business Writing and Business/Start-up Plans are examined, and previous studies in these areas are reviewed. Additionally, the concept of persuasion is defined, various related theories are delved into, and its relevance in business documents is discussed. Finally, previous studies on writing issues in Vietnamese higher education are reviewed, offering valuable insights into this context. This literature review establishes the theoretical foundation for the research and identifies research gaps to inform the subsequent study.

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CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research design, data collection methods, data analysis techniques and the procedure of a pilot study. The chapter description involves the sampling strategies and justifications of sampling sizes, the creation and management of two corpora, the frameworks and methods for discourse analysis of the corpora and thematic analysis of interviews, and preliminary findings from the pilot study. By presenting the methods employed in the current study, this chapter aims to offer a detailed account of the steps taken to address the research questions and achieve the objectives of the thesis.

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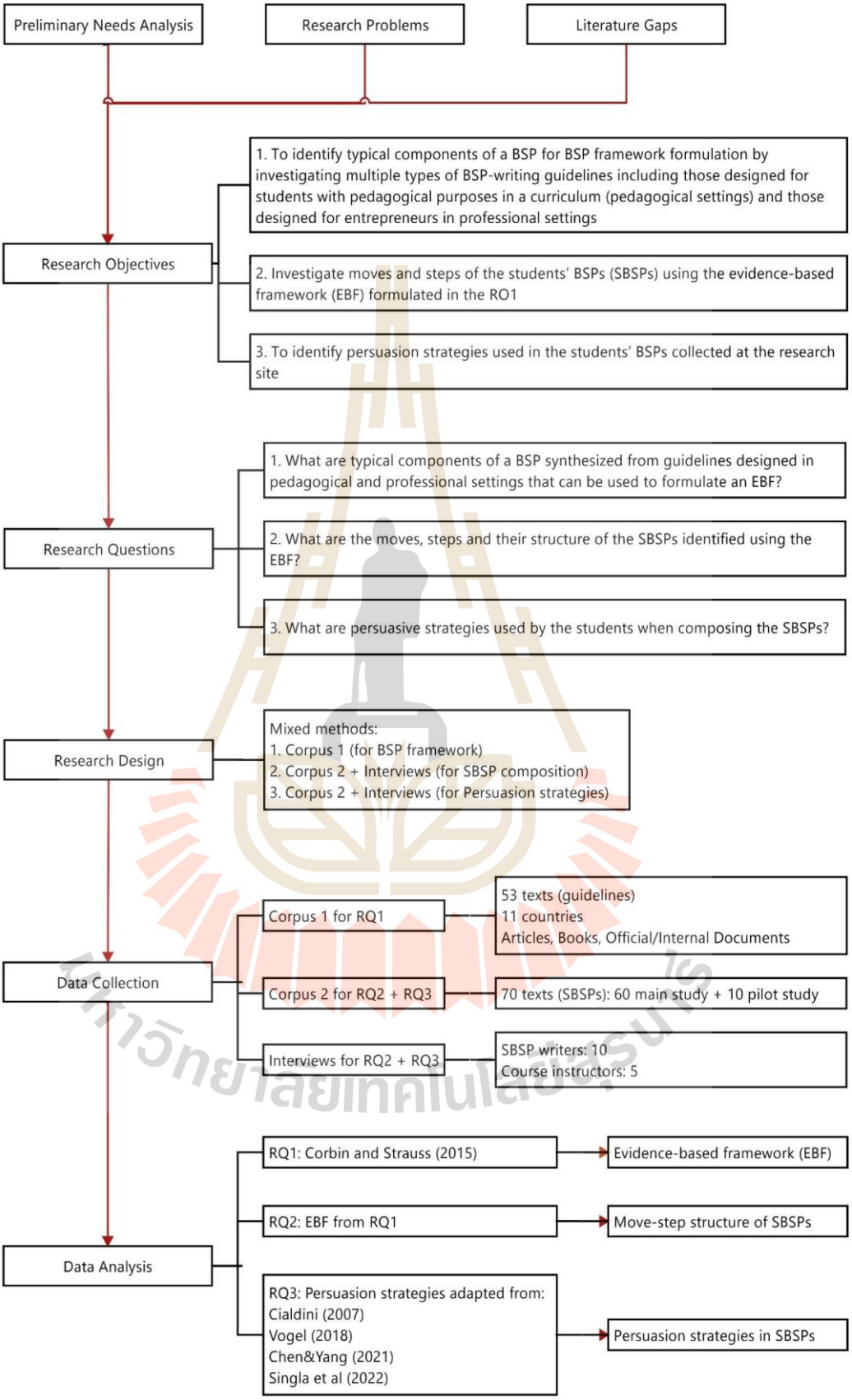


Figure 3.1 Overview of research methodology

3.1 Research design

The current research employs mixed method which involves a primary text-based analysis of the two corpora and a theme-based analysis of focus-group interviews with the writers and individual interviews with the course instructors. The data collection of the current study includes three separate sets of data. The first is the corpus of guidelines for writing a business/start-up plan (BSP), the second is the collection of student business/start-up plans (SBSPs) at the research site, and the last is a set of interviews conducted with student writers and course instructors. The researcher is going to provide a thorough description and the procedure of data collection and data analysis, as follows.

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 Corpus of guidelines for writing a BSP (Corpus 1)

3.2.1.1 Corpus creation and management

This data set consists of a collection of guidelines for writing a BSP collected from a diversity of accessible sources on the Internet through the purposive sampling strategy. According to Dana et al. (2023), the very first step for data collection is how to identify the most appropriate set of key words. The compilation of Corpus 1 involved the identification of potential guidelines through Google search engine, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, ResearchGate and other scientific platforms, starting with key words such as “guidelines to write business plan(s)”, “writing start-up plan(s)”, “how to write business plan(s)”, “business planning”, “start-up course”. Some text titles were identified through References of articles collected and then downloaded through abovementioned platforms, primarily from Google search engine and Google Scholar. The books identified from the key words were normally downloaded through a number of websites which provide a full access to the texts. For the purpose of seeing whether the genre components change overtime or influenced by community practices (Berkenkotter, 2001; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 2016), the corpus included guidelines published in different periods of time, ranging from 1988, which was the earliest source that the researcher could reach, to 2021, the latest source with identified date of publication. A number of texts without an identified date of publication but currently available on the given website were then categorized as “n.d.”. The guidelines were collected from universities (or educational organizations belonging to certain universities), journals, business development organizations/centers (e.g., SCORE

Association or US Small Business Administration) and books published by well-known publishers. Then, they were categorized into three groups including articles, books and official/internal documents. The Article category includes those published in peer-reviewed journals or in the cooperative extension of certain universities particularly in the US contexts (e.g., University of Maryland Extension, Purdue University Extension, etc.). The Book category has a wide range of collection, referring to books, ebooks, workbooks, handbooks, pocketbooks, printed books and book chapters, primarily presented in pdf form, published for either internal use or public use. The last category Official/Internal Document are normally presented in the forms of an official document of a training program of a university or a business development center (in pdf or doc), a ppt presentation document as a course instruction or a lecture, or a writing template. This categorization, on the one hand, helps to maintain a systematic corpus construction. On the other hand, thanks to this categorization, differences in content presentation and formats among the categories are expected to be derived, which may lead to different findings about required components stated in each type. Factors such as the context (country), the category of the texts (article, book, official/internal document), the year of publication and the setting (pedagogical or professional) were taken into account during the construction of the corpus. The context of a text was decided based on the place of publication and the primary business contexts given in the guidelines. At university settings, the corpus design was based on undergraduate level and multiple disciplinary groupings, if any, aiming at identifying the most common components to construct a BSP in general. Only texts which elaborates detailed elements of a BSP within each section were collected. Due to the limited accessibility of the data, the equality in the number of texts within each factor or among factors involved in the corpus construction could not be controlled.

After the text collection from a variety of sources, the specific section of composing a BSP was extracted from the original texts, then randomly numbered and coded as T-number (starting with ***T1***), and stored in a separate folder. The details of each text including source, author(s) (if any), year of publication (if any), category (article, book, official/internal document), setting (ped, pro or both) and context (country) were profiled offline and online. Due to the accessibility of the texts and the nature of guidelines, the texts' contents are presented in different forms, such as a template with blanks for writers to fill in, a detailed instruction with specific

questions, or a narrative which guides writers of the components of a BSP. Therefore, the number of pages and word count of the texts in the corpus vary. In order to reduce the difficulties in corpus management and data coding, a set of criteria for inclusion and exclusion was determined. First of all, the present study aimed for start-up plans, so business plans that are for existing businesses were excluded. Besides, regarding the contents of a BSP, the corpus included texts which elaborate detailed components of a BSP and excluded those with title of sections only or those with lengthy instruction (more than 20 pages) without providing a clear structure of the plan (e.g., a clear detailed outline). After the application of abovementioned criteria, the final number of 50 guidelines (out of 80 texts that the researcher can reach) remained, coming from 11 countries (Australia, Brunei, Canada, Ghana, Iran, Kenya, Nigeria, Switzerland, the UK, the US, and Vietnam). Then, the corpus was validated by a language expert in Applied Linguistics. The details of the corpus information are provided in Table 3.1.

In summary, the steps of Corpus 1 creation are as follows.

Step 1. Identify potential guidelines from different sources using key words.

Step 2. Categorize them into 3 groups: books, articles and official/ internal documents and store them in a separate folder.

Step 3. Add inclusion and exclusion criteria to refine the collection.

Step 4. Extract relevant sections from the original texts if the original texts are too long.

Step 5. Refine the final texts.

Step 6. Validate the corpus with a language expert.

3.2.1.2 Setting and context

The guidelines of the corpus are designed for pedagogical purposes in both pedagogical and professional settings. The texts designed in pedagogical settings (ped) such as in course guidelines (as a requirement of a training program from universities) and in books written for students aim to assist the students to develop knowledge of the construction of a BSP. On the other hand, the texts designed in professional settings (pro) such as in articles published in journals, in guidelines offered by educational organizations or business development centers, or in other books written for entrepreneurs aim to help the readers write an effective

BSP which is supposed to be a contributor to their real-life start-up. Occasionally, some texts are designed in both settings (ped and pro) to assist both students and entrepreneurs or anyone else who wants to learn about the development and composition of a BSP. The equal number of texts produced and used in pedagogical settings and in professional settings could not be controlled because the guidelines in the latter outnumbered those in the former while the accessibility of the texts in the former was limited due to the fact that very few universities upload their course guidelines and internal documents on their website and not many books are written for students only. Among 53 filtered texts, the majority came from American context, ranging from books and journal articles regarding business published in the US, guidelines offered by American business development centers and other course guidelines offered by American universities. Others were texts collected from different countries. The texts written for or published in many regions all over the world were placed in Global context. The distribution of the texts according to settings and contexts are illustrated in Table 3.2.

3.2.2 Corpus of the SBSPs (Corpus 2)

3.2.2.1 Corpus creation and management

Corpus 2 was collected through purposive sampling. The SBSPs were those written by undergraduate English majors studying Business, collected from three batches belonging to three consecutive academic years 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, with an equal number for each group. The reason for choosing these three batches was that the requirement of writing a BSP had been revised from individual work to group work since 2020-2021, and it is supposed to be a fixed requirement for future batches studying this Start-up course. Therefore, in order to assist teachers' teaching and students' writing in the future courses, it is advisable to investigate the compositions collected from the three latest batches which are the first products after the revision and are deemed to be the representatives of the SBSP genre which is the target of the current research. Because the required word count ranges from 3,000 to 5,000 words, texts within this range were preferred. However, a number of texts with over 5,000 words (under 6,000) were also selected for the variety of the text sizes. Totally, the overall number of texts selected included 35% ranging from 3,000 - 4,000 words, 35% ranging from 4,000 - 5,000 words, and 30% ranging from over 5,000 to under 6,000 words. This categorization was to see whether word counts influence the quality of a SBSP or not. Besides, due to the inconsistency in students' demonstrations of the financial section among the plans which

presented data in tables or in table photos, the table content in the financial section was excluded from the word count. Another additional criterion for the selection of texts was determined on those plans fully presented with all required sections from the guidelines provided the Faculty of Foreign Languages, (including Executive summary, Business description, Financial section and Supporting documents) regardless of the scores by which they were assessed. However, after a quick survey of the texts collected, a number of plans were found to present the supporting documents with either photos or written texts, and some even place contracts in Vietnamese in this section, which was considered inappropriate according to the course guidelines provided by the Faculty of Foreign Languages. Thus, the content of the last section Supporting documents was excluded from the corpus word count, and those presenting appropriate information in this section were chosen for the corpus. This procedure was to ensure that they conform to the course requirements and reduce low-quality plans, which was supposed to be a compensation for the limited accessibility to their final scores. The last criterion of sampling was a mere selection of new business start-ups because a number of business plans adopt existing business ideas.

Corpus 2 included 10 for the pilot study and 60 SBSPs (20 per group) for the main study; therefore, the total word count of the corpus ranged from 210,000 words to 350,000 words. According to Ghadessy et al. (2001), the corpus size depends on the time it is collected, and 250,000 words can be a small size corpus of a specialized discourse. As such, the size of Corpus 2 was bigger than that. In fact, for a pedagogical usefulness, a manageable size of corpora is preferred and suggested by Howard (1998, as cited in O'Keeffe & McCarthy, 2010) in order to look at specific areas of language in relation to teaching and use in the language classroom. Furthermore, a quick literature review regarding genre analysis has witnessed a wide variety of corpus sizes among business-related and academic corpora, ranging from 14 grant proposals (~6,054 words) in Connor (2000), 22 authentic business reports (~101,508 words) in Yeung (2007), 25 authentic auditors' reports (no word count identified) in Flowerdew and Wan (2010), 53 case reports (~125,000 words) in Nathan (2013), 50 business case reports (no word count identified) in Nathan (2016), 60 laboratory reports from BAWE (no word count identified) in Parkinson (2017), to 60 commercial scripts (~5,961 words) in Romanova and Smirnova (2019). Compared to the literature, the size of 70 SBSPs is considered sufficient for genre analysis to identify typical features of a genre.

Table 3.1 Overview of BSP guidelines corpus

Context / Form	Year of Publication																						
	1988	1991	1999	2000	2002	2003	2005	2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	n.d.	Total
Australia																**1**							**1**
Book																1							1
Brunei																					**1**		**1**
Official/Internal Document																					1		1
Canada									**1**														**1**
Book									1														1
Ghana													**1**										**1**
Official/Internal Document													1										1
Global																**1**			**1**				**2**
Book																1			1				2
Iran														**1**									**1**
Article														1									1
Kenya																**1**							**1**
Official/Internal Document																1							1
Nigeria																						**1**	**1**
Article																						1	1
Switzerland																		**1**					**1**
Book																		1					1
UK											**1**				**1**							**1**	**3**
Book															1							1	2
Official/Internal Document											1												1
US	**1**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**2**		**1**		**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**4**		**4**	**2**		**3**	**35**
Article	1		3	1	3									1	2		1		1	2		1	16
Book		1	1			1	1	2				1	1			1	3		3				15
Official/Internal Document										1					1							2	4
US, UK																		**1**					**1**
Book																		1					1
Vietnam																				**1**			**1**
Official/Internal Document																				1			1
Total	**1**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**2**	**5**	**3**	**1**	**5**	**50**

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Table 3.2 The BSP guidelines corpus distribution according to settings and contexts

Context / Form	Setting			
	Ped	Ped and Pro	Pro	Total
Australia	**1**			**1**
Book	1			1
Brunei	**1**			**1**
Official/Internal Document	1			1
Canada			**1**	**1**
Book			1	1
Ghana			**1**	**1**
Official/Internal Document			1	1
Global	**1**	**1**		**2**
Book	1	1		2
Iran			**1**	**1**
Article			1	1
Kenya	**1**			**1**
Official/Internal Document	1			1
Nigeria			**1**	**1**
Article			1	1
Switzerland			**1**	**1**
Book			1	1
UK	**1**		**2**	**3**
Book			2	2
Official/Internal Document	1			1
US	**6**		**29**	**35**
Article			16	16
Book	4		11	15
Official/Internal Document	2		2	4
US, UK	**1**			**1**
Book	1			1
Vietnam	**1**			**1**
Official/Internal Document	1			1
Total	**13**	**1**	**36**	**50**

The researcher gained the permission of data access from the Administrative Board of the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the research site. Then, she was assigned into all groups of the Start-up course on the E-learning system, where texts from different batches were stored, to collect the SBSPs. The researcher had to download the texts from different groups and gather them according to the academic-year groups (one group of the year 2020-2021, one of the year 2021-2022 and the other of the year 2022-2023) and check the whole corpus to make sure that no

duplicated version existed. The data separation according to academic years aimed to see whether there would be any difference between the composition of students in different batches. The filtered texts were numbered from 1 until the last number for each group. After that, the first 20 numbers of group 1 (later coded as ***A1*** until ***A20***), the second 20 of the group 2 (later coded as ***B21*** until ***B40***), and the last 20 numbers of group 3 (later coded as ***C11*** until ***C60***) were gathered as the official corpus of the SBSP to be analyzed, and then stored in a separate folder. The official corpus was collected from five instructors with a balanced quantity of texts.

In order to achieve objectivity for the data analysis, all the information regarding the SBSP writers was deleted from the texts. Every text starts with the contents table and ends with supporting documents or the references (if any). The current study followed a linguistic dimension; therefore, the textual content other than statistical data and financial figures demonstrating balance sheets, income statements or other types of capital distribution (whether in tables or not), was the primary focus of the analysis.

3.2.2.2 Setting and context

The SBSP collection included the BSPs written by undergraduate students studying in Business section of the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the university where the researcher is working. The convenience of gathering the data and the limited accessibility to any other similar course in Vietnamese contexts constituted the reasons for the selection of this university as the research site. The students at the research site study Start-up course in their final year (if they do not choose to submit a thesis), and writing a business/start-up plan is the requirement for their end-term assessment, which accounts for 50 percent of their total score at the completion of the course. Students are provided with writing guidelines and template to finish the assignment. Initially, the assignment was designed as an individual task, but later, after the course revision in the year 2020-2021, it has been changed into a group task. Therefore, all the SBSPs investigated in the current research were products of group work.

3.2.3 Interview data

In order to triangulate the results obtained from the text analysis, interviews were conducted with the SBSP writers and the course instructors. There are two layers of theme investigation in the interview data. The first one refers to the insights

regarding the structural composition of the BSP as an emerging genre which can be obtained through the voices of the authors and their audience. Their perspectives are expected to add more into the comprehension of the genre itself and the practice of genre creation. The other refers to the insights regarding the persuasion strategies utilized in the SBSP which can be derived from the voices of the persuaders and the persuadees, then the process of persuading and the process of being persuaded can be explained, as two routes of persuasion.

3.2.3.1 SBSP writers

In order to be able to recruit interviewees, the researcher asked for help from the course instructors and alumni for the distribution of a google form for demographic information of the participants who were willing to join the research. The combination of convenience and purposive sampling strategies allowed ten students, six from the batch of 2021-2022 and four from the batch of 2022-2023, to be contacted for the interviews. The number of ten student interviewees was decided thanks to the literature review which revealed a number from six to twelve for a focus group interview (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Krueger, 2000; Langford et al., 2002; Morgan, 1997), and the current researcher determined two groups of interviewees (with five students each) so that the interviewees could have time to share their view points. Because of the researcher's difficulties in reaching the SBSP writers, especially those from the batch of 2020-2021 (due to the course completion long time ago), this batch was excluded from the interviews. The student interviewees were actual SBSP writers, that is, the real writers of the SBSPs in the corpus. However, the ten students represented only six SBSPs because some of them belonged to the same writing group who composed one SBSP together. The participants were asked to sign the consent form which was sent through email address. Then, they received a list of interview questions about their own experience when writing their own SBSPs. The student interviewees were asked to draft their answers before the interviews, so they could recall detailed memories of writing those SBSPs. Because the plans are quite long, it was reasonable to let them spend some time reading and connecting the plans with the interview questions which include both semi-structured and text-based types. The semi-structured questions referred to open-ended questions regarding their experience of composing their own SBSPs, and the text-based ones referred to more specific questions to elicit information based on their SBSPs. One online focus-group interviews in L1 for students was set up afterwards on the day the first five

members were free, and another similar interview was set up on another day for those who could not join the first meeting. Both the interviews were recorded for transcription and translation into English. The information then was sent back to the interviewees for them to double-check to make sure no misinterpretation was made. They are coded as **Itv x** (x: from 1 to 10).

3.2.3.2 Course instructors

Besides investigating the voices of the writers, it is suggested to additionally listen to the voices of the readers assuming with different roles, i.e as teachers and as business people, to see whether they have any shared perceptions of the composition of the SBSPs. Moreover, as the writers play the roles of persuaders and the readers play the roles of persuadees, it is necessary to see how the writers plan to persuade the readers, and then whether the persuadees are convinced by the techniques the persuaders have chosen to put into the SBSPs, or whether the two routes of persuasion - the process of persuading and the process of being persuaded - are well-matched. By investigating the insights from both sides, the current research is supposed to offer comprehensive and objective interpretation of the data gained. As such, in addition to the interviews with the writers, five course instructors were invited for individual interviews by purposive sampling. Two of the course instructors are teaching and at the same time managing their own business (so-called business people); the other three are only teaching at university level, one of whom owns a degree regarding business administration. The purposive sampling aims to look for differences between the perspectives of teachers who experience teaching only and those who experience both teaching and business practices. After the consent forms were obtained, the course instructors received a list of interview questions and the six SBSPs that the student interviewees wrote. Similar to questions for the student interviewees, the interview questions for the course instructors also included two sections, the semi-structured section which referred to general information regarding their experience of teaching and supporting students to write the SBSPs, and the text-based section which referred to the information based on the SBSPs they are provided with. Once the interviewees were given the question list, they had a week (or more) to read the SBSPs (which are quite long) and connect the plans with the interview questions. Then the interviews were conducted online or in person with each individual teacher in L1 to get insightful data for the theme-based

analysis later. The interviews were recorded, then transcribed and translated into English before being sent back to the interviewees for a double-check. They are coded as **Rec x** (x: from 1 to 5).

3.3 Data analysis

As the BSP is a new genre in a variety of EFL contexts, the investigation of the BSP is expected to encounter to a lot of challenges. Hence, in order to be able to analyze an unfamiliar genre, Bhatia (1993) suggests undertaking some or all of the following suggested steps together with a thorough consideration of the purpose of analysis, the target aspects of the genre analysis and the background knowledge regarding the nature of genre that the researcher has owned.

Step 1. Place the given genre-text in a situational context
Step 2. Survey prior literature
Step 3. Refine the situational/contextual analysis
Step 4. Select corpus
Step 5. Study the institutional context
Step 6. Decide levels of linguistic analysis which focus on one or more of the following levels:
Level 1: Analysis of lexico-grammatical features
Level 2: Analysis of text-patterning or textualization
Level 3: Structural interpretation of the text-genre
Step 7. Check the specialist information in genre analysis

The researcher adopted the approach of analyzing a new genre suggested by Bhatia (1993) in the investigation of the BSPs, starting by analyzing the guidelines collected to find the typical components of the genre in order to propose an evidence-based framework (EBF). Then, based on such framework, the researcher analyzed the corpus of SBSPs collected in a university context to identify the rhetorical structure (move-step) of the genre, and finally looking for persuasion strategies frequently used in the SBSP corpus collected before. Besides, in order to properly conduct the genre analysis, the researcher also employed Swales' approach (1990) in investigating the common structure of a BSP and analyzing moves and steps of the SBSP corpus. At the same time, she deployed a compiled framework of persuasion strategies based on three Aristotelian persuasion appeals, the persuasion principles proposed by Cialdini

(2007) and other filtered strategies adapted from previous studies. The details of the frameworks are going to be presented in the following sections.

3.3.1 The BSP guidelines

The analysis of the guidelines followed the procedures of interpreting and analyzing qualitative data which refers to "conceptualizing and reducing data, elaborating categories in terms of their properties and dimensions, and relating through a series of prepositional statements" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12). This process is termed "constant comparisons" referring to (i) breaking down the data into manageable pieces for comparison, (ii) grouping similar data under the same conceptual heading for further analysis to get categories, (iii) developing each category in terms of its properties and dimensions and integrating the different categories around a core category which describes the major theme of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 7). Finally, the structure of the theory is provided by the core category and other categories while the details are filled by the properties and dimensions of each category. Therefore, the guidelines analysis procedure was performed as follows:

(1) Compile and number the guidelines for convenient management.
(2) Look for title of sections in the guidelines, place them in a spreadsheet.
(3) Identify the components within each section based on their communicative purposes though they may be named differently by comparing their similarities and differences, then grouping them into SBSP elements.
(4) Calculate the frequency of the SBSP elements and identify their organizational order.
(5) Decide the most popular elements by sorting from the most to the least.
(6) Construct a final structure, termed as "evidence-based framework", or the EBF.

3.3.2 The SBSPs

3.3.2.1 Framework for analysis of Moves and Steps

Genre analysis of the SBSPs is placed within the ESP School (Hyon, 1996), following the frameworks by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993). The formulation of moves/steps is determined within the frame of their communicative purposes. Moves presents as text units occurring in typical sequences in combination with(out) one or more steps (or sub-moves). While moves perform the function of a text

segment at a higher level (more general), steps serve as more specific rhetorical choices for the realization of the function of moves (Martín & Pérez, 2014). The general analysis of moves and steps in the current study adopted the process by Askehave and Swales (2001), which goes through move/step hypotheses based on initial text analyses. That is, the researcher took out ten SBSPs, conducted move/step analysis based on the EBF from the RQ1 to form a preliminary structure, so-called preliminary analysis (Labrador et al., 2014). This process, according to Corbin and Strauss (2015), is open coding which is exploratory and it leads to concept identification. In this current research, once the researcher has obtained initial concepts (which mean a list of moves and steps), she can verify her initial interpretations by comparing them with those in the other SBSP text samples in an iterative process until a stable and consistent rhetorical structure is identified (Nathan, 2016). The analysis was based on sentence-level units, but there might be cases where the unit of analysis was under sentence level (e.g. clause or phrase) or above sentence level (e.g. paragraph). In any of the cases, a move/step was decided based on its communicative purpose. The moves and steps were marked obligatory, conventional and optional if their frequency was identified as 100%, more than 60%, and less than 60% in the corpus, respectively (Kanoksilapatham, 2005, 2015). This categorization was adopted because it has been employed in other non-science disciplines of Research Articles as well.

3.3.2.2 Framework for analysis of persuasion strategies

The analysis of persuasion strategies employed the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) model complemented with the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM) and the Unimodel, as stated in the *Section 2.3.3.5*. In a more specific manner, the framework for analyzing persuasion strategies of the whole SBSP was a compilation of different strategies stated in Cialdini (2007), Vogel (2018), Yang et al. (2019), Chen and Yang (2021) and Singla et al. (2022) in relation with three rhetoric appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) in order to understand the processes of persuading and being persuaded according to the abovementioned theories. The justifications for this compilation lie in two roots. Firstly, while a lot of persuasion strategies regarding linguistic features are used in other studies, e.g. Zheng (2000), Hyland (2005), Issa (2017), Rudolf von Rohr (2018), Lulu and Alkaff (2019), and Romanova and Smirnova (2019), most of them are conducted in academic genres and political genres, not business genres. Besides, the study by Issa (2017) about persuasive functions of politeness strategies in print advertisements (a business genre)

has a mere focus on the politeness strategies rather than comprehensive persuasion strategies. The study by Romanova and Smirnova (2019) in advertisements, on the other hand, proposed a number of persuasive techniques which can be identified within Cialdini's principles (2007). Secondly, Cialdini's principles are more business-related but they are classified as heuristic (O'Keefe, 2016; Yang et al., 2019) which cannot cover the logical appeal of persuasion. Therefore, persuasion strategies used in the current study were adapted from different studies and categorized according to three Aristotelian appeals. Table 3.3 presents the generic taxonomy of persuasion strategies used in the current study.

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Table 3.3 Generic taxonomy of persuasion strategies in relation with rhetoric appeals used for the analysis of the current study

Rhetoric appeals	Persuasion strategies	Explanation and examples	Prior works
Ethos	Commitment and Consistency [CC1]	The persuaders indicate their intentions to take acts or justify their earlier decisions to convince others that they have made the correct choice. E.g. *Our products **are committed** to be a good dessert for everyone's health.*	(Cialdini, 2007) (Yang et al., 2019) (Chen & Yang, 2021)
	Authority [AU]	Authority is indicated through expertise, source of power, third-party approval, credentials, and awards. E.g. *After that, we would be **pasteurizing** and then **homogenizing** the mixture.*	(Cialdini, 2007) (Singla et al., 2022)
	Trustworthiness [TR]	The trustworthiness is indicated by honesty and integrity of the source through tropes like years of experience, "trusted brand", numbers and statistics. E.g. *The yogurt will be purchased from a quality **TH true milk** vendor in bulk.*	(Singla et al., 2022)
	Reciprocation [RE]	People are under obligation to make the future repayment of favors, invitations, presents or the like. E.g. *In order to convert the message of the **conservation the environment**, we also deduce those features in the style of minimalism (single-lined artwork with big brand names and logos).*	(Cialdini, 2007)
Pathos	Scarcity [SC]	People tend to value an item more as soon as it becomes rare, distinct or limited. E.g. *We see **a gap** in the food market of Vung Tau that is **none of the food trucks** in the area sells pizzas.*	(Cialdini, 2007) (Yang et al., 2019) (Chen & Yang, 2021) (Singla et al., 2022)
	Contrast and Comparison [CC2]	A product's value is strongly influenced by what it is compared to. E.g. *Our office model will **break the boredom** of working in **traditional** spaces.*	(Cialdini, 2007) (Singla et al., 2022)
	Social Identity and Social Proof [SIP]	SIP involves *normative influence*, which refers to people's self-concept of their membership in a social group [SI], or *informational influence* by accepting information obtained from others as evidence about reality, e.g., customer reviews and ratings [SP]. E.g. *We consider advertising through social media platforms such **as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok,** and using **customer reviews** as another channel.*	(Yang et al., 2019) (Singla et al., 2022) (Cialdini, 2007)
	Impact and Value [IV]	Impact and Value refers to the emphasis of importance or bigger impact of a product/service. E.g. *We **aim for the standardization of authentic food to replace** the stereotype that European foods are reserved for the upper-class market only.*	(Yang et al., 2019) (Chen & Yang, 2021) (Singla et al., 2022)

Table 3.3 Generic taxonomy of persuasion strategies in relation with rhetoric appeals used for the analysis of the current study (Cont.)

Rhetoric appeals	Persuasion strategies	Explanation and examples	Prior works
	Positivity [PO]	Positivity refers to the usage of positive words to inform both positive developments, achievements and strengths as well as negative phenomena such as threats, difficulties and drawbacks. E.g. *We feel that our chosen business area is **promising** in the industry.*	(Vogel, 2018)
	Liking [LI]	Liking refers to the factors that cause a person to be persuaded such as a friend's name, physical attractiveness, similarity, compliments, familiarity, condition and association. E.g. *Super coffee has created a cup of coffee with a **strong** bitter taste, **elegant** sourness, spreading **passionate aroma**, **quickly conquering** anyone's taste.*	(Cialdini, 2007)
Logos	Concreteness and Evidence [CE]	Concreteness and Evidence refers to the provision of concrete facts or evidence to appeal to the logic of consumers. E.g. *At the end of **2020**, its sales reached **250,000,000** VND after **5** months.*	(Yang et al., 2019) (Chen & Yang, 2021) (Singla et al., 2022)

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Despite the inter-rating during the categorization process, some strategies could be posited into two places. For example, *reciprocation* can be put in ethos or pathos; however, the ethical sense of the strategy is more salient, so *reciprocation* belongs to ethos. Similarly, *contrast and comparison* can be placed in either pathos or logos, but the emotional effect is more salient, consequently it is categorized as pathos.

3.3.2.3 The SBSP assessment rubric

In order for more reliable discussion, a rubric was developed to categorize the SBSPs according to their writing competencies. The rubric was initially generated by ChatGPT, then revised and adapted from Chang (2017) to the current context by the researcher. After that, it was proofread and validated by the inter-rater to make sure it would be comprehensible, logical and suitable for assessment. Last but not least, the rubric was sent to a teacher (who is teaching this Start-up course) for comments and suggestions to finalize the draft. The rubric is constituted by 10 criteria in terms of business content (including 7 items regarding the BSP structural elements: Executive Summary, Business Description, Product/Service, Market and Industry Analysis, Marketing Plan, Management and Operations Plan, Financial Plan) and writing skills (including 3 items regarding Presentation and Structure, Writing Clarity and Style, and Consistency). Each criterion is assessed according to four levels (Excellent, Good, Fair and Needs Improvement) with the highest score of 5 scores for Excellent and 1-2 scores for Needs Improvements. The total score for the whole 10 criteria will decide the level of the SBSP quality. That is, an SBSP with a total score ranging from 43-50 will be classified as Excellent, from 33-42 as Good, from 23-32 as Fair and lower 23 as Needs Improvement (for more details, see Table A.0.11)

3.3.2.4 Procedures of analysis

The procedures started with the move/step analysis of the SBSPs. The coding rule was based on communicative purposes. In case there was existence of two moves within a sentence, the move which seemed to be more salient was assigned. If it was impossible to decide which move was more salient, the sentence then was coded as containing two moves (Holmes, 1997). The same rule was deployed as the researcher continued with the coding of persuasion strategies. The coding was implemented through ATLAS.ti. After the coding was completed, the persuasion strategies were placed within each move for the identification of which

strategies were more frequently employed in certain moves. Each persuasion strategy was counted once in each move.

The rubric, after validation procedure, was used to rate the SBSPs in Corpus 2. The SBSPs were later classified into four groups including Excellent, Good, Fair and Needs Improvement, and the analysis of PS was conducted within each group and there was comparison among the groups to see whether there were differences in distribution patterns of the PS amid different groups.

Finally, the qualitative interpretation was integrated with the insights collected from interviews with the writers and the readers. The results finally were discussed through the comparison with the prior literature to see whether there are any significant changes or new development in this specific genre, especially in the utilization of persuasion strategies which are popular in other genres but has not been investigated in BSPs.

3.3.3 Interview data analysis

The interviews were refined to keep only useful information for the current study. The refinement was conducted by the researcher listening to the recordings and removing unrelated parts to the composition of the SBSPs in RQ2 and persuasion strategies in RQ3 from the original files. After that, they were transcribed, translated into English and analyzed through a theme-based approach using ATLAS.ti. The theme identified was based on the findings resulted from Corpus 2 analysis, aiming at explaining, supporting or contradicting the findings and making conclusive claims. The analysis was expected to clarify the interpretation of the move/step construction as well as enrich the discussion of the employment of persuasion strategies in order to make the plans more convincing. Furthermore, the voices of the writers and the readers in different roles were taken into consideration, by which the development of this emerging genre is expected to be a noticeable research area in other contexts.

3.3.4 Quantitative analysis

In order to enhance the reliability of the qualitative results, some quantitative analysis was conducted. First of all, in order to figure out the sequence of moves and steps in the SBSPs, a sequential analysis was carried out using GSEQ. The sequential analysis included probability (number of times the pairs of moves occur divided by the number of times the move occurs), strength (natural logarithm of frequency of pair of moves multiplied by its probability) and z-score (number of

standard deviations the observed frequency of the pair of moves is from the expected frequency). The result was expected to propose a more concrete rhetorical structure of the writing genre. Secondly, another analysis using ATLAS.ti was also conducted to identify the distribution of the persuasion strategies within moves of the SBSPs. The results gained were expected to contribute to strengthen the qualitative interpretation and explanation.

3.4 Summary of research methods and procedure

Table 3.5 Summary of research methods

Research Question	Instruments	Data analysis methods
RQ1	Corpus 1	Quatitative (Excel)
RQ2	Corpus 2 + Interviews	Qualitative + Quantitative (ATLAS.ti, GSEQ)
RQ3	Corpus 2 + Interviews	Qualitative + Quantitative (ATLAS.ti)

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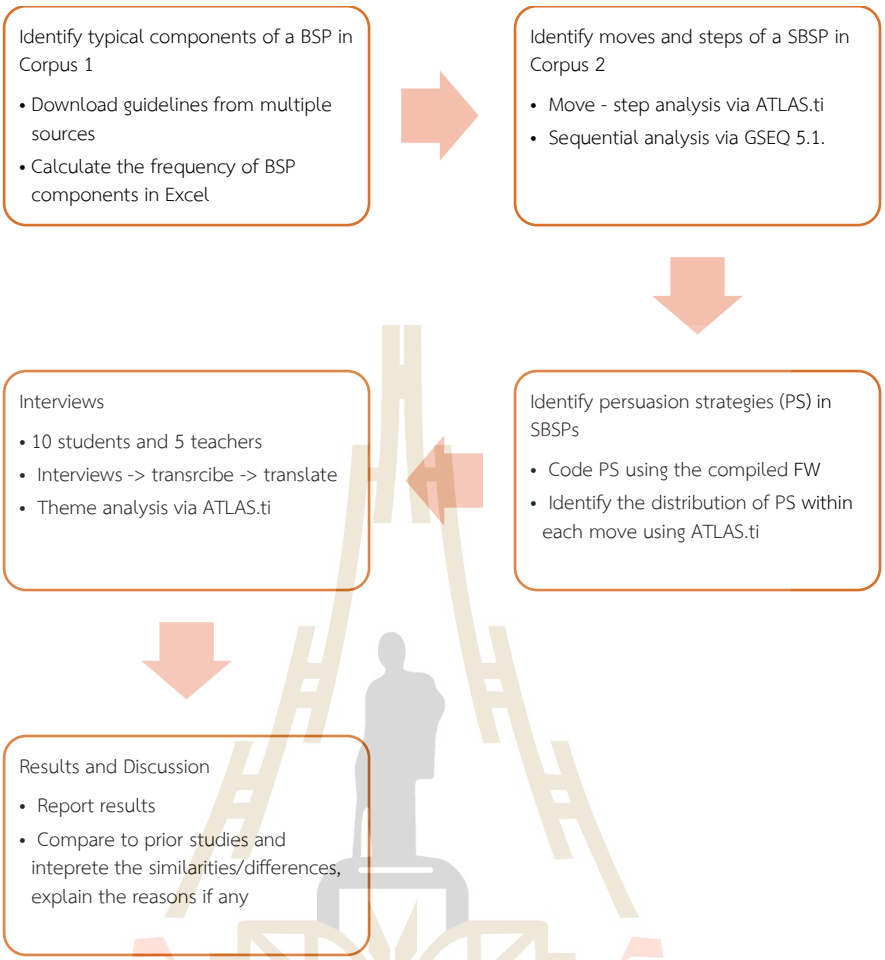


Figure 3.2 Summary of research procedure

3.5 Reliability of the study

The current study adopts a qualitative method in nature strengthened by the triangulation of the data by interviews. Although the segmentation of texts in genre analysis tends to carry a certain amount of subjectivity as it is determined by the analyst's interpretation regarding communicative purposes of the text segments. In order to maximize the reliability of the study and verify the analysis outcomes, an additional inter-coder procedure should be a necessary complement of the genre analysis (Kanoksilapatham, 2015). A peer researcher holding a PhD in Education in an English-speaking country and currently teaching in business areas of an economics-oriented university was invited to be an inter-coder of the present study. Thorough coder training was conducted to make sure the peer researcher would be familiar with move-step analysis. His business-related knowledge was expected to be helpful in identifying communicative functions of the text segments. The coding procedure

started with the coding together by both the researchers on five SBSPs to come to agreement on typical move and step definitions. Then, the researchers coded individually on 20% of the corpus, after which disagreements were discussed until consensus was reached. In any cases where discrepancies occurred, the researchers resorted to the assistance of an expert researcher in Applied Linguistics.

The reliability of this thesis, particularly in coding the move-step structure and persuasion strategies in student business/start-up plans (SBSPs), was ensured through rigorous statistical measures. To achieve a high level of reliability, inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's Kappa coefficient. This statistical measure was chosen because of its robustness in evaluating agreement between coders beyond chance. The coding process involved two independent coders who analyzed the SBSPs to identify and classify the rhetorical moves, steps, and persuasive strategies. Cohen's Kappa values for both the move-step structure and the persuasion strategies were calculated, resulting in a Kappa coefficient of 0.82 and 0.79, respectively. These values indicate a substantial agreement between coders, confirming that the coding framework is reliable and consistent. This high level of inter-coder agreement strengthens the validity of the findings and supports the robustness of the analytical framework used in this study.

3.6 Pilot study

In order to test the practicability, feasibility and quality of the current research design integrated with the intended frameworks, a pilot study is expected to be an essential phase before the main full-scale study is conducted. This preliminary investigation allowed for the identification of potential challenges, refinement of the research design, and validation of the research instruments. The findings from the pilot study were supposed to play a crucial role in enhancing the robustness and reliability of the main study. Because of the necessity for an evidence-based framework to be proposed in RQ1 aiming to serve RQ2, 19 texts (35%) of Corpus 1 were investigated. Regarding RQ2 and RQ3, 10 SBSPs of Corpus 2 (~ more than 10% of the main corpus) were analyzed for preliminary findings in the pilot study. The texts of Corpus 2 were drawn from diverse groups taught by different instructors (2 texts/instructor). The interviews were not yet conducted in this phase but saved until the main study. The pilot study came to findings of 16 typical components of a BSP as an emerging genre, the four-section structure (with a newly identified move TBM9 in the second section)

of the SBSPs collected at the research site and a diverse distribution of persuasion strategies in which TBM4 includes the highest occurrences of all the persuasion strategies, as well as employs the biggest crowds of strategies in each move. The detailed explanation and illustration of the typical components of an SBSP as well as the persuasion strategies identified is going to be presented in the next Chapter regarding the Results of the whole study.

3.7 Summary

Chapter 3 of this thesis outlines the methodology used to investigate the components and strategies in business/start-up plans (BSPs). Data collection involved three collections: guidelines for writing BSPs, students' BSPs collected at a university, and interview data from students and teachers. The analysis of these corpora included both qualitative and quantitative methods. The guidelines were analyzed to extract common components and recommended practices, while the students' BSPs were examined to assess adherence to these guidelines and identify structural patterns. Interview transcripts provided qualitative insights into the practical challenges and strategies of BSP writing. The chapter also summarizes the research methods and procedures, discusses the reliability of the study and details the pilot study, whose results informed the final research design. This comprehensive methodology ensures a robust and systematic approach to the research, underpinning the subsequent analysis and findings.

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CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the focus is on presenting the outcomes of the research inquiries, which included three primary questions driving the investigation, and providing discussion of the typical findings regarding such questions. These questions aimed to illuminate distinct facets of the synthesis and construction of students' business/start-up plans (SBSPs) within the educational context, particularly concerning the integration of an Evidence-Based Framework (EBF) and the persuasion strategies employed by students in this process.

Research Question 1 delves into recognizing the typical components of a business/start-up plan (BSP) synthesized from guidelines crafted within pedagogical and professional settings, with the intention of formulating an EBF. Through thorough analysis and synthesis, this investigation unveiled a wide range of common components intrinsic to BSPs derived from established guidelines, which were subsequently integrated into an evidence-based framework to inform the creation of SBSPs. This chapter, then, offers a discussion on the diversity of BSP components found in the EBF, highlighting typical characteristics of this genre.

Research Question 2 focuses on explaining the structural elements and procedural steps characterizing SBSPs crafted through the utilization of the EBF. Drawing upon systematic analysis and categorization, this chapter provides a description of moves and steps inherent in the formulation of SBSPs. This detailed examination sheds light on the sequential organization and structural coherence of SBSPs, providing valuable insights into their compositional dynamics. In the discussion, this chapter delves into the realities of students' SBSPs, outlining the common moves and steps students use, examining how SBSPs align with or diverge from other academic and professional writing forms, highlighting the unique challenges and requirements of writing business/start-up plans.

Finally, Research Question 3 centers on identifying the persuasion strategies employed by students when composing SBSPs, thereby illuminating the rhetorical dimensions of the BSP as a genre within educational contexts. Through qualitative analysis and thematic coding, this chapter unveils an array of persuasion techniques deployed by students, ranging from appeals to authority and evidence-based reasoning to emotional appeals. The discussion discusses the persuasive strategies employed by

students, focusing on the use of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*, as well as the features of persuasive messages and the process of conveying persuasion and being persuaded. It also addresses the common writing problems faced by students in crafting their SBSPs which tend to strongly influence the persuasiveness of their plans. This discussion underscores the need for a structured approach and effective persuasive techniques to enhance the impact of SBSPs.

Research question 1: What are typical components of a BSP synthesized from guidelines designed in pedagogical and professional settings that can be used to formulate an EBF?

4.1 The evidence-based framework (EBF) of a typical BSP

4.1.1 The structural elements of a BSP

The RQ1 seeks for the typical components of a BSP based on Corpus 1, which includes the guidelines collected from a diversity of sources such as articles, books and official/internal documents published in different contexts around the world. The surface structure analysis of a BSP identified 21 structural elements (See Appendix B, p.194), among which the 10 listed in Table 4.1 could be considered inherent components of a plan based on their frequency in the corpus (50% or over).

Table 4.1 Typical elements of a BSP drawn from the guidelines

No.	Code	Elements of a BSP*	Frequency (No. = 50)	Percentage
1	TC	Table of Contents	25	50
2	ES	Executive Summary	50	100
3	CO	Company Overview/Business Description	39	78
4	PS	Product or Service Plan	26	52
5	MIA	Market and Industry Analysis	38	76
6	MKP	Marketing Plan	38	76
7	MNP	Management Plan	43	86
8	OP	Operations Plan	30	60
9	FP	Financial Plan	49	98
10	AP	Appendices/Appendix	29	58

* These elements are presented according to the order of their appearance in a BSP, not their frequency in the corpus

There is a fact that a specific guideline (coded as *Tx, x* is the order number) in Corpus 1 might not refer to all the elements identified. Furthermore, there were low frequencies (under 50%) of certain elements in the corpus, i.e., Title/Cover Page (36%), Cover Letter (6%), Industry (18%), The Economics of the Business (10%), Competition/Competitor Analysis (22%), Technology Plan (20%), Development Plan (24%), Financing Requirements (20%), Risks (26%), Summary (8%), Overall Schedule (8%), and Sustainability and Impact (14%). These sections are found in separate sections in some guidelines, but they tend to be combined in the other abovementioned primary sections of the texts. For example, Technology Plan can be found in Product/Service Plan (in *T5*, *T77*) or in Marketing Plan (in *T16*); and Development Plan can be found in Operations Plan. Risks and Summary are found in several texts but the frequencies are not high, and risks may be mentioned as a sub-component in other sections such as Executive Summary, Company Overview or Marketing Plan.

The *Table of Contents* (TC) summarizes the whole contents of the plan, normally placed after the *Title/Cover Page*, but sometimes after the *Executive Summary* (in *T14, T22, T27, T75*, and *T76*). The *Executive Summary* (ES) was the most essential component of a BSP. It appeared in all texts of Corpus 1, which could make it the most typical section of a BSP. It is an abstract of the BSP, summarizing the future plans of the business. The *ES* includes a variety of information, capturing the essence of the business.

Company Overview/Business Description (CO) was the fourth most popular component of a BSP (after *Financial Plan*). The name of this section varied among texts, e.g., "Company Summary/Background" (*T7*, *T16*), "Business Description and Approach/History" (*T5*, *T14*), "Company Description//Description of Company" (*T8*, *T17*, *T80*), "Business Description//Description of Business" (*T12*, *T70*), "The Business (*T67*, *T78*), "History and General Description" (*T75*), "Background/History, Goals and Objectives" (*T76*), "Introduction and Description of the Business" (*T44*), etc. This section covers the most comprehensive information related to the foundation of the business, regarding legal information, mission/vision and goals/objectives, and other development strategies. Sometimes, it referred to the business and its opportunity in the industry, so the section was entitled "The (Venture) Opportunity" (*T39, T52*), "Company and Industry" (*T59*), or "The Industry and the Company and its Product(s) or Service(s)" (*T64*).

Product or Service Plan (PS) provides a detailed description of the product/service which is proposed in the BSP. Though this section referred to identical

aspects, it was entitled under different names in different texts, such as “Product and service description” (*T14*, *T16*) or “Description of product/service” (*T76*), “Service and product line” (*T17*), “(The) Products and services” (e.g., *T1*, *T8*, *T69*, *T78*), “Background information” (*T79*), “Product/Technology” (*T77*) or “Technology, products and services” (*T5*), “General description of the business project” (*T7*). Some texts even required no separate section regarding the products/services by either omitting this section or combining the content of product/service description in the CO section (e.g., *T6*, *T12*, *T55, T64, T67*, *T70*, *T75*, *T80*). That was the reason for a lower frequency in Corpus 1 of PS compared to other primary elements in a BSP.

Market and Industry Analysis (MIA), sometimes under the title “(The) market” (*T1*, *T77*) or “Definition of the market” (*T5*) “Market description” (*T76*), “Market (Research and) Analysis (Summary)” (*T13*, *T17*, *T39*, *T69*, *T75*, *T78*), “Market Analysis and Trends” (*T14*), sometimes divided into two sections “Industry Analysis/Examination”, “Description of Industry”, “The Market (Analysis)” (T19, T25) followed by “Competitive Analysis/Landscape/Advantage” (*T25*, *T30*, T52, *T77, T78*), or “Competitor Analysis/Assessment”, “ (The) Competition” (*T12*, *T16*, *T19*, *T35*) describes and analyses the industry and the target market(s) that the BSP writers aim for. The information obtained is used to develop the *Marketing Plan* in the next section (under some other titles such as “(The) Marketing” - *T17*, *T67*, “Marketing strategy/-ies” - *T1*, *T76*, or “Strategy and implementation summary” - *T69),* which elaborates marketing strategies and future marketing programs (if any). Because the information collected from *Market and Industry Analysis* section is the basis for the *Marketing Plan*, some texts even either omitted the section, e.g., in *T6*, or included the details of the former section in the latter (e.g., *T8*, *T16*, *T67*, *T79*, *T80*).

Management Plan (MP) clarifies management policies regarding human resources together with benefits, compensations and salaries while the *Operations Plan* (OP) suggests management strategies regarding production, productivity, quality and other things under a bigger scope of operations. Both sections were interrelated and sometimes integrated into one section (so-called “Organization and Management” - *T14*, *T17*, *T25*, *T56*, *T75*, *T78*, “Management and Operations” - *T38*, *T78*, or “Organizational plan/matters” - *T70*, *T79*). In a number of texts, OP was presented regarding the manufacturing and implementation strategies, under titles such as “Manufacturing (and Operations Plan)” (*T13*, *T32*, *T39*, *T59*, *T64*), or “Implementation (and Operating) Strategy/-ies” (*T21*, *T52*)/ “Strategy and Implementation” (*T42*, *T56*) or “Production and Operations” (*T3*). OP was even integrated with Development Plan as “Operations and Development Plan” (*T65*).

Financial Plan (FP) is one of the most essential parts of a BSP which attracts the attention of funders based on its demonstration of projected financial statements within the first year and within several years (ranging from 2 to 5 years' time). This is the second popular element of a BSP which was referred to in 98% of the texts in Corpus 1 as a separate section. The only text ignoring a separate section of FP mentioned Projected Income Statement as the only focus of financial data in a BSP.

Appendices (AP) is the last section identified in a typical BSP. It introduces documents that help to clarify the information provided inside the BSP. Though it appears at the end of a BSP, that fact does not weaken its importance as something like the qualifications of the management team which may be added in this section is the most important to a prospective investor. However, the documents are supporting materials and the existence of certain sub-components of the Appendices does not provide a significant impact on the content of other primary sections of a BSP, the Appendices section, unsurprisingly, is not referred to in some guidelines.

In short, the investigation of 50 guidelines in both professional and pedagogical settings suggested 10 typical components of a BSP with frequency of 50% or over in the corpus. The explanation of sub-components within each element is going to be presented in the next section.

4.1.2 Sub-components of the structural elements of a BSP

Among the 10 structural elements of a BSP, the *Table of Contents* (TC) is the only element regarding the format of the plan. It serves as a guide to writing and organizing the BSP, further assists readers to understand and easily access the information presented (*T14*). TC is also substituted by another title "Contexts" (*T54*) aiming at helping the reader to look up the items in the following pages. It is a list of headings included; therefore, the length of the list depends on the content of the plan. In the upcoming section, the researcher is going to present sub-components of the other 9 structural elements (which refer to the content of a BSP) other than the TC.

Executive Summary (ES) is the most essential part of a BSP. Ninety eight percent of the guidelines referred to ES as the first section, normally one to two pages long, after the TC, but it was entitled differently as "Introduction" (in *T48*) though the content and function seemed to be identical. Most of the texts specified the elements included in the ES, while only two (*T7*, *T25*) referred to ES generally without any specific information of what should be there. ES is an abstract of the BSP, summarizing the future plans of the business. It includes a variety of information, capturing the essence of the business. ES briefs the most important and attractive information of the BSP, conveying a clear and concise picture of the proposed venture, in order to draw

readers' attention and boost their curiosity to read further (as referred to in *T55*). Therefore, ES is "the single most widely distributed written description of the business" (as mentioned in *T62*). The sub-components of ES are fully presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Sub-components of the Executive Summary drawn from the guidelines

Code	Sub-components of ES	Freq. No. = 50	Percentage %
ES1	Summary financial projections/Financial plan	27	54
ES2	Target market/customer	24	48
ES3	The product/service	23	46
ES4	Near- and long-term objectives/goals	23	46
ES5	Competitive Advantage	22	44
ES6	Funding/Capital requirements	22	44
ES7	The management team	21	42
ES8	Mission	17	34
ES9	Business description	16	32
ES10	Strategic plan (to achieve goals)	15	30
ES11	Profits and cash forecast	13	26
ES12	Opportunity (need, solution to problem, market size, trends)	12	24
ES13	Expected return on investment with timeframes	10	20
ES14	Concept description	8	16
ES15	Investment offering	8	16
ES16	Sources and uses of funds	7	14
ES17	Value proposition (benefits to target customers)	7	14
ES18	Business background (name, location, legal status, business model, contact)	6	12
ES19	Problem being solved	6	12
ES20	Highlights potential competitors	5	10
ES21	The marketing plan	5	10
ES22	Vision	5	10
ES23	Key elements of your operations	4	8
ES24	Keys to success	4	8
ES25	Purpose of the plan	4	8
ES26	Core value	3	6
ES27	Key risk factors	3	6
ES28	Marketing strategy	3	6
ES29	Resources needed	3	6
ES30	Industry overview	2	4
ES31	Overview of technology	2	4
ES32	Revenue model	2	4
ES33	Position	2	4
ES34	Economics of the opportunity	1	2
ES35	Key financial indicators (KFIs)	1	2

The results of ES sub-components suggested 35 items among which 22 items had frequency of 10% and over in Corpus 1. Among all the ES sub-components, 10 most frequent items include Summary financial projections/Financial plan, Target

market/customer, The Product/service, Near- and long-term objectives/goals, Competitive Advantage, Funding/Capital Requirements, The Management Team, Business Description, Mission, and Strategic plan (to achieve goals). These sub-components represent the core elements typically emphasized within the Executive Summary of a BSP, each playing a crucial role in presenting a comprehensive overview of the business venture to potential stakeholders. A wide variety of sub-components might be a reason for which their frequency is not very high with only ES1 (Summary financial projections/Financial plan, providing a financial plan or a condensed overview of the expected financial performance of the business over a specific period, typically including projections for revenue, expenses, and profitability) reaching 54% of the corpus, followed by Target market/customer (ES2, 48%) defining the specific demographic or customer segment that the business aims to serve, along with relevant market insights. The third most frequent items include Product/service (ES3), which entails a concise description of the product or service offered by the business, and Near- and long-term objectives (ES4), which outlines the short-term and long-term goals or objectives that the business aims to achieve. Both of them accounted for 46%, nearly the same as those at the second rank (44%) including Competitive advantage ES5 (emphasizing the unique aspects or strengths that differentiate the business from competitors in the market), Funding/Capital requirements ES6 (outlining the financial needs or requirements of the business, including startup costs, ongoing expenses, and potential sources of funding). The Management team (ES7) had slightly lower frequency (42%) compared to the second rank. It highlights the key members of the management team and their relevant expertise or experience. Mission (ES8), accounting for 34% of the corpus which is much lower than the third place of the list, articulates the fundamental purpose or mission of the business. Having nearly the same frequency as ES8, Business description (ES9, 32%), provides an overview of the business or a description of the new venture including its nature, industry or any unique features. The last item of the ten with the frequency of 30% in the corpus is Strategic plan (to achieve goals) (ES10), which outlines the strategies and actions the business intends to take to accomplish its goals. The other 27 sub-components of the Executive Summary are listed and explained in the *APPENDIX C* (p.198).

Company Overview (CO) is found to possess the highest number of sub-components within the section. The name of this section can vary among texts, i.e., “Company Summary/Background” (*T7*, *T16*), “Business Description and Approach/History” (*T5*, *T14*), “Company Description//Description of Company” (*T8*, *T17*, *T80*), “Business Description//Description of Business” (*T12*, *T70*), “The Business

(*T67*, *T78*), "History and General Description" (*T75*), "Background/History, Goals and Objectives" (*T76*). This section covers the most comprehensive information related to the foundation of the business, regarding legal information, mission/vision and goals/objectives, and other development strategies. A total of 44 items were identified from the analysis of Corpus and fully explained in the *Appendix D (*p. 201). The ten most popular items include Mission statement (CO1), Legal structure (CO2), Short- and long-term objectives/goals (CO3), Current position/status (CO4), History of the business/industry (CO5), Location and facilities (CO6), Products and services (CO7), The principal owners/ownership structure (CO8), Nature of the business (CO9), and The industry (CO10).

Like in the ES, due to a wide variety of sub-components, their frequency in the corpus is not very high. The most popular sub-component is Mission statement (CO1), whose frequency accounted for 52% in the corpus. It primarily describes the purpose of the business/venture through the identification of market needs or opportunities to be addressed and outlines what should be done to address those needs. Simultaneously, the vision of the company led by its core values and guiding principles is also included in this brief Mission statement. With much lower frequency (38%), Legal structure (CO2), referring to the form of business ownership (e.g., sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation) and any relevant legal documentation, is at the second place on the list, followed by two items with slightly lower frequencies, namely Near- and long-term objectives/goals (CO3, 36%) and Current position/status (CO4, 34%). Regarding the objectives/goals, there are two schools of thought. One is that the goals are the means of achieving the objectives (or goals are short-term and objectives are long-term), and the other is the opposite, which defines the objectives as the means of achieving the goals (or objectives are short term and goals are long term) (*T79*). In the majority of the guidelines in Corpus 1, either Goals or Objectives is consistently adopted together with the initial phrase "Near/short- and long-term…". However, in some other texts (e.g., *T12*, *T44*, *T50*, *T52*, *T58*, *T75*) both terms are referred to, in which Objectives are short term and Goals are long term. In whichever meaning, they are supposed to follow the SMART rule (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable, and Timed) for evaluation of the entire process and provide valuable feedback along the way (*T79).* Meanwhile, four other items CO5-8 share the same frequency which accounted for 30% in the Corpus. CO5 describes background information about the company, including its history, founding date, key milestones, and relevant industry background. CO6 provides details about the company's physical location(s) - the address - and facilities. CO7, similar to ES1, outlines an overview of

the products or services offered by the company, including their features, benefits, and value proposition. CO8 is an important item of the section which briefs about the principal owners or stakeholders of the company and the ownership structure, including any significant shareholders or investors. CO9, Nature of the business, is a description of the nature of the company's business activities, including its industry focus, target markets, and customer segments while CO10 - The industry, similar to ES32, depicts an analysis of the industry landscape in which the company operates, including market trends, competitive dynamics, and growth opportunities.

Because both ES and CO provide the most comprehensive information regarding the foundation of a business, a number of items (e.g., The products/services, Competitive advantage, Core values, The Industry) were identified in both sections. Actually, items regarding mission/vision and goals/objectives can be found either in the Executive Summary or in the Company Overview, sometimes found before Executive Summary (*T17*, *T67*) or found as a separate section (*T75*, *T77*, *T79*). Therefore, the explanations of the repeated items presented in the Appendices can be found in the prior list of the ES.

Product/Service Plan (PS) provides a detailed description of the product/service which is proposed in the BSP. Though this section refers to the same things, it may be entitled under different names in different texts, such as "Product and service description" (*T14*, *T16*) or "Description of product/service" (*T76*), "Service and product line" (*T17*), "(The) Products and services" (*T1*, *T8*, *T69*, *T78*), "Background information" (*T79*), "Product/Technology" (*T77*) or "Technology, products and services" (*T5*), "General description of the business project" (*T7*). Some texts even require no separate section regarding the products/services (e.g., *T6*, *T12*, *T67*, *T70*, *T75*, *T80*) by either omitting this section or combining the content of product/service description in the CO section without mentioning detailed sub-components of the Product/Service Plan. That may be the reason for the low frequencies of the sub-components. The results revealed 33 sub-components of the PS including Description/features (PS1), Benefits/value proposition (PS2), Competitive comparison (PS3), A prototype of product/service (PS4), Unique selling points (PS5), Technology (PS6), Proprietary rights (PS7), Need for the product/service (PS8), Future products (PS9), Competitive advantage (PS10) and the other types of relevant information related to the product/service being proposed (PS11-33), as presented in Appendix E (p. 206). The highest frequency is PS1,whose frequency accounted for 52% in the corpus. Obviously, there is a significant gap between the frequency of PS1 and the other sub-components of the PS, e.g., PS2 Benefits/Value proposition, which accounted for only

28%. Furthermore, like in the CO section, there are a number of sub-components of PS which are similar to those in previous sections (e.g., Mission, Target customer profile, Competitive advantage, etc.). That is, such sub-components may appear in ES, CO or PS section without changing their meaning.

The section of *Market and Industry Analysis* (MIA), sometimes under the title "(The) market" (*T1*, *T77*) or "Definition of the market" (*T5*)/"Market description" (*T76*), "Market analysis (summary)" (e.g., *T17*, *T23*, *T25*, *T69*, *T75*, *T78*), "Market analysis and trends" (*T14*), "Market and industry (research and analysis)" (*T13*, *T32*, *T54*, *T58*, *T64*), sometimes divided into two sections "Industry analysis"/"Description of industry" (*T12*, *T70*) and/or "Competitor analysis" (*T12*, *T16*, *T77*, *T78*), describes and analyses the industry and the target market(s) that the BSP writers aim for. The content may include the market segmentation through the analysis of customers' demographics, behaviors and preferences, the investigation of the industry trends, and the evaluation of the business's own SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) to look for opportunities and a niche market for their business. The information obtained is used to develop the marketing plan in the next section *Marketing Plan* (under some other titles such as "(The) Marketing" - *T17*, *T67*, "Marketing strategy/-ies" - *T1*, *T76*, or "Strategy and implementation summary" - *T69*) which elaborates marketing strategies (regarding positioning, pricing, promotion and place) and future marketing programs (if any). Because the information collected from *Market and Industry Analysis* section is the basis for the *Marketing Plan* (MKP), some texts even either omit the section MIA from the BSP, e.g., in *T6*, or include the details of the former section in the latter (*T8*, *T16*, *T67*, *T79*, *T80*). In total, MIA is found to include a collection of 20 sub-components, among which the most popular (frequency of 68%) is Industry description and market environment (MIA1) specifying the market characteristics in the industry, followed by Competition analysis (MIA2, 64%) assessing the competitive landscape within the industry and Potential and target customers' characteristics (MIA3, 52%) identifying and describing the characteristics, behaviors, preferences, and needs of potential and target customers. The frequencies of the other MIA sub-components are found under 50%, as presented in *Appendix F* (p. 206). MKP is concluded to be constituted by 23 sub-components, among which the most popular are 4Ps regarding strategies in four areas of Pricing (74%), Promotion (74%), Distribution (60%) and Positioning (60%). MKP sub-components are elaborated in *Appendix G* (p. 208).

Management Plan (MNP) clarifies management policies regarding human resources together with benefits, compensations and salaries while the *Operations Plan* (OP) suggests management strategies regarding production, productivity, quality

and other things under a bigger scope of operations. Both sections are interrelated and are sometimes integrated into one section (so-called "Organization and Management" - *T14*, *T17*, *T75*, *T78*, "Management and Operations" - *T78*, *T38* or "Organizational plan/matters" - *T70*, *T79*). Because OP is primarily about the implementation of the business, it is also entitled "Implementation and (operating) strategies/Strategy and implementation" (*T52, T42, T56),* or "Production/Manufacturing and Operations" (*T3, T13)*. The details of sub-components of MP and OP are demonstrated in *Appendix H* (p. 212) and Appendix I (p. 214). The most frequent sub-components of MNP are Personal history of the principals (76%), Positions and duties/responsibilities (72%), Organization structures/chart (58%) and Board of directors/advisors (52%) while those most popular belonging to OP include Production facilities and capacity (60%) and production process (60%).

Financial Plan (FP) is the second most essential part (98%) of a BSP which attracts the attention of funders based on its demonstration of projected financial statements within the first year and within several years (ranging from 2 to 5 years' time). This section primarily includes forecasted income statement (90%), cash flow (80%), balance sheet (78%), and break-even analysis (50%). The sub-components of this section are illustrated in *Appendix J* (p. 216).

Appendices (AP) introduces 22 documents that help to clarify the information provided inside the BSP. The relevant documents for the AP are not limited to the listed items of the sub-components in *Appendix K* (p. 218.) but they are likely to belong to some of the groups listed there. Because the existence of certain sub-components of AP does not provide a significant impact on the content of other primary sections of a BSP, the AP section, unsurprisingly, is not accounted for in some guidelines.

In short, based on their frequencies (≥ 50%) identified from Corpus 1, ten primary structural components of a BSP were concluded in this current study including TC, ES, CO, PS, MIA, MKP, MNP, OP, FP and AP. They are to serve as components of an EBF for the analysis of students BSPs in the next section.

4.1.3 Discussion

The BSP belongs to the Proposal genre family (Nesi & Gardner, 2012). In academic settings, the BSP is chosen as academic assignments because it provides students with an opportunity to stimulate and practice the planning of a business that they are not ready to perform while they are still pursuing a degree. In professional settings, writing a BSP is a stage that helps entrepreneurs sketch their ideas in details, evaluate their own potentials, predict future trends, calculate and make projections of

their business activities while taking advantage of consultancy from advisors as they read the plan. Such preparation may not go smoothly in reality as planned but, to some extent, brings the entrepreneurs more confidence and steadiness to run a new business. As a result, a BSP plays a significant role in giving birth to a business theoretically and professionally though the effects it has on a business performance are on a debate (Bewayo, 2015; Schramm, 2018). Learning how to write an effective BSP, therefore, is as essential as finding good ingredients to make a dish. The compilation of typical components of a BSP can contribute to the success of a BSP in both roles of an academic assignment and a professional document (Nguyen and Miller, 2012).

From this study, a great diversity of BSP components have been found, including both primary structural items such as Executive Summary, Company Overview, and Product/Service Plan, etc. and sub-components within each item. The diversity can be on account of the fact that the sources of the BSP guidelines analyzed are collected from different contexts (countries) and different settings (pedagogical and professional) which may hold different purposes and aim for different target types of audience. Furthermore, the differences among various markets in dissimilar contexts may lead to the wide variety of the components and sub-components of a BSP identified in the guideline collection. Besides that, Financial Data (FD) is deemed to be the most typical section for this type of genre which seems to occur in no other genres and varies according to every single BSP. This variation may come from the nature of a BSP which is an individual plan specifying a definitely different business idea (from any other ideas out there in the market) in a certain context. In addition, it is likely that no other genres except the BSP require such an estimation/projection of financial issues for future activities (Nesi and Gardner, 2012).

One more thing is the low occurrences found among many sub-components in the corpus. This stems from the fact that a number of sub-components are listed in different sections of a BSP. For instance, Value proposition is placed in PS in *T16*, but listed in CO in *T2*. That explains why their frequencies may be found low in a section.

Regarding the distribution of the components between pedagogical and professional category of the texts, though there are slight differences, it is hard to claim significant differences between the number of components included in the texts belonging to these two categories because of the unbalanced number of texts (13 verse 36). Similarly, it is hard to claim significant differences in component distribution of texts according to forms (Official/Internal Document - OID, Article, Book), but as far as the current data have shown, the average number of structural components

required in Article tends to be the highest (10), followed by those required in OID (9.77), and those required in Book (9.13).

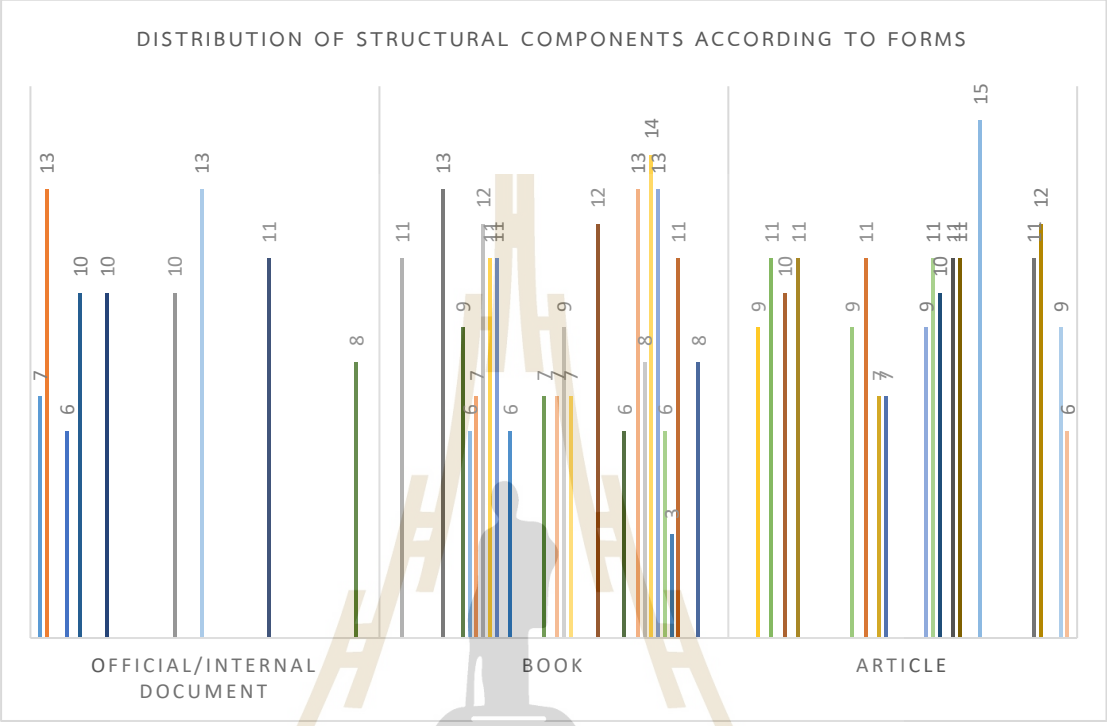


Figure 4.1 Illustration of structural components distribution according to forms

Research question 2: What are the moves, steps and their structure of the SBSPs identified using the EBF?

4.2 Move-step structure of the students' business/start-up plans (SBSPs)

The RQ2 investigates the rhetorical structure (move-step) of the SBSPs collected at the research site. Based on the requirements from the guidelines issued by the Faculty of Foreign Languages, besides the Cover page and Marking sheet (with templates) and the Table of Contents (Figure 4.2), the SBSPs include four primary sections (Executive Summary/Statement of Purpose, The Business, Financial Data and Supporting Documents) and one infrequent section (References). The SBSPs collected choose Executive Summary as the first section, instead of Statement of Purpose. There is no Cover letter in the SBSPs corpus.

In the upcoming explanation, the researcher will present the moves/steps with the reference to the codes of the components/sub-components of the sections identified in the EBF (for details, please refer to Appendix B), e.g. ES1 referring to the

first sub-component (Summary financial projections/Financial plan) of the Executive Summary. The italicized moves/steps show that they are newly identified in that certain area. The presentation of the move-step structure will be followed by pattern frequency analysis.

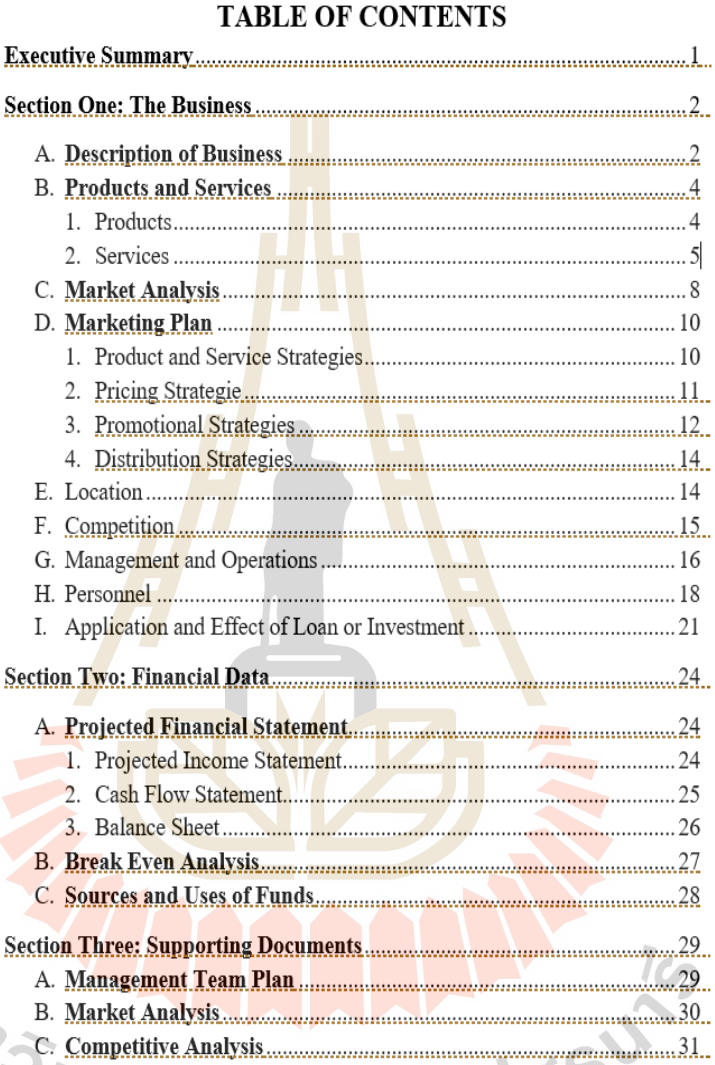


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Figure 4.2 An example of Table of Contents (B43)

4.2.1 Executive Summary section

The Executive Summary (ES) in this corpus starts with one of three patterns: (1) an overview of the industry (ES30) with the notice of current trends and opportunity (ES12) leading to the reasons for the establishment of the start-up, (2) a general description of the concept (ES14), or (3) a table providing brief information of the start-up company (business name, location, business model and/or structure, contact information including website, social network accounts, email address and telephone number - The information may not be fully presented in a specific SBSP). Table 4.3

demonstrates the moves and steps in the first section Executive Summary, followed by the codes identified in the Evidence-based framework (EBF).

Table 4.3 Moves and steps in Executive Summary

Section	Moves and steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
Executive Summary	**Move 1: Company brief introduction**	**48 (68.6%)**	Conventional
	M1S1: Business background ES18	48 (68.6%)	Conventional
	M1S2: Logo explanation	2 (3%)	Optional
	M1S3: Location justification	2 (3%)	Optional
	Move 2: Business description	**62 (88.6%)**	Conventional
	M2S1: Industry overview ES30	55 (79%)	Conventional
	M2S2: Opportunity ES12	65 (93%)	Conventional
	M2S3: Concept description ES14	57 (81%)	Conventional
	M2S4: Problems to be solved ES19	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M2S5: Value proposition ES17	59 (84%)	Conventional
	M2S6: Highlights potential competitors ES20	37(53%)	Optional
	M2S7: Competitive Advantage ES5	35 (50%)	Optional
	M2S8: SWOT analysis	7 (10%)	Optional
	M2S9: Key to success ES25	29 (41%)	Optional
	Move 3: Product/Service	**44 (62.9%)**	Conventional
	Move 4: Objectives, mission and vision	**44 (62.9%)**	Conventional
	M4S1: Mission ES8	42 (60%)	Conventional
	M4S2: Near- and long-term objectives/goals ES4	41 (59%)	Optional
	M4S3: Vision ES22	33 (47%)	Optional
	M4S4: Core value ES26	19 (27%)	
	Move 5: Target markets ES2	**49 (70%)**	Conventional
	Move 6: Financial plan	**50 (71.4%)**	Conventional
	M6S1: Sources and uses of funds ES16	49 (70%)	Conventional
	M6S2: Funding/Capital requirements ES6	50 (71%)	Conventional
	M6S3: Summary financial projections ES1	35 (50%)	Optional
	Move 7: Management plan	**10 (14.3%)**	Optional
	M7S1: The management team ES7	10 (14.3%)	Optional
	Move 8: Implementation plan	**6 (8.6%)**	Optional

*Order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

According to the frequencies, no moves/steps in the ES are categorized as obligatory (100%). There are six conventional moves (60%-99%) including Company brief introduction (ESM1), Business description (ESM2), Product/Service (ESM3), Objectives, missions and visions (ESM4), Target markets (ESM5) and Financial plan (ESM6). The others are optional (under 60%). The researcher is going to elaborate the most typical moves of this section (ES Move 1-6).

ES Move 1 briefs readers about the company background information including its name, location with/without mentioning its business model, followed by legal status and/or business structure, and contact channels (e.g. website, Facebook link, email address or telephone number). The introduction is illustrated in Figure . The order of the information listed in the table varies in different SBSPs but tends to start with the name and location of the business. Found with very low frequencies (3%) are the attachment of the company logo explanation, or the justification of the company current location after the table of background information.

Business's name	**Sumāka Furniture**
Location	B15-26, Nguyen Huu Tho street, Kim Son Residential area, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City
Type of business	Self-assembled furniture business
Website	SumākaFu rniture.c om
Facebook	facebook.com/Smart-Home-Sumāka
Phone number	086 962 0894
Mail	Sumākafur niture @gma il.com
Status of business	Start-up
Business form	Limited Liability Company (LLC)

Figure 4.3 Table of company brief introduction (C70)

Alternatively, the business is introduced through a description, as in **ES Move 2**, by firstly reviewing the industry with the identification of a trend (M2S1) and the opportunity leading to the establishment of the business (M2S2), as in example (1), or introducing the concept directly (M2S3), as in example (2),

(1) According to the researcher, Thai Cuisine is part of Thai culture and has become one of the tourist attractions. There are 300,000 Thai restaurants in the US, 15,000 Thai food diners every day, and 5,500 Thai restaurants in Europe. **M2S1**

However, in Vietnam, Thai restaurants can only be counted on fingers even many young people travel to Thai at least 2-3 times in a month just to enjoy Thai foods. (*trend*)

Because of the increasing demand for Thai food among Vietnamese people, and our passion for Thai food, we decided to establish Thai Spirit. ***(C75)*** **M2S2**

(2) Thiên Trúc is a great new upscale vegetarian restaurant, serving fresh and healthy meals located at 36 Nguyen Van Cu Street, Vinh city, Nghe An province, Vietnam. Although there are a few vegetarian restaurants in the vicinity, there are none like us. We will serve dishes that are made entirely from natural ingredients and fresh, to guarantee the absolute safety and health for customers' health from children, the elderly to the people on the diet or diseases. (***A7***) **M2S3**

The business then is described in detail by referring to various aspects of the business. The SBSP writers may write about the problems that their service/product addresses (M2S4),

(3) For clients who live environmentally conscious lives, our furniture firm is the best option since it uses high-grade industrial wood that is resistant to warping and termites and is not only long-lasting but also helps to maintain forests by lowering the amount of natural wood that is harvested. ***(C70)***

about the value proposition for customers (M2S5) which is related to both the value and benefits they gain and the price they have to pay,

(4) Our restaurant is highly regarded for its service, our staff are trained on attitudes and professional service level to serve the best customer, this is also one of the cores of our restaurant. In addition, other core values which attract customers to our restaurant are the reasonable price, variety of foods and drinks for all ages. ***(C75)***

about their potential competitors (M2S6),

(5) Our competitors are some coffee, milk tea shop[s] nearby our Floral Swings shop. As all of us are located on Lê Văn Lương street, we compete about target markets, recipes and service attitude. (***A25***)

about competitive advantages (M2S7) they possess compared to their competitors,

(6) LIM Store has a competitive advantage over competitors due to its vast library of graphic images, which was made possible by developing partnerships with businesses that already have such libraries and who will give us access to their most recent printing equipment. ***(C68)***

or about other overall information such as Keys to success and SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), which are not of high frequency.

Interestingly, in this move, M2S2 (Opportunity, 93%) and M2S4 (Problems to be solved, 90%) exceed the frequency of Move 2 (88.6%). This is because in some cases, these steps appear independently in an irrelevant position in the ES instead of being included in Move 2 or in any ES move, and the researcher counted their frequency as usual. Therefore, the frequencies of both steps M2S2 and M2S4 are higher than that of ES Move 2. This points out that students need help regarding move-step structure and writing assistance to present a convincing BSP.

ES Move 3 introduces the product/service of the business to the readers for the first time in the plan. The writer might list the products they offer, for example,

(7) In Léger, we offer a wide range of brunch meals inspired by Western and Eastern culinary traditions including salads, toasts, sandwiches, and bakery items freshly made by our skilled chefs and bakers. (***B46)***

or add some services besides the products,

(8) Furthermore, we open a workshop (*for those*) who love making and decorating their cakes themselves. (***C72***)

In this section, the introduction of the product/service is normally general instead of being detailed because the ES is deemed to summarize the whole SBSP and then includes many types of contents.

ES Move 4 defines the objectives, mission and vision of the company. Their order varies widely in different SBSPs but the mission tends to be mentioned first, referring to what a company expects to offer,

(9) [...] listen to our customers' feedback, create high-quality eating environment, providing our customers with an authentic Thai dining experience. (***C75)***

to whom they expect to serve,

(10) We hope to deliver the best shopping experience for Kpop lovers in Viet Nam with our professionalism and our understanding of the market". (***B36)***

or the ideal they plan to do follow,

(11) Creating a community of passionate and knowledgeable furniture enthusiasts who value quality, convenience, and design. (***C70)***

M4S1 (Vision) and M4S2 (Near- and long-term objectives/goals) are not clearly separated. Goals tend to be included in the Vision in which the writer expresses the desired image of the company in the future, for example,

(12) To become the leading convenience food enterprise in Can Tho area and a retail establishment of pre-processed food with quality assurance and environmental friendliness" (***C71)***.

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Besides, the Vision also refers to the way the business witnesses the industry development and predicts the future status of the business,

(13) LIM Store believes continued investment in technology, production facilities and its employees are essential to ensure a sustainable and adaptable business" (***C68)***.

In fact, there are two schools of thought regarding goals and objectives. The first states that goals are typically broad and long-term achievable outcomes while objectives are specific, measurable actions to achieve the goals, and the second means the opposite (as mentioned in ***T79)***. However, in the current research, SBSP writers did not separate the goals and objectives. Indeed, both were normally written under the title Objectives or Vision. The reason for this integration is that the writers were not aware of the distinction between these two concepts. This claim is confirmed by both teacher and student interviewees as 100% of the student interviewees confessed that they did not notice the distinction while only two over five teachers guaranteed they mentioned the differences of the two concepts in class. In ES Move 4, additionally, M4S4 (core values) informs the values the business is committed to, for example,

(14) Dedication, passion, and professionalism; Cooperation, understanding, and courtesy; Customer-oriented, efficient and creativity. (***B37***)

ES Move 5 specifies the key markets that the business targets which are either briefly presented in a paragraph or simply listed according to customers' characteristics, as in example (15),

(15) Young Adults - from 18 to 29 years of age in Vietnam who has trouble sleeping. Occupation: University Students, Office workers, Blue Collars. Geography: Urban cities (Ho Chi Minh City and Ha Noi) (***A2***)

ES Move 6 Financial plan demonstrates how a business collects start-up capital and plans to cover all future expenses and has profits at the same time. This move is realized by M6S1 Sources and uses of funds or M6S2 Funding/Capital requirements, which breaks down how the business capital is expected to be collected, typically from equity capital and bank loan. Meanwhile, in several SBSPs, they are replaced by M6S3 Summary financial projections, which is related to drawing financial projections for the business in a certain time, as illustrated in example (16).

(16) In one year, the total revenue of the business is expected to be at 429 million VND with a total cost of around 232 million VND. The break-even point for the business is at the second month. (***A2***)

4.2.2 The Business section

Regarding "**The Business**" (TB) section, it is composed of different sub-sections of the texts which can be realized as moves. The components of this section are illustrated in Table 4.4. In general, the components of this section are almost similar to the sections in a BSP identified in RQ1. That is, the Description of the Business is equivalent to the Company Overview (CO), followed by the Products/Services (or PS), Market Analysis or MIA, Marketing Plan or MKP. The differences from the EBF identified in RQ1 are the separation of Location and Competition in the researched SBSPs while they are included in the MKP in the EBF. Besides, MP and OP are combined into Management and Operations, but Personnel is excluded from the MP and is written in isolation. One more novel item in The Business section is the *Application and Effect of Loan or Investment*, which seems to be absent from the EBF.

Table 4.4 Moves of The Business section

Section	Moves*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	M1: Description of Business CO	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M2: Products/Services PS	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M3: Market Analysis MIA	69 (98.6%)	Conventional
	M4: Marketing Plan MKP	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M5: Location	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M6: Competition	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M7: Management (MP) and Operations (OP)	68 (97.1%)	Conventional
	M8: Personnel	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M9: Application and Effect of Loan or Investment	68 (97.1%)	Conventional

*Order is consistent. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

The first move TBM1 of The Business section contains a lot of similar information to that stated in ESM2, e.g. industry overview, opportunity, mission, vision, value proposition, etc. which can be found in Table 4.5

Table 4.5 Steps in The Business Move 1

Section	Move 1 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M1: Description of Business**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S1: The industry CO10	21 (30%)	Optional
	M1S2: Opportunity	28 (40%)	Optional
	M1S3: Business name CO14	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S4: Mission statement CO1	28 (40%)	Optional
	M1S5: Legal structure CO2	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M1S6: Type of business CO16	59 (84%)	Conventional
	M1S7: Near- and long-term objectives/goals CO3	35 (50%)	Optional
	M1S7: Location and facilities CO6	65 (93%)	Conventional
	M1S8: Business model CO13	28 (40%)	Optional
	M1S9: Products and services CO7	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S10: Target customer profile CO15	52 (74%)	Conventional
	M1S11: Value proposition CO25	39 (56%)	Optional
	M1S12: Operation strategy CO17	23 (33%)	Optional
	M1S13: Competitive advantage CO12	30 (43%)	Optional
	M1S14: The principal owners/ownership structure CO8	35 (50%)	Optional
	M1S15: Problem being solved CO29	29 (41%)	Optional
	M1S16: Strengths and weaknesses CO21	25 (36%)	Optional
	M1S17: Future (growth) plans CO23	21 (30%)	Optional
	M1S18: Personal history and business background of the managers CO11	14 (20%)	Optional
	M1S19: Market entry strategy CO27	14 (20%)	Optional

*Order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

Compared to ESM2, **TBM1** contains more steps, e.g., M1S17, M1S18, M1S19 as presented in the examples (17), (18) and (19), respectively. Besides, M1S2 (*Opportunity*) is a new item which seems to be absent from the Company Overview of the EBF but exists at 40% in The Business section of SBSP corpus.

(17) When the firm is stabilized, I intend to spend the next three to four years focusing on enhancing service and coffee quality. In addition, I intend to focus my efforts on developing the coffee shop franchising across Ho Chi Minh City. We will finish the Superb Coffee project and bring it into service in December 2022 as scheduled. (***B43***) **M1S17**

(18) As former staffs in the field of customer services with a Bachelor of Business Administration, we have developed the basic skills and experiences of managing and operating a business. Additionally, we used to work at different companies, in which employees regularly **M1S18**

participating in various meetings. We all know that there are enjoyable meetings, but sometimes the meeting atmosphere could be stressful [...]. (***A4)***

(19) To reach these markets, we will use e-commerce platforms and social media extensively. Our brand image, unique selling propositions, and competitive pricing will differentiate us from existing market players. (***C70***) **M1S19**

TB Moves 2, **3**, and **4** of The Business section include similar components to what found in the PS, MIA and MKP of the EBF identified in RQ1. The steps are presented in Table 4.6,

Table 4.7, Table 4.8, respectively

Table 4.6 Steps in The Business Move 2

Section	Move 2 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M2: Products/Services PS**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M2S1: Description/features of products/services PS1	68 (97%)	Conventional
	M2S2: Benefits/value proposition PS2	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M2S3: A prototype of product/service (early sample/model) PS4	36 (51%)	Optional
	M2S4: Need for the product/service (problem to be addressed) PS8	38 (54%)	Optional
	M2S5: Implementation plan PS13	31 (44%)	Optional
	M2S6: Description of production and packaging process PS17	45 (64%)	Conventional
	M2S7: Unique selling points PS5	35 (50%)	Optional
	M2S8: *Vision*	*14 (20%)*	Optional
	M2S9: Industry PS24	14 (20%)	Optional
	M2S10: Competitive advantage PS10	35 (50%)	Optional
	M2S11: Pricing and Competitive Positioning Strategy PS14	28 (40%)	Optional
	M2S12: Current state of development of the product/service PS15	28 (40%)	Optional
	M2S13: Usage PS12	50 (71%)	Conventional

*Order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

Table 4.7 Steps in The Business Move 3

Section	Move 3 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M3: Market and Industry Analysis MIA**	69 (98.6%)	Conventional
	M3S1: Potential and target customers' characteristics MIA3	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M3S2: Target market MIA4	58 (83%)	Conventional
	M3S3: Market segmentation MIA5	30 (43%)	Optional
	M3S4: Opportunity MIA8	35 (50%)	Optional
	M3S5: Industry description and market environment MIA1	39 (56%)	Optional
	M3S6: Competition analysis MIA2	55 (79%)	Conventional
	M3S7: Strengths and weaknesses MIA7	38 (54%)	Optional
	M3S8: Industry and market forecasts MIA13	28 (40%)	Optional
	M3S9: Key to success	7 (10%)	Optional
	M3S10: Problems/needs MIA6	23 (33%)	Optional

*Order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

Table 4.8 Steps in The Business Move 4

Section	Move 4 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M4: Marketing Plan**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M4S1: Distribution strategy MKP3	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M4S2: Promotion strategy MKP2	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M4S3: Pricing strategy MKP1	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M4S4: Product/service portfolio and strategy MKP6	67 (96%)	Conventional
	M4S5: (Target) market definition MKP5	65 (93%)	Conventional
	M4S6: Overall marketing strategy MKP7	47 (67%)	Conventional
	M4S7: Positioning strategy MKP4	34 (49%)	Optional
	M4S8: SWOT analysis MKP11	38 (54%)	Optional
	M4S9: MKT objectives MKP19	25 (36%)	Optional

*Order may vary.

In this **TBM2**, the product/service is primarily described with detailed features (M2S1) and benefits (M2S2) that customers are expected to receive. In this move, unique selling points (M2S7) are also emphasized besides the reference to the needs for the product/service (M2S4), for example,

(20) PERGU will be a travel booking application for Android & IOS systems. We have unique on-demand traveling services. We provide Personal guide and Private local vehicles for customers who want to drive to go sightseeing or go backpacking. Customers can easily hire vehicle when they travel, it can help them make an exhaustive plan for their trip. **M2S1** **M2S2** **M2S7**

Covid-19 infections leave an impact on the travel trade, raising concerns about going travel alone or with a small group instead of big group or package tour. One platform that offers local guides for organized teams including you and your coworkers or friends while keeping you healthy during Covid-19 pandemic will be the better one right now. (***A18***) **M2S4**

In order to make the picture clearer, an illustration of a sample tends to be attached to the description, as in Figure 4.4,



Figure 4.4 Samples of photo shooting service (B38)

and an implementation plan (M2S5) is presented, as example (21),

(21) First and foremost, the company is focused on gaining a footing in the domestic market. The company intends to grow in the market and expand in order to compete with local brands. Businesses will export to other countries if the opportunity arises. (**B39**) **M2S5**

TBM3 and **TBM4** are inter-related. TBM3 includes steps that can support the implementation of marketing strategies adopted in TBM4. TBM3 primarily provides

analysis of target customers (M3S1) and target market (M3S2) or market segmentation (M3S3), followed by basic competition analysis. Based on the analysis given in TBM3, the business is going to tailor appropriate marketing strategies to specific customers and markets. Figure 4.5 illustrates an example of market segmentation,

"Mastida Tokbokki-Buffet" has certain customer segments that are advantageous enough to meet the needs of customers. There are two main groups of customers: mostly younger direct customers and indirect customers.

3.1 Demographic Profile:

- Direct customers are students under 24 years old.
- Direct customers are office staff who have a 30-45 mins break.
- Indirect customers include office staff, people who love Korean cuisines people who have a short break, people who are food bloggers, ...
- Our target market is mostly middle-class and upper-class.

3.2 Gender:

Figure 4.5 An example of market segmentation

(B49) and Figure 4.6 presents an example of marketing plan.

4. Marketing Plan

4.1 4Ps of the marketing mix

a. Product

- Being verified clearly the origins of the raw materials, having high-quality standards
- Ensuring safe hygiene in kitchen utensils and service tools
- Serving coffee, healthy smoothies, and dessert
- Using crystal glasses, paper straws, paper boxes and bags, and paper beakers for takeout
- Designing the minimalist packaging, consisting of a light gray color, and our logo at the bottom of the glass
- Having appropriate size options such as S, M, and L

b. Price

-Following the value-based pricing strategy, based on the affordability of customers who can be students, colleagues, or event middle and high-income workers

- Being ranged from 50,000 VND to 150,000 VND

Figure 4.6 An example of Marketing plan (B54))

The isolation of **TB Move 5** (Location) and **TB Move 6** (Competition) of this section in the SBSPs makes a distinction with what identified in the EBF. In the EBF,

Location and Competition are included in MKP as they tend to sketch a plan for the marketing and sales of the product/service. Table 4.9 and Table 4.10 present the steps realized in Move 5 and Move 6.

Table 4.9 Steps in The Business Move 5

Section	Move 5 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M5: Location**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M5S1: Proposed (geographical) location MKP16	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M5S2: Justification	56 (80%)	Conventional
	M5S3: Facilities	35 (50%)	Optional
	M5S4: Rent	35 (50%)	Optional

*Order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

Location is also a sub-component in the Management Plan or Operation Plan in terms of facilities management. Meanwhile, in the SBSPs, Location is a separate move **(TB Move 5)** in which a geographical location for the business is proposed (M5S1), followed by the justification of the proposal (M5S2), the facilities they expect to have (M5S3) and the amount of rental budget (M5S4). M5S1 is obligatory, M5S2 is found conventional whereas M5S3 and M5S4 are realized to be optional. Besides, similar to other parts of the plan, the order of the steps varies in different SBSPs, as illustrated in example (22). M5S2, M5S3 and M5S4 are not recognized in the EBF.

(22) The initial feasible location for LIM Store's business is District 7, a prosperous area with significant development. **M5S1** **M5S2**
The store will be established with a small storefront that will feature one computer, enabling customers to create their own designs. A counter and cash register will also be available for those who prefer assistance. The store's setup will be akin to a kiosk, with most of the work occurring offsite and online. ***(C68)*** **M5S3**

Table 4.10 Steps in The Business Move 6

Section	Move 6 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M6: Competition**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M6S1: Competition analysis MKP9	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M6S2: Competitive advantage MKP17	43 (61%)	Conventional
	M6S3: SWOT analysis MKP11	23 (33%)	Optional
	M6S4: Differentiators MIA16	17 (24%)	Optional

*Order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

TB Move 6 demonstrates the concept of competition of the business. It is realized by an obligatory step M6S1 performing a competition analysis to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of their competitors. The information may be presented in a compare-and-contrast table, as illustrated in Figure 4.7,

Furniture Brand	Price range (VND)	Overview about business's pros (+) and cons (-)
IKEA 16C, Street 75, Tan Phong Ward, District 7, HCMC	550.000 – 3.400.000	(+) Wide selection of products and designs to cater to different lifestyles and tastes (-) High price list compared to some competitors
The Home Shop 80A, Quarter 6, Tan Thoi Nhat Street 6, City, District 12, HCMC	350.000 – 5.000.000	(+) Offers a minimalist and modern product range; Great customer services including an after-sales support (-)Limitations on product range; Online presence is currently limited, aim at high-income customers only
Homemart 183 Nguyen Van Dau, Ward 11, Binh Thanh District, City. HCMC	499.000-7.500.000	(+)Wide selection of products and competitive prices, Installation and delivery services for the convenience (-) Dependence on physical store traffic, which can be impacted by economic downturns, low- quality facilities.

Figure 4.7 Example of competition analysis (C70)

followed by competitive advantages,

(23) Oasis Café has a competitive potential in this area for several reasons: [...]. With these advantages, we believe that our shop will absolutely survive and develop in the future" (***C54***).

Besides competition analysis, SWOT analysis can be added to assess internal strengths and weaknesses of the business. Differentiators M6S4 are also attached to strengthen the business strategies,

(24) As a franchise, we can differentiate ourselves from competitors by emphasizing the quality of our ingredients, offering a wide range of meal options, and providing personalized service to customers" (***C82***).

TB Move 7 of the SBSPs sketches a plan regarding managing and operating issues of the business. As can be seen, this move includes steps which are realized as sub-components of MP and OP of the EBF (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11 Steps in The Business Move 7

Section	Move 7 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M7: Management and Operations**	68 (97.1%)	Conventional
	M7S1: Organizational structure/chart MNP3	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M7S2: Positions and duties/responsibilities MNP2	63(90%)	Conventional
	M7S3: Personal history of the principals MNP1	21 (30%)	Optional
	M7S4: Salaries, compensation and benefits MNP6	21 (30%)	Optional
	M7S5: Personal recruitment, training and development plan MNP8	28 (40%)	Optional
	M7S6: Operations strategy OP15	49 (70%)	Conventional
	M7S7: Scope of operations OP16	46 (66%)	Conventional
	M7S8: Production process OP2	15 (21%)	Optional
	M7S9: Outsourced support services OP9	25 (36%)	Optional

*Order may vary.

In the EBF, MP and OP are separate and carry different purposes of communication. On the contrary, in the SBSPs, it is found that Move 7 conveys the communication of both business management and operations. **TB Move 8** describes planned policies regarding business resources including staffing requirements; human resource matters such as personnel responsibilities and duties; salaries, compensation and benefits; recruitment, training and development, etc. Though Move 8 emerges as a new name compared to the EBF, it is not a newly identified component of an SBSP because the steps identified in this move are realized in MNP and OP of the EBF. The difference is that personnel aspects which are included in other sections of a BSP are presented separately in the SBSPs. Table 4.12 clarifies the steps included in M8.

Table 4.12 Steps of The Business - Move 8

Section	Move 8 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	**M8: Personnel**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M8S1: Organizational structure/chart MNP3	21 (30%)	Optional
	M8S1: Staffing requirements OP4	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M8S2: Positions and duties/responsibilities MNP2	50 (71%)	Conventional
	M8S3: Personnel recruitment, training and development plan MNP8	49 (70%)	Conventional
	M8S4: Salaries, compensation and benefits MNP6	60 (86%)	Conventional
	M8S5: Operations strategy OP15	21 (30%)	Optional

*Order may vary.

As can be seen from Tables 4.11 and 4.12, **TB Move 7** and **Move 8** share a number of similar steps, e.g. MNP2, MNP8, MNP6 and OP16. However, though the steps seem to be identical, they convey slightly different message and retain different levels of frequency. To be specific, MNP2 (Positions and duties/responsibilities) is found with high frequency in both TBM7 and TBM8, but in TBM7, it primarily refers to managerial positions while in TBM8, it mostly refers to staff positions. Similarly, MNP6 (Salaries, compensation and benefits) also focuses on management team in TBM7 and general staff in TBM8; moreover, because of the nature of TBM8 as human resources management, MNP6 has higher frequency in TBM8 than in TBM7 (which is supposed to clarify the management structure of the business other than budget spent on those positions). This essence of TBM8 is also applied for MNP8's frequency which is higher in TBM8 than in TBM7 because recruitment, training and development plan should be placed among personnel matters. In contrast, Organizational structure/chart (MNP3) and Operations strategy (OP15), though found in both moves, are witnessed with higher frequency in TBM7 than in TBM8 because TBM7 describes the management and operations plan of the business other than personnel issues only.

TB Move 9 (Table 4.13) demonstrates the loan/investment required for the business, how the loan/investment makes the business profitable, and when the loan/investment will be repaid.

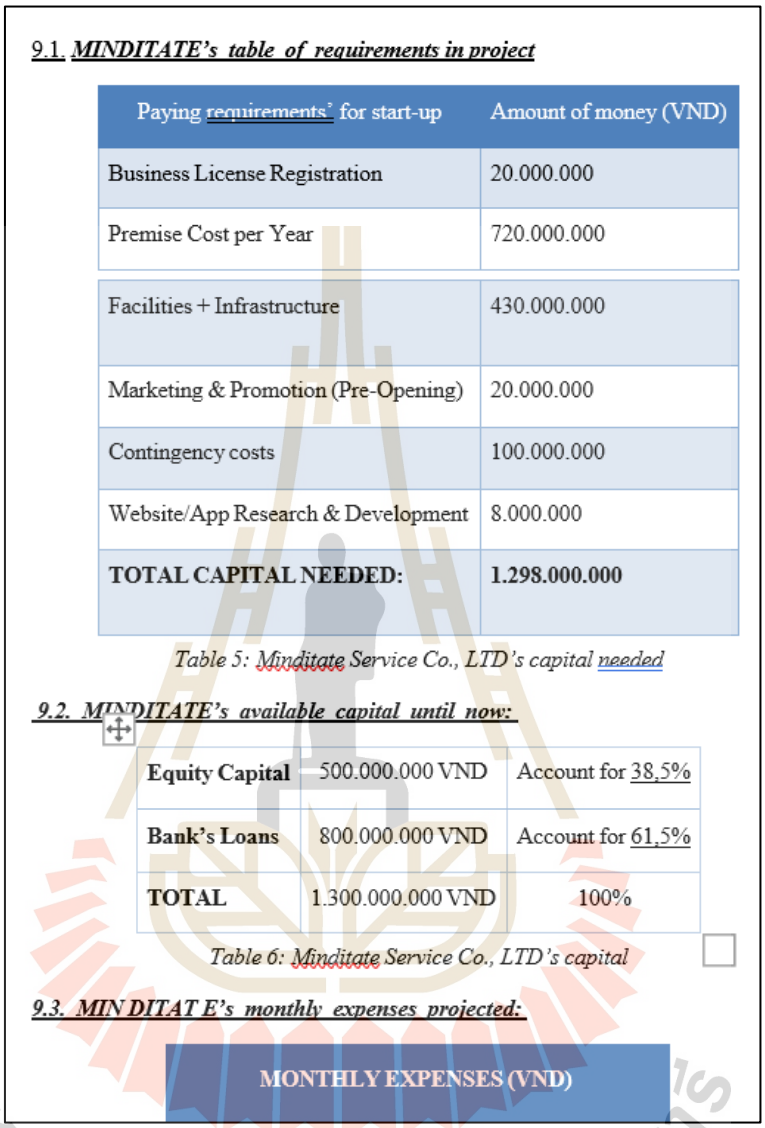
Table 4.13 Steps of The Business - Move 9

Section	Move 9 - Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
The Business	*M9: Application and Effect of Loan or Investment*	68 (97.1%)	Conventional
	M9S1: Funding request FP5	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M9S2: Funding sources FP6	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M9S3: Forecast expenses FP13	60 (86%)	Conventional
	M9S4: Potential return on investment FP10	21 (30%)	Optional

*Order may vary.

Though TBM9 is not realized as a structural component in the EBF, this move is related to financial issues; therefore, the primary steps identified are FP sub-components of the EBF. Similar to the other moves, the order of the steps in TBM9 varies in different SBSPs. However, writers tend to start with a breakdown of the total capital required for the business (M9S1), or present how the business is capitalized (M9S2) and then elaborate on the forecast expenses that the business is expected to

cover (M9S3). Potential return on investment (M9S4) is mentioned afterwards. TBM9 is either presented by tables only, like in Figure 4.8,



9.1. ***MINDITATE's table of requirements in project***

Paying requirements' for start-up	Amount of money (VND)
Business License Registration	20.000.000
Premise Cost per Year	720.000.000
Facilities + Infrastructure	430.000.000
Marketing & Promotion (Pre-Opening)	20.000.000
Contingency costs	100.000.000
Website/App Research & Development	8.000.000
TOTAL CAPITAL NEEDED:	**1.298.000.000**

Table 5: Minditate Service Co., LTD's capital needed

9.2. MINDITATE's available capital until now:

Equity Capital	500.000.000 VND	Account for 38,5%
Bank's Loans	800.000.000 VND	Account for 61,5%
TOTAL	1.300.000.000 VND	100%

Table 6: Minditate Service Co., LTD's capital

9.3. MIN DITAT E's monthly expenses projected:

MONTHLY EXPENSES (VND)

M9S1

M9S2

M9S3

Figure 4.8 An example of Move 9 (C87)

or in words, like in example (25) below.

(25) Our business needs 600 million for total investment. M9S1
In that, we will use 400 million for preparing equipment and 200 million for buying ingredients. By decorating a trendy atmosphere, preparing fresh ingredients, etc., we believe that our company will attract thousands of adolescents every week. M9S3
Our capital is about 400 million, so we are going to get a loan, about 200 million and it will be repaid in a year later. In case of seeking equity, it is suitable for us to give up 20%. (***B40***) M9S2

4.2.3 Financial Data section

Regarding "Financial Data" section (Table 4.14), it typically proposes a development of financial evidence which aims to persuade the readers into the feasibility and profitability of the business based on the strategies applied in The Business section by the demonstration of projected financial statements (FDM1), which are ideally completed for a duration of two to five years' time, break-even analysis (FDM2), and sources and uses of funds (FDM3) with the utilization of spreadsheets and tables instead of written texts throughout the section.

Table 4.14 Moves and steps in Financial Data section

Section	Moves-Steps*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
Financial Data	**M1: Projected financial statements**	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S1: Profit and lost projection/income statement FP1	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S2: Projected balance sheet FP3	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S3: Cash flow projection FP2	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M2: Break-even calculation/analysis FP4	69 (98.6%)	Conventional
	M3: Sources and uses of funds FP5	59 (84.3%)	Conventional
	M4: Important assumptions FP8	6 (8.6%)	Optional

*Order may vary.

Typical moves and steps are identified, equivalent to the sub-components of FP in the EBF. In **FDM1**, M1S1, which is a pro-forma (forward looking) income statement for a particular period (around 3 years) of the business plan, elaborates on revenues and expenses, and potential profits and loss. When expenses are deducted from revenues, a company's profit figure called "net income" is produced. M1S2, a projected balance sheet (ideally for the first three years), provides a "snapshot" of a company's assets, liabilities, and shareholders' equity. M1S3, a cash flow projection (normally for the first year by month), measures how cash is generated in a company to pay debt obligations, fund operating expenses, and fund investments. The cash flow statement reconciles the balance sheet with the income statement in three key business activities. M1S1, M1S2, and M1S3 often appear in this order as the information flows logically according to the consequence (as mentioned in ***T61***).

FDM2 outlines an accounting process which determines at what point a company, or a product/service, will obtain profit. It includes a calculation deciding the number of products/services which must be sold to cover the production cost.

FDM3 lists sources of funds and how they are used to bring profits to the company. In this section, surprisingly, most of the moves and steps are conventional; there is no obligatory move and one optional move (FDM4).

FDM4 provides key assumptions underlying the financial projections, helping stakeholders understand the basis for the forecasts. Figure 4.9 is an example of the projected income statement (M1S1).

Huppa			
Income Statement			
Unit: VND			
	2023	**2024**	**2025**
Revenue			
Sales	256,385,000	330,835,000	380,946,000
Less: Discounts and Allowances	12,856,000	14,802,000	18,036,000
Net Sales (Revenues)	**243,529,000**	**316,033,000**	**362,910,000**
Costs of Sales			
Materials/ Supplies	20,384,000	25,640,000	33,957,000
Overhead	7,364,000	7,765,400	8,157,600
Total Costs of Sales	**27,748,000**	**33,405,400**	**42,114,600**
Gross Profit	**215,781,000**	**282,627,600**	**320,795,400**
Operating Expenses			
Wages	153,600,000	213,600,000	237,600,000
Advertising	7,356,000	8,040,000	9,075,000
Rent	0	0	0
Loan repayments	30,857,000	30,857,000	30,857,000
Miscellaneous	9,765,000	9,857,000	11,375,000
Total Operating Expenses	**201,578,000**	**262,354,000**	**288,907,000**
Profit/ Loss before Taxes	**14,203,000**	**20,273,600**	**31,888,400**
Less: Tax Expenses	4,004,000	4,846,000	5,504,000
Net Profit/ Loss	**10,199,000**	**15,427,600**	**26,384,400**

Figure 4.9 An example of projected income statement (B37)

4.2.4 Supporting Documents section

Regarding the last section "Supporting Documents", the elements included this section vary widely. Furthermore, as the documents added are not dependent on each other, their order is not fixed. As shown in the data, the writers tend to support their plan with intellectual property (e.g. licenses) and advertising/marketing materials (e.g. trademark, logo, etc.), followed by the evidence of contracts, purchase orders, leases and other supportive documents, such as plans, market studies, resumé, management chart, SWOT analysis. There are two newly identified items in this section including *Company description* (E11) and *Growth plan* (E12). Table 4.15 lists the identified elements of Supporting Documents section. Like Financial Data, this section is typically supported with documents which can be presented in tables or in photographs instead of written texts. The function of each element in this section is

equivalent to those of the sub-components of the AP in the EBF. Meanwhile, the occurrence of such elements seems to bring no impact to the contents of the other sections, and they are not inter-dependent. Therefore, the contents of this section should be listed as elements instead of moves and steps. The elements presented in this section tend to be Agreements regarding contracts or leases, Advertising/marketing materials such as logos, menus, or other graphical illustrations for branding, Intellectual property documents, e.g. licenses, patents, or Resumés of key personnel. As a matter of fact, students generally decided to include a certain document in this section based on their reference with previous samples and on their consultation with experts in the field, for example an accounting consultant. This was confirmed by all the student interviewees, some of whom even referred to the relation of the documents in the SD section with the previous parts in the plan while the others did not.

Table 4.15 Elements of Supporting Documents section

Section	Elements*	Frequency (No. = 70)	Category
Supporting Documents	E1: Intellectual property (trademarks, licenses, patents, etc.) AP4	30 (43%)	Optional
	E2: Advertising/marketing materials AP3	38 (54.3%)	Optional
	E3: Agreements (Leases, contracts, purchase orders, letters of intent, etc.) AP2	29 (41.4%)	Optional
	E4: Resumes of owners/key employees AP1	15 (21.4%)	Optional
	E5: Management chart AP15	6 (8.6%)	Optional
	E6: Any historical financial information that exists AP19	12 (17%)	Optional
	E7: Details of market studies AP6	14 (20%)	Optional
	E8: SWOT analysis	8 (11.4%)	Optional
	E9: Blueprints/plans AP9	7 (10%)	Optional
	E10: Details of market, finance, operations AP13	14 (20%)	Optional
	E11: Company description	9 (12.9%)	Optional
	E12: Growth plan	3 (4.3%)	Optional

* The order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

4.2.5 References section

The analysis of Corpus 2 witnesses the presence of REFERENCES as a separate section whose frequency is 28 over 70 (40%). Though the frequency is not very high, it still confirms the students' awareness of providing credit to what they refer to.

4.2.6 Pattern frequency analysis

The analysis of pattern frequency using GSEQ 5.1 and N-gram generator has found the most common sequential patterns as presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16 Most common pattern of moves resulted from sequential pattern analysis

No.	Pair of moves	Frequency	Probability	Strength	Move sequence z-score
1	TBM1 TBM2	70	1	4.25	35.78
2	TBM4 TBM5	70	1	4.25	35.78
3	TBM5 TBM6	70	1	4.25	35.78
4	TBM2 TBM3	69	0.99	4.17	35.53
5	TBM3 TBM4	68	0.99	4.16	34.99
6	TBM7 TBM8	66	0.97	4.07	34.18
7	TBM9 FDM1	66	0.97	4.07	34.18
8	TBM8 TBM9	67	0.96	4.02	34.73
9	TBM6 TBM7	66	0.94	3.95	34.18
10	FDM1 FDM2	65	0.93	3.88	33.35
11	FDM2 FDM3	58	0.84	3.41	32.55
12	ESM6 TBM1	40	0.82	3.01	24.16
13	ESM1 ESM2	29	0.6	2.03	16.56
14	ESM5 ESM6	28	0.58	1.94	20.49
15	ESM2 ESM3	25	0.33	1.07	14.41
16	ESM3 ESM5	21	0.46	1.39	15.59
17	ESM2 ESM4	17	0.23	0.64	9.4
18	ESM2 ESM5	13	0.17	0.44	6.46
19	ESM4 ESM2	11	0.24	0.59	5.49
20	ESM1 ESM4	11	0.23	0.55	7.65
21	ESM4 ESM5	10	0.22	0.51	6.83
22	ESM3 ESM4	10	0.22	0.5	7.04

Probability = number of times the pairs of moves occur divided by the number of times the move occurs

Strength = natural logarithm of frequency of pair of moves multiplied by its probability

Z-score = number of standard deviations the observed frequency of the pair of moves is from the expected frequency

Regarding the sequence of moves, the sequence of moves in The Business section and Financial Data section are common with high frequency, e.g., sequence TBM1-TBM2 is fixed in Corpus 2 (p =1, strength = 4.25, z = 35.78). That is, the students provided description of their company/business first then they introduced their product/service. The same or nearly the same frequency is witnessed among sequence

of other pairs of moves in these two sections (TB and FD). These patterns confirm the students' behavior of strictly following the details proposed in the course guidelines provided by the Faculty of Foreign Languages. However, in the Executive Summary, where no details are provided, the sequence of moves varies. The most common pattern in the ES is ESM1-ESM2 (p = .6, strength = 2.03, z = 16.56). That is, most writers started the ES with a description of the business they were introducing, typically by inserting a table of background information. After that, they demonstrated the elaboration of the foundation of their business, regarding the industry overview, problems and opportunities, and their decision to launch the project. Then they introduced the product/service (ESM2-ESM3, p = 0.33, strength = 1.07, z =14.41) and referred to their target market (ESM3-ESM5, p = 0.46, strength = 1.39, z = 15.59) followed by financial highlights (ESM5-ESM6, p = 0.58, strength = 1.94, z = 20.49). These patterns show a low frequency of sequences related to ESM4 - Objectives, mission and vision and other moves in the ES, which should be enhanced in the future SBSPs for a more consistent format of the plan.

4.2.7 Discussion

4.2.7.1 Rhetorical structure (move-step) in the SBSPs and the EBF

The identification of moves and steps in the SBSPs is based on the components and sub-components of the EBF identified in the RQ1. On the one hand, the analysis of the SBSPs as a course assignment reveals a rather similar model of a BSP. On the other hand, the distribution of a BSP components identified in the EBF and in the SBSPs collected at the research site makes a clear distinction (Table 4.10). That is, while a large number of primary components (21) and sub-components are found in the EBF with a typical presentation of ten primary sections (Table of Contents, Executive Summary, Company Overview, Product/Service Plan, Market and Industry Analysis, Marketing Plan, Management Plan, Operations Plan, Financial Plan and Appendix, a limited number of the core structural items (5) including Table of Contents, Executive Summary, The Business, Financial Data and Supporting Documents (among which The Business includes other sectional plans such as Product/Service Plan, Market and Industry Analysis, Marketing Plan, Management and Operations Plan as moves) are identified in the SBSPs which are end-term assignments of a business course for English-majored undergraduate students. The fact that SBSPs are not very popular among EFL contexts at HE level may cause such a limitation in the students' disciplinary knowledge, preventing them from developing business-related critical thinking and thoroughly stimulating their planning skills. Furthermore, the habit of strictly following the guidelines provided by their instructors (or issued by the Faculty in charge), which

has been confirmed by the interviewed students, makes a great contribution to the full adoption of the components from the guidelines (which are more likely to be suggested ideas) in their SBSPs. The student interviewees admitted using the structure provided in the guidelines as the core of their SBSP in order to be safe and on the right track (**Itv 2**, **3**, **7**, **8**), maintain comprehensibility (**Itv 5**) and receive high scores (**Itv 1**, **4**, **6**, **9**) or because they did not know where to start (**Itv 10**).

Meanwhile, in the EBF, sectional plans carry different communicative purposes. Therefore, Management Plan and Operations Plan are separated; Location is found in Marketing Plan, Management Plan and Operations Plan ; Personnel tends to be included in Management Plan; Competition can be a separate part or included in Market and Industry Analysis or Marketing Plan. However, in the SBSPs, Management Plan and Operations Plan are combined into Management and Operations Plan; Location, Competition and Personnel being isolated parts; together with a newly identified item *Application and Effect of Loan and Investment* (AELI). This difference, again, is based on the instruction of the guidelines issued by the Faculty of Foreign Language.

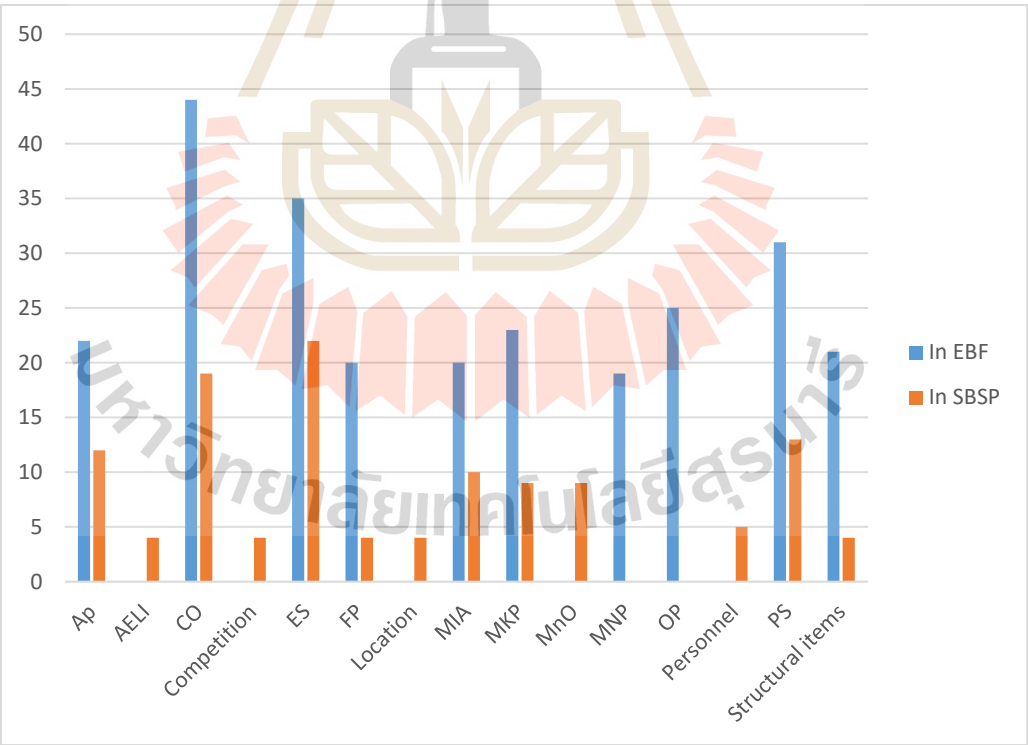


Figure 4.10 The distribution of BSP components identified in EBF and in SBSP

Though there is a significant variation in the number of sectional sub-components in the EBF and in the SBSPs, almost all the items found in the SBSPs

come from the EBF (except the *Application and Effect of Loan and Investment* (AELI) and the steps in TBM5 Location), and the structural elements vary slightly. This finding echoes Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. (2020) stating that business communication tends to stick to standard formats, procedures, scripts and formulation, and that the presentation of such a section as Financial Data in this emerging genre in a concrete and typical form represents business nature of this genre confirming Vásquez (2013) that those formats need to be followed strictly. That reality is also the reason why a number of newly identified moves/steps were found in SBSP moves (e.g. ESM1S2, ESM1S3, ESM2S8, ESM8, TBM1S2, TBM2S8, TBM3S9) but their frequencies are very low (under 50%) except TBM5S2-3-4. The reason for the higher frequencies of TBM5S2-3-4 compared to other newly identified items is that the majority of the writers may find it necessary to provide justification and details for their proposed location in order for better comprehension and persuasion to the readers of the plan.

Another difference in the SBSPs compared to the EBF is that company information (name, business structure/model, address, telephone, fax, email address and website) which is supposed to be placed at the cover page is displayed in either the ES or TB section. The explanation for this difference may lie in the nature of the SBSP which is a final assignment of a course, so the format and layout requirements of the assignment make the writers include the information in the contents of the SBSPs instead of on the cover page (which is an institution-level template with students' information on it). According to the interviews, student writers confirmed that the table of company background information (illustrated in Figure 4.3) is placed in either the ES or TB on purpose. Those who put it in the ES explained that ES covers the holistic picture of a company and their audience tend to pay attention to this section first, so it is reasonable to place such information there for the audience to capture the whole view before going to details in the next sections (**Itv 1, 3, 5**). In contrast, those who put the table in TB section elaborated that this section is aimed at providing details regarding the company and business description while the ES covers general information of the whole plan (that means, the ES should be brief). Therefore, the table should be placed in TB section (**Itv 4, 6**). However, those who did not include such a table in their SBSP explained that they presented the information in paragraphs, so there was no need for that table (**Itv 2, 9, 10**).

Overall, the number of components of a BSP identified from the guideline corpus and from the piloted SBSPs may not be the same, but the primary sections remain in both types, including Executive Summary, Business Description or Company Overview, Products/Services, Market and Industry Analysis, Marketing Plan,

Management and Operations, Financial Plan and Appendices. The name of each section may vary but the content tends to be of similar nature. The components are quite similar to those listed in Yüksel (2022) except the Business Description (TBM1), Product/Service (TBM2) and Market and Industry Analysis (TBM3). The difference may be explained that in Yüksel (2022) TBM1 and TBM2 may have been included in the Executive Summary and TBM3 may have been included in the Marketing Plan.

4.2.7.2 SBSPs and other writing genres

Interestingly, compared to the study by Zhu (2004) which analyzes writing assignment types in HE and claims that a business proposal genre (including a business plan) requires certain elements such as Executive Summary, Statement of the vision/goals/objectives, Description and analysis of the situation, product, or service, Discussion of key strategies/action plans, Sales/expenses projections together with a discussion of how the proposal is being evaluated, the results of this current SBSP collection show no occurrence of a Discussion section. Some SBSPs may include justification for their planned strategies, but some seem to propose their plans but ignore the reasons. This ignorance contributes to the vague interpretation among readers and less convincing results to such audience. The comprehension of this problem must be referred to students' writing issues in Vietnamese context (as presented in section 2.3.7) which expose a lack of critical thinking and a requirement of only the reproduction of knowledge. Therefore, students are not familiar with having a discussion on what they have presented. Furthermore, they tend to strictly follow the guidelines provided without an intention of offering any extension. That is a reason for the absence of a Discussion section in the SBSPs.

Though the (S)BSP is an emerging genre and it is difficult to compare with the previous studies of the same genre, the identification of moves and steps in the SBSPs has some similarities with the results in the study by Yeung (2007). In that study about business reports, background description is found first, followed by the objectives of the report and the examination of a specific business problem and the identification of practical solution to the problem concerned at the final stage. The SBSPs in this study start with the introduction and description of a business which develop a product(s)/service(s) that meet the needs of a number of customers, then define the business mission, vision and objectives. A major similarity between the structure of business reports found by Yeung (2007) and the structure of the SBSPs in this study is that, instead of looking for theoretical gaps and fulfilling the construction of theories like research articles (another academic genre), they both work and seek to find answers and practical value of application to satisfy the living requirements of

human needs. Business problems are the key questions raised in both types of genres. However, in business reports, a business problem is directly dealt with by specific solutions, but in (S)BSPs, a business problem is dealt with by the launch of a new product/service. Additionally, compared to a research article which tends to be completed with conclusion and with/without some recommendations for future research without further actions, and to a business report which ends with particular solutions to particular problems (Yeung, 2007), an SBSP does not end with any of the above-mentioned suggestions but entails implementation of specific actions including the responses of the target readers or the application of a number of strategies sketched in the plan. This feature may be a signal of business genres emphasizing the typical nature of business with quick and instant reactions to adapt to unexpected changes of markets.

4.2.7.3 Writing SBSPs, impact and influencing factors

It is obvious that writing BSPs is a very challenging task for students in spite of their being L1 or L2 in English. For the English-majored undergraduates in the current context, they even found the task more difficult because they had had little exposure to business environments while the course was not long enough for them to thoroughly investigate business concepts as well as business background knowledge, e.g. accounting skills of making income statements, balance sheet or cash flow statements (Itv 6). This is also a reality proposed by a teacher interviewee (Rec 5) who expressed her expectations for a lower-level requirements for assessment regarding students' business knowledge displayed in the SBSPs because she thought the requirements are "too ideal and demanding".

Despite the challenges, the composition of a BSP has had positive impact on the student writers. Similar to the study by Vesper and Vesper (1993), which concludes that writing a BSP can help students provoke creative thinking along with informative, analytical and persuasive writing, this current research also witnessed the students to develop same types of skills while investigating business areas (such as market analysis) besides a number of soft skills such as team work, self-disciplines, proactive manner, etc. The value of the SBSP development lies in its acting as a bridge for knowledge translation process for business management, as proposed in Dal Mas et al. (2021). In the interviews, those student writers who considered themselves as a founder while writing the SBSPs confirmed that they have learnt the way to transfer their ideas into an explicit form in a written document, at the same time learning analyzing skills (e.g. do market analysis and develop financial statements). Their entrepreneurial education knowledge has been enhanced through the process of

understanding their target/potential customers and finding solutions to their problems (**Itv 5, 6, 7**). They confirmed the value of the course as it provided them with business knowledge which helps them understand and be able to read other BSPs in the future besides triggering their business initiatives. The value of the course and the necessity of writing an SBSP was also confirmed by the interviewed teachers as they agreed that the composition of an SBSP really helps students improve their business knowledge. In their opinion, it is an opportunity for them to explore the business world before graduation and look for a chance for start-up, if possible (Rec 4, 5). It is obvious that the value of the course and the composition of SBSPs as a course requirement is acknowledged by both the teachers and students regarding knowledge enhancement and hands-on practice as a preparation before students graduate and step into real business world. Similar to what found in Olokundun et al. (2017), the student writers expressed their respect and gratitude to the support of their teachers during their writing process. Their course instructors' practical experience indeed fascinated them and "facilitated my [their] navigation through complex topics" (**Itv 9**) and strengthened their writing flow. Interestingly, the students' perception of their teacher's support and their satisfaction regarding their teacher's competence varied among students working in the same group (making the same SBSP). Some students provided good compliments to their teacher's business knowledge and experience while their groupmate expressed that their teacher's support was not really sufficient and her answers to their questions were quite vague (**Itv 9**). Meanwhile, another student also revealed she had to look for help from another teacher instead of the one in her class because she felt her teacher could not provide good support for her writing (**Itv 6**). Therefore, in terms of entrepreneurship educators' competence like the teachers' business competence in this context, it is hard to claim whether their competence really influences their students' commitment to writing SBSPs. Whatever they perceived of their teachers, they still tried to finish the assignment as it is a requirement to complete the last course of their program. Besides, the task was a teamwork product, the completion of the SBSP was also decided by other group members.

In contrast to Yüksel (2022) in which students reveal big team size negatively influences their perception/experiences and confess they are not convinced of the necessity of the BSP or they are not well-supported with materials and lectures, all of the interviewed students in the current study supported the SBSPs as a teamwork assignment and confirmed the necessity of writing a BSP as a task for students studying this program because during teamwork they could learn a lot of things, brainstorm and share ideas as well as the burden of the task of which the workload was high. Besides,

writing a BSP helped them learn about a number of complex things such as financial statements; therefore, though they may not have a demand for start-up, they still felt satisfied with learning new things. The teachers interviewed also shared the opinions of teamwork effectiveness, and one of them recommended gathering students of the same working experience (from the internship) because, according to him, those students with the same experience would share more ideas and encounter fewer obstacles in their idea presentations (**Rec 1**). What the students shared can be concluded that the composition of a BSP as a business simulation indeed helped them enhance some essential business skills, developing their entrepreneurial competences to be self-reliant and taught them the impact of good teamwork (Fregetto, 2005; Okolocha & Ile, 2012). However, the students also pointed out some drawbacks of working in a group such as difficulties to maintain coherence and cohesion in the plan, or unbalanced workload to group members due to the nature of some sections that need individual work for consistency. Additionally, the context in reality and that in the textbook are not the same, so they also encountered obstacles to adapt the knowledge from the course to their real situation. Regarding the necessity for the requirement of this task as an end-term assignment, one of the students confessed that she was not sure this can be the only or the best way to assess student's business knowledge, but she could not figure out an alternative because she did not have sufficient expertise to evaluate whether any option can be an alternative. In terms of material and lecture support, they all agreed that they completely followed the guidelines (aiming for a high score) and had no other suggestion/recommendation while they could list supportive activities by their teachers and expressed a lot of gratitude, showing that they received enough support. However, all of them classified Financial Data section as the most difficult section. This finding echoes students' opinion in Yüksel (2022) and once again emphasizes the disadvantage of non-business students while writing the BSP.

In short, the current study confirms findings from a number of previous studies, but also reveals some differences in the findings from students' perceptions. This dissimilarity may root from the differences in the academic settings and contexts where students are pursuing their programs. However, the results from the current research play as a good contribution to shedding light on the benefits and drawbacks of BSP composition in academic settings.

Research question 3: What are persuasion strategies used by the students when composing the SBSPs?

4.3 Persuasion in the SBSPs

The RQ3 seeks for the identification of persuasion strategies used in the SBSPs to make the texts convincing and appealing to their readers. In the upcoming section, the researcher is going to present the results regarding the utilization of persuasion strategies in the SBSPs corpus in accordance with the codes introduced in Table 3.3. The results will be demonstrated in terms of the frequencies that the persuasion strategies are used in the SBSPs (Table 4.17) and their occurrences within moves (Table 4.19). After that, a discussion regarding the employment of the persuasion strategies in the SBSPs, message features and persuasion in those texts and two sides of persuasion process will be presented. Besides that, the identification of a number of writing problems by student writers which seems to negatively influence persuasiveness level is going to be demonstrated, raising a considerable awareness regarding students' writing competence.

4.3.1 Persuasion strategies used the SBSPs

Table 4.17 Distribution of persuasion strategies in SBSPs categorized into groups

Code \ Texts	*Fair* *GS=52*		*Good* *GS=13*		*Needs Improvement* *GS=5*		*Totals* *GS = 70*
	AF	C-RF (%)	AF	C-RF (%)	AF	C-RF (%)	AF
AU Gr=212	156	6.0	47	5.4	9	3.8	212
CC1 Gr=282	184	7.1	84	9.7	14	5.9	282
CC2 Gr=272	187	7.2	70	8.0	15	6.3	272
CE Gr=920	**595**	**22.9**	**247**	**28.4**	**78**	**32.8**	**920**
IV Gr=245	177	6.8	55	6.3	15	6.3	245
LI Gr=298	208	8.0	70	8.0	21	8.8	298
PO Gr=401	**281**	**10.8**	**94**	**10.8**	**28**	**11.8**	**401**

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Table 4.17 Distribution of persuasion strategies in SBSPs categorized into groups (Cont.)

Code \ Texts	*Fair* *GS=52*		*Good* *GS=13*		*Needs Improvement* *GS=5*		*Totals* *GS = 70*
	AF	C-RF (%)	AF	C-RF (%)	AF	C-RF (%)	AF
RE Gr=269	187	7.2	70	8.0	14	5.9	269
SC Gr=259	198	7.6	42	4.8	19	8.0	259
SIP Gr=248	187	7.2	49	5.6	13	5.5	248
TR Gr=292	239	9.2	42	4.8	12	5.0	292
Totals	**2599**	**100%**	**870**	**100%**	**238**	**100%**	**3698**

Gr = Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code);
GS = Number of documents in a document group;
AF: Absolute frequencies; C-RF: Column-relative frequencies

As can be seen from Table 4.17, the most popular strategy used in Corpus 2 as well as in each group of SBSPs (assessed according to the rubric) is CE (Concreteness and Evidence). CE accounts for 920 over the total of 3698 times of strategy occurrences in the whole corpus, much bigger than the occurrence of the second popular strategy PO (Positivity - 401 times) in PS group, followed by LI (Liking) 298 times, TR (Trustworthiness) 292 times, CC1 (Commitment and Consistency) 282 times and other strategies CC2 (272 times), RE (269 times), SC (259 times), SIP (248 times) and IV (245 times). The least frequent strategy is AU (Authority) which accounts for 212 times. The results show a wide variety of strategy adoption in the SBSPs collected for this study.

The biggest occurrence of CE identified in Corpus 2 shows that the writers are in favor of using concrete information or evidence (e.g. concrete numbers, detailed plan, proper names and locations) to persuade the readers of the content of the plan. They may use concrete figures in the breakdown of financial growths and projections (as illustrated in abovementioned figures from Figure 4.7 to Figure 4.9) or in the elaboration of budgets and locations as in example (26),

(26) The business is run at a rent **50m2** room currently in **[D]district 7** as one of our team apartments located. We pay rent at **around 8 million** monthly for the

residential stay, but with the commercial staying, we are expecting to pay **double the price**. (*A2*)

or a detailed description of product/service features, as in example (27)

(27) Roast coffees are a primary line of Hive cafe with varieties such as **Espresso**, **Mocha, White Mocha, Candy Latte**, **and Brewed coffee**. Smoothies and teas will be a complementing line for the coffee including wild **strawberry, peach, mango, and lemonade** [...]. Private rooms are a special feature of Beehives, which will consist of **4 rooms with 2 rooms for 4-6 people and 2 rooms for 8-10 people**. (*A4*)

The adoption of this strategy greatly contributes to the coherence of the content (O'Keefe, 2016; Shen & Bigsby, 2013), assisting the readers to imagine the writer's idea more easily as their ideas have been transferred to more concrete form of numbers and very specific details.

PO (Positivity) is the second popular strategy identified in the corpus (401 among 3484 in total). In terms of good achievements, positive development and strengths, the writers use PO to express their positive commitment regarding their product/service quality control like in example (28),

(28) "We are confident that our café will become an inspiration place for our customers". (*A2*)

or predict their financial growth, profitability or positive results of their strategies such as in example (29),

(29) "We feel as though our target customer would **greatly appreciate this generosity**. This in turn would **boost** our brand loyalty, setting us up for a **promising** future with a **substantial** loyal customer base." (*A4*);

or provide a positive claim of the industry development like in (30),

(30) "The self-assembled furniture industry has been **steadily growing** in recent years due to various factors such as increasing urbanization and demand for affordable and customizable furniture." (*C70*).

In terms of negative competition and threats, they may refer to such negativities by giving them a label of "**challenges**" or something "**limited**" instead of "difficulties", and immediately attach the challenges with their solution that makes them more confident of themselves, like in examples (31) and (32),

(31) Our massive competitors already controlled a large number of supply chains and had a significant number of loyal customers across the country, which bring us **big challenges**. However, **well** [*a good*] combination and connection between drinks, desserts, activities, entertainment, relaxing trends satisfying the

target customer (the youths) are the **strength** of Superb Coffee that **overcome the competitors**. (***B43***)

(32) Because of our current position as a new business, the product range for this line is still **limited** at the time being, but this can be **extended** to printed wearables and stationaries in the near future. (***B37***)

A high occurrence of LI (Liking) indicates that the writers care about their customers' hobbies and concerns. Therefore, they provide information related to their customers' preferences such as smells, tastes, looks, modernity, atmosphere and even their price expectation. Belows are the examples of LI used in Corpus 2.

(33) Easymealss provides **well-prepared fresh** vegetables and meat that are **packaged following recipes and** servings. **Fresh** foods (pork, chicken, vegetables, etc.) will be **pre-processed** by **removing the inedible part** of the food (shell, offal, ect.). After preliminary processing, they will be **packaged in a tray and wrapped with food wrap**. (***C71***)

(34) Our furniture products are designed with **ergonomic** features and utilize **advanced technology** to provide **optimal support and comfort**. (***C70***)

TR (Trustworthiness) is another strategy used to enhance the persuasion of the SBSPs. The writers may include reliable sources of their arguments to prove their trustworthiness, as in example (35), or mention a popular name(s) as their business partner(s), as in example (36) to show their reliability.

(35) [...] **according to TheGoodBody.com - Dec 2018,** lack of sleep is also strongly related to the cause of depression, serious car incidents, overusing sleeping pills, shortening their life span and serious economic losses. Some other supportive statistics are 37% of Vietnamese suffer from sleep deprivation (**VNExpress, 2019**), Vietnamese among those who sleep the least across the globe only sleep on average under 7 hours a day (**VNExpress, 2018**). (***A2***)

(36) LIM Store has established a strategic partnership with the **Epson printer** division. (***C68***)

In order to persuade their readers, the writers show their commitments and consistency (CC1) according to their core values and mission which they promise and expect themselves to bring to their customers, like in example (37),

(37) We **always** make customers happy, listen to our customers' feedback, creat **high-quality** eating environment, providing our customers with an **authentic** Thai dining experience, which is **enjoyable, delicious, and represents the best quality** of service. (***C75***)

The application of persuasion strategies is also helpful when the product/service is compared and contrasted with others (CC2). This technique is not new but seems to entail instant effects because it can show the readers/customers obvious answers and directly influence their decisions. This technique is especially influential to those who care about the details of the product/service and have to make thorough consideration before making their final decisions. Example (38) demonstrates the adoption of CC2.

(38) Comfortable space - This model will help you **break the boredom** of working **in traditional spaces**, **noisy shops and a home-work atmosphere. (*A4*)**

The persuasion is also attached to the SBSPs by the employment of RE (Reciprocation), which tends to encourage customers to come back and buy the product/service or attract high-quality personnel by offering them good things first. For example, the plan developers may offer coupons/vouchers as sales/promotion strategies, or they may add some values to the product/service which show their care for the customers' health/benefits or environmental/social issues as well as express concerns for their own personnel policies. These strategies are attached in the following examples (39) - (41),

(39) For clients who live **environmentally** conscious lives, our furniture firm is the best option since it uses **high-grade industrial** wood that is resistant to warping and termites and is not only **long-lasting** but also helps to **maintain forests** by **lowering the amount of natural wood that is harvested.** (*C70*)

(40) We choose sales promotion to create a temporary increase in sales by bringing purchasing decisions forward and adding some immediacy to the decision-making process. The technique includes a **free trial, first purchase coupon, coupon, or voucher code**. We will limit the offer to a few days for the best result. (*C75*)

(41) Employees' promotions and downgrades will be determined by their performance evaluation report. Offering **flexible** work schedules to **prevent employee burnout**, offering **competitive compensation**, and **offering training programs** to **advance their abilities** are just some initiatives the bakery store will use to draw in and keep staff. (*C72*)

The usage of SC (Scarcity) helps the writers to feature the uniqueness of their business through the limited supply of the product/service in the industry, as in example (42),

(42) Léger Brunch & Café has **two distinctive features** which identify it among other competitors. The first feature regards its **fusing of Vietnamese cooking styles into foreign dishes and vice versa**. The other **outsmarting point** is that we

strongly emphasized the quality of service to ensure our customers' most content dining experience. (***B46***)

In order to make the SBSPs appealing to the readers, the writers use SIP (Social Identity and Social Proof) as a persuasion strategy that enables the readers to feel the involvement of a community. The impact of this strategy is to have the readers' decisions influenced by other people's assumptions. Therefore, the adoption of this strategy implies the fact that the SBSP developers tend to use social media platforms or other online channels as ways to attract customers to buy their product/service, as in example (43), or they tend to justify the foundation of their business by referring to the current trends, or the assumptions/expectations of a group of related people, as in example (44),

(43) Superb Coffee's target customers are **young people**, who are mostly **students and employees**, from **13 to 45** years ago. They tend to use social media frequently, so we plan to develop official papes on social networking sites such as **Facebook, Instagram, Zalo or Tiktok**. We would regularly update the menu, decorations, and the upcoming events of the shop **on those social networking sites.** (*B43*)

(44) In recent years, **young people** have accepted to give up anything inconvenient in order to discover current and optimal appliances in design to assist [*to*] save money, energy, time, and money since they are gradually moving towards a simpler and more convenient living. As a result, **young people are gradually adopting smart[*ly*] constructed furniture as a trend**. […] **For these reasons, we made the decision to launch a company** that produces completed furniture using high-quality components and styles **that are appropriate for today's consumers**. (*C70*)

The utilization of IV (Impact and Value), showing the impacts and values of the product/service, is another persuasion strategy which is deemed to be effective because it can entice readers of clear-cut outcomes of the product/service which the business is offering, as in example (45),

(45) Using high quality material and distinctive design for our packaging, HUPPA **provides customers with the best "unboxing experience", boosting their satisfaction and giving them a greater impression of our brand**. (*B37)*

The last strategy listed is AU, which would be expressed through the way SBSP writers display their expertise or refer to the recognition of a third party, source of power, credentials, or awards, as in example (46),

(46) As **former staffs in the field of customer services** with a **Bachelor of Business Administration**, we have **developed the basic skills and experiences of**

> **managing and operating a business**s. Additionally, we used to **work at different companies**, in which employees regularly participating in various meetings. **We all know** that there are enjoyable meetings, but sometimes the meeting atmosphere could be stressful. (***B43***)

Among the 11 persuasion strategies, AU is the least frequently used in Corpus 2. The interpretation for this lower frequency lies in the fact that the SBSPs are developed by language students who are still pursuing their bachelor's degree with very little or without business-related experiences. Therefore, they are not really confident to talk about their expertise or mention any recognition/awards which actually can be made up to make the plans more attractive. This interpretation was confirmed by the SBSP writers interviewed as they confessed that they did not dare to make up new information related to their expertise and experiences and they were writing real things in their SBSPs.

Regarding the distribution of persuasion strategies among moves (Table 4.18), the study has revealed a lot of interesting results. First of all, ESM2, TBM1, TBM2, TBM3, TBM4 and TBM6 have a wide diversity of all persuasion strategies offered by the framework in Table 3.3. Such moves are about the business description (ESM2, TBM1), product/service plan (TBM2), market analysis (TBM3), marketing plan (TBM4) and Competition (TBM6). Among these moves, TBM4 includes the highest occurrences of all the strategies, followed by TBM2, TBM1, TBM3, TBM6 and ESM2. The reason for this distribution may be explained by the fact that TBM4 details a marketing plan which needs a lot of strategies to convince customers to buy the product/service, at the same time demonstrate to the readers of the SBSP that the plan is feasible and profitable. Therefore, the writer had to adopt two layers of persuasion strategies, one for their readers, the other for their customers. For such a reason, the number of persuasion strategies employed is large. The other four moves also refer to different plans about the business description, product/service, market analysis and competition which are very informative; hence, the writer also has to utilize a wide variety of persuasion strategies. Besides, though both EMS2 and TBM1 describe the business being proposed, the strategies used in TBM1 outnumber those in EMS2 because TBM1 is a move presented as a separate small section that talks about the business description in details while EMS2 is included in the Executive Summary of the plan, which tends to be short and more general.

Table 4.18 Frequencies of persuasion strategies within moves

Moves \ Persuasion Strategies	AU	CC1	CC2	CE	IV	LI	PO	RE	SC	SIP	TR
ESM1 Gr=49	0	0	0	38	5	0	0	5	0	5	0
ESM2 Gr=75	10	10	23	11	31	37	25	14	33	15	23
ESM3 Gr=46	6	22	9	8	8	28	5	14	27	6	14
ESM4 Gr=45	1	22	1	5	4	5	12	5	5	0	0
ESM5 Gr=49	5	0	6	12	3	0	15	5	9	19	5
ESM6 Gr=50	0	0	0	33	0	0	12	0	0	0	0
ESM7 Gr=10	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ESM8 Gr=6	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TBM1 Gr=70	48	48	33	25	42	52	46	19	43	47	43
TBM2 Gr=70	20	**55**	44	56	**57**	**58**	36	35	35	7	**45**
TBM3 Gr=69	24	8	29	**61**	25	30	64	27	29	37	37
TBM4 Gr=70	**29**	**55**	**24**	**40**	**50**	**42**	**37**	**65**	**24**	**70**	**33**
TBM5 Gr=70	10	7	9	**65**	2	20	33	5	6	9	40
TBM6 Gr=70	10	12	70	23	15	21	61	30	43	28	28
TBM7 Gr=68	29	7	0	61	3	3	14	5	5	0	9
TBM8 Gr=70	10	31	0	42	0	2	18	33	0	0	5
TBM9 Gr=68	0	0	0	**65**	0	0	9	0	0	0	5
FDM1 Gr=70	0	0	5	**70**	0	0	5	2	0	0	0
FDM2 Gr=69	5	0	0	**69**	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
FDM3 Gr=59	0	0	0	**59**	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

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Table 4.18 Frequencies of persuasion strategies within moves (Cont.)

Moves \ Persuasion Strategies	AU	CC1	CC2	CE	IV	LI	PO	RE	SC	SIP	TR
FDM4 Gr=6	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE1 Gr=30	0	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE2 Gr=38	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE3 Gr=29	0	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE4 Gr=15	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE5 Gr=6	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE6 Gr=12	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE7 Gr=14	0	0	8	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE8 Gr=8	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE9 Gr=7	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE10 Gr=14	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDE11 Gr=9	0	5	6	9	0	0	5	5	0	5	5
SDE12 Gr=3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	**212**	**282**	**272**	**920**	**245**	**298**	**401**	**269**	**259**	**248**	**292**

Gr = Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code);

Secondly, regarding the use of specific strategies among the moves, finance-related moves such as ESM6 (Financial plan), TBM9 (Application and effects of loan/investment), FDM1 (Projected financial statements), FDM2 (Break-even analysis) and FDM3 (Sources and uses of funds) together with all the elements of the Supporting Documents section (from SDE1 to SDE10) primarily adopt CE as the major strategy. The highest frequencies of CE are in FDM1, FDM2 TBM9 and TBM5, which can be interpreted to be in accordance with the nature of FDM1 (typically working with numbers to break down the income statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement), TBM9 (clarifying the usage of loans and investment), and TBM5 (proposing a location with justification

including rental budgets). The SD section is expected to bring evidence into the SBSP, so the fact that CE is almost the only strategy used in this section is understandable.

Thirdly, regarding the distribution of persuasion strategies among the moves and within each move, the strategy employment varies. The crowded distribution lies in five main moves including TBM1, TBM2, TBM3, TBM4, and TBM6, in which TBM2 possesses 4 persuasion strategies witnessed at their highest occurrences including CC1, IV, LI, and SC. This arrangement seems to be inevitable because they are the sections that carry the majority of information regarding the foundation of the target business. Meanwhile, the adoption of strategies fluctuates widely among moves; therefore, the most frequent strategy used in each move is different. For example, CE plays as the key strategy in ESM1, ESM6, TBM2, TBM5, TBM7, TBM8, TBM9, FDM1, FDM2, FDM3 and in all the SD elements though the distribution occurrences are not equal. LI is preferred in three moves, i.e., ESM2, ESM3, TBM2, primarily describing the business and the product/service which is supposed to be able to attract attention from customers by referring to some characteristics they are interested in. Within TBM4 (Marketing plan) - the move with highest total occurrences of all the persuasion strategies, SIP is the most popular, followed by RE, CC1, IV and other strategies. This result may explain that the writers are more likely to market their product/service by (i) making their customers feel being involved in a social group of identity that shares their interests regarding the product/service (occasionally using Big names or influencers to promote the product/service - They do not think this strategy is really effective compared to the others, ***Itv 4, 5, 6, 8***) , (ii) giving them benefits (e.g., vouchers or other added values), besides (iii) showing the customers their commitment in the launch of the product/service, and (iv) emphasizing the values and impacts of the product/service, all of which aim to boost their customers' decision-making process. It can be claimed that the key strategy effectively utilized in each move indeed serves the main communicative purposes of the moves.

4.3.2 Discussion

4.3.2.1 The employment of persuasion strategies in SBSPs

The investigation of persuasion strategies in the SBSPs confirms the huge impact of three Aristotelian appeals regarding *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos* in human life, especially in the business field. CE (Concreteness and Evidence) is the most popular strategy used in the corpus whose number of occurrences (920) tends to double the strategies of the second place (Positivity PO - 401). This means the logical appeal (*logos*) is the most important to the writers, and they may have expected that the demonstration of factual evidence (e.g. tables, diagrams, figures, etc.) (CE) can

convey objectiveness that their customers require. This strategy indeed helps the readers visualize the information provided in a more concrete way (***Itv 2***), "enhancing clarity and comprehension, at the same time strengthen persuasiveness and credibility" (***Itv 6***). Unsurprisingly, all the student interviewees admitted that the illustration by graphical/statistical evidence strongly contributes to the persuasiveness enhancement of the arguments presented in the SBSPs. This assumption is also shared by the teacher interviewees as they all had the same comprehension of their students' employment of such factual evidence. However, according to the teachers' assessment, despite its presence, the factual evidence was not very efficient because students did not master financial skills, e.g., accounting performance, so their data were not reasonable or convincing (**Rec 1**, **5**, **6**). Therefore, it is necessary for enhanced instructional methods to be implemented to assist student writers to improve the quality of their plans.

PO (Positivity) and LI (Liking) (*pathos*) are two strategies bringing the feelings/emotions to the readers. PO is expected to cause good feeling and positive expectation of the possibility of the business foundation, whereas LI is expected to be inspiring enough to sow interest and fondness as well as curiosity into a customer's mind, pushing them to buy the product/service with no more hesitance. Both strategies are found to convey as much persuasion effectiveness as the three similar strategies in Izquierdo and Pérez Blanco (2020) including *enjoying the experience*, *praising the benefits* and *aesthetic appeal* because these strategies are primarily used to describe the product/service being introduced in the plan, which is supposed to provoke the highest level of interest (positive emotion) from their audience. However, though such strategies are witnessed at high frequencies in the corpus, the student writers interviewed expressed their unawareness of the existence of emotional factors attached in their SBSPs because they preferred (and presumed) that precision is the necessity in business rather than emotions.

CC1 (Commitment and Consistency) (*ethos*) is a strategy to enhance the writer's credibility. Besides giving such commitment and consistency, the typical usage of self-mention *we* in SBSPs also enhances the writer's credibility and trustworthiness for better objectivity besides the acknowledgement of teamwork product, which is strongly confirmed by 100% of the student writers interviewed. This result is found to be in line with the study by Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. (2020). The identification of 920 instances of *logos*, 1055 instances of *ethos*, 1723 instances of *pathos* over 3698 instances of persuasion strategies makes *pathos* the most frequently used though CE (*logos*) is the most popular strategy. This result is also in line with

Romanova and Smirnova (2019) as they claim that *pathos* is found the most popular among persuasive techniques used in commercial advertising. This similarity emphasizes the trend of using emotional appeals to persuade customers which seems to be preferably noticed and expected to bring certain outcomes other than the conventional approach of using CE only to enhance the credibility and strengthen the argument. In this case, persuasion process is proceeded through both central and peripheral routes which include both heuristic cues and message arguments as evidence in the persuasive process, as proposed in the Unimodel by Kruglanski and Thompson (1999).

Regarding the effects of persuasion strategies on convincing their audience, a comparison among three groups of assessed SBSPs including (G1) Good, (G2) Fair, and (G3) Needs Improvement was conducted. Because group 3 in the corpus is constituted by only 5 SBSPs, the comparison took place with 5 samples in each individual group regarding the employment of persuasion strategies within each group, as presented in Table 4.21. As can be seen, those belonging to G1 tend to use more persuasion strategies than those belonging to the other Gs, except the SC (Scarcity) category which is witnessed as the lowest among the three groups. However, G3 sometimes shows a slightly higher number of persuasion strategies adopted than G2. Only in CE category, G3 reveals a much higher number than G2. Obviously, the number of compared samples is too limited, which cannot result in a strong claim regarding the effectiveness of persuasion strategies towards the readers. However, a general claim in terms of the trend of using such strategies in order for persuasion enhancement seems to be significant.

Table 4.19 Comparison of persuasion strategies used in 3 groups of SBSPs (No.=5/group)

Code \ Texts	Good GS=5	Fair GS=5	Needs Improvement GS=5	Totals
AU	18	15	9	33
CC1	33	18	14	51
CC2	27	18	15	45
CE	73	44	63	117
IV	21	17	15	38
LI	27	20	21	47
PO	36	27	28	63
RE	27	18	14	45
SC	16	19	19	35
SIP	19	18	13	37
TR	16	23	12	39

Compared to other business genres (e.g. annual reports, business reports and advertisements), persuasion in the SBSPs and in other genres has both similarities and differences. Unlike annual reports in Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. (2020) which minimize the usage of pathetic elements, in SBSPs, LI is used as a frequent strategy to bring good emotions to customers and the readers. However, in Yeung (2007), CE, PO and TR (Trustworthiness) are also found in business reports under the presence of objectivity and rational arguments (CE), positive tone (PO) and statistics (TR), which shows a strong similarity between the two genres as they both prefer CE and PO as the strategies to convince their readers. In comparison with persuasion in advertisements (Labrador et al., 2014) in which Move 2 (Describing the product) uses *positive evaluation* and *informal style* (with the usage of second personal pronoun *you*), the move TBM2 in the current SBSP corpus also uses a lot of *positive evaluation* to describe the product/service regarding product qualities, highlighting characteristics and/or other benefits/values that the product/service bring to customers (**Rec 2**) aiming for product/service advertisement (**Rec 1**, **2**) or to persuade customers of their competitive advantages (**Rec 3, 4**). However, according to the teachers, the writers did not utilize this strategy efficiently (e.g., using too many subjective adjectives or writing lengthy descriptions), so they failed to make their product/service distinct from other products/services of the same industry (**Rec 3**, **5**). One more thing, in contrast to *informal style* used in advertisements, the SBSPs employ politeness forms, e.g., *Being optimistic* or *Impersonalize writer and reader*, as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), with no occurrence of *you*; instead, *we* is used as a confirmation of teamwork and group commitment to the launch of the product/service; moreover, no contraction form is used. This difference between SBSPs and advertisements may lie in the nature of these two genres. One requires a direct address with customers (in advertisements) then refers to *you* and, on the other hand, the other expresses an indirect contact with customers, so no direct address like *you* has been found in the SBSPs. Again, the employment of PO and CE in these genres confirms the inclusion of both central route and peripheral route in the persuasion process (Petty et al., 1983). The results in this study also confirm the study by Mustafa et al. (2012) that the writers tend to adopt a certain strategy in a certain move of the text. For example, RE (Reciprocation) is preferred both in sales letters, Move E, Offering incentives (Mustafa et al., 2012), and in the current SBSPs, TBM4 (Marketing plan). Both moves share a similarity of giving the target audience a (good) reason(s) to push them to make the decision to buy the product/service.

In short, the utilization of persuasion strategies has been identified with some similarities as well as differences with that of previous studies, and their effectiveness is going to be discussed more in the section regarding two sides of the persuasion process in section 4.3.2.3.

4.3.2.2 Message features and persuasion in SBSPs

The primary aim of the SBSPs was to persuade their readers (teachers) in order for high scores after the course completion. Some of them even conveyed the desire to explicitly sketch real start-up initiatives on paper. Whatever the aims are, persuasion of the messages designed in the SBSPs are presented in ***content***, ***structure*** and ***style*** of the text (O'Keefe, 2016; Shen & Bigsby, 2013).

Regarding the ***content*** of SBSPs, these texts are supported by a number of evidence, primarily including *statistical evidence*, *anecdotal evidence* and *analogical evidence*. *Statistical evidence* is presented in some specific sections such as Market and Industry Analysis (TBM3) when talking about industry overview, trends, opportunities (Figure 4.11) and other market analysis areas such as surveys. *Anecdotal evidence* is often used to provide information about the business or characteristics of the product/service in Business Description (TBM1) or Product/Service (TBM2), and in these sections, the evidence is quite personal and subjective as the writers are writing about themselves in their own views. *Analogical evidence* tends to be used in Competition section (TBM6) when the writers refer to their competitors and rival products/services to compare with theirs. As can be seen, the ***content*** in SBSPs is rather *one-sided* because the plans primarily talk about their own product/service. The only *two-sided* parts seem to be SWOT analysis or Competition, in which the writers analyze their competitors and themselves through the identification of their strengths/weaknesses or advantages/disadvantages. In fact, SWOT analysis is not very frequent in the Corpus (only 47.1%), either included in MIA or Competition sections or placed at SD, occasionally standing alone in the plan. However, while it is necessary for the two-sided message to be *refutational* (providing a counter-argument against the opposition) in order for the achievement of more persuasion (Miller & Levine, 2019; O'Keefe, 2016; Shen & Bigsby, 2013), a number of writers only create *non-refutational* messages as they strongly conclude that their business outperforms their competitors without providing any justification, which plays as a counter-argument against the advantages of their rivals.



Figure 4.11 An example of statistical evidence (B59)

Regarding the ***structure*** of the message (how the data or the argument are presented), different moves and steps of the SBSP contain different features, for example, TBM3 (MIA) referring to the industry analysis often follow *climax* order (most important arguments presented at the end of the message) as the writers tend to go from the overview of the industry, then identify trends and conclude opportunities for their own business which can be considered as the focus message. Meanwhile, other moves are more likely to follow *anticlimax* structure because they generally jump to the most important points on top. Both types of structure are suitable for that specific section besides the fact that the latter order can help the readers save time. Therefore, both of them carry certain levels of persuasion which barely make difference in terms of effectiveness. Another typical feature of the SBSP structure lies in its conclusion which is rather *implicit*. That is, compared to other writing genres such business reports which tend to have an *explicit* conclusion, SBSPs leave the conclusion to their readers to decide whether the plans are good or not. In terms of persuasion, *explicit* conclusions are considered to be more persuasive (Hovland & Mandell, 1952; O'Keefe (1997); as cited in Shen & Bigsby, 2013) because source credibility will be increased. However, with the aim to be acknowledged, the *implicit* message hidden in each SBSP is "Our business (product/service) is outstanding! (Please rate us high!)". If the arguments in the SBSP are not strong enough, there is a high

likelihood that the message cannot be received, which means the level of persuasion effectiveness is not high as expected.

Regarding ***style*** (how the information is linguistically presented), language of the SBSPs is recognized as ocassionally *powerless* (showing the writer's social inferiority) and primarily *powerful*, with an absence of *metaphor* and frequent presence of *gain frame* strategy (other than *loss frame*). The *powerless* feature is identified in certain moves talking about the product/service and their dedication, commitment in the business by the inclusion of politeness forms such as *being optimistic,* categorized as positive politeness by Brown and Levinson (1987), e.g. "We believe that our cafe will offer our dearest customers the best experience with high-quality products and services" (***C92***). In other moves, the language is simply frank and straightforward, hence rather *powerful*, increasing the source credibility. The *gain framing* (emphasizing benefits and rewards from compliance of the message advocacy) is also adopted for persuasion effectiveness, e.g., "...to express our gratitude for our loyal customers, we've created a membership system that provides [...]. We value our customers' loyalty and want to ensure that they feel appreciated and rewarded for choosing us as their go-to spot for cocktails and relaxation" (***C89***).

In summary, message features in SBSPs bring certain levels of persuasion. The persuasion process will be further explained through the investigation of two processes of persuading and being persuaded in the upcoming section.

4.3.2.3 Two sides of persuasion process in writing SBSPs

a) Students' general aims and teachers' expectations

The results of the current study confirm a number of issues related to the composition of a SBSP as a term project, identical to what is stated in Vesper and Vesper (1993). First of all, regarding the composition of SBSPs, the students, who considered themselves as language students, not business students, also strictly followed the principles elaborated in the course outlines delivered by the Faculty of Foreign Languages. This fact was confirmed by all the student interviewees as they confessed that they aimed for high scores, so they followed exactly what their teachers offered without adding any extra section or criticizing the efficiency of the guidelines and tried to beautify their language use because they are language students. Their understanding of their teacher in charge (that means, their course instructor in class was considered as their first target reader) led their way of outlining and constructing the SBSPs so that they could meet his/her requirements because they thought s/he would be their SBSP assessor.

However, contrary to their expectations, the assessor of their SBSP could not be their teacher in charge. Besides, the assessor may not have been impressed by those SBSPs which were well-written with but lacked a sense of real experience (**Rec 1**). Therefore, their SBSP might/might not have conveyed exactly what the assessor had expected. This is linked to the second issue of grading.

In Vesper and Vesper (1993), the grading is based on the form and presentation other than the business validity of the plan, and the qualities of a well-written SBSP are on the emphasis of ideas (40%), organization (40%), style and mechanics (10%), appearance of a professional look (5%) and something unexpected but valued (5%), similar to the qualities of effective writing in other writing assignments. In the context of this study, the grading rubrics issued by the Faculty of Foreign Languages seemed to convey the same objectives with slightly different criteria including content (50%), in-class activities (30%), organization (10%) and language use (10%).

However, the conflicts lie in each individual assessor regarding their role perceived by themselves while assessing the SBSPs. All five teacher interviewees are language teachers who have been pursuing their teaching career for over 10 years. Two of them are exposed to real business activities besides their teaching, one owns a degree of business administration besides his degree of teaching English as a foreign language, and the other two are pure language teachers who merely conduct their teaching activities in class. Though all of the teachers interviewed expressed their expectation of an SBSP which is logical, reasonable and comprehensible, their perceptions regarding the evaluation of the SBSPs varied. Only one teacher interviewee (out of five) considered herself as a mere language teacher who is grading the SBSPs and expecting her students to demonstrate their understanding of business concepts through the eyes of language learners. At that time, while another two teacher interviewees saw themselves wearing two hats of both a language teacher and a business teacher/expert and the other two admitted their roles as business teachers only, all of the four graded the SBSPs primarily in terms of business content which could be fictitious but make sense. Only two of the five noticed their students' writing flaws regarding language use, grammar, citations and references; the others expressed their focus on the feasibility of the plan and how the business ideas are persuasively justified. The grading at this time does not really depend on the grading rubrics/principles but rather on the persuasiveness of the business ideas that the student writers have embedded in their SBSPs and how the assessors perceive that persuasiveness (whether they are persuaded or not).

One teacher interviewee even emphasized his ignorance of students' language abilities in the SBSPs but impression on any SBSP which could reveal the students' actual experience in business contexts such as their exposure to working environments. Unsurprisingly, those teachers who have business knowledge or had exposure to real business practices (**group 1)** looked for disciplinary aspects (or business-related issues) rather than linguistic contributions. They expressed their trust on their students' language abilities in the SBSPs because at least the students are English majored undergraduates whose English level must be acceptable. Instead, they expected to see SBSPs which tend to be feasible, practical and real, showing the ambition/passion of the youth. In contrast, similar to Forey (2004), in which teacher informants care about the language use of the text while business informants consider how language constructs meaning, the two teachers with pure teaching experience (**group 2**) required the students to merely understand business concepts correctly and present them in the SBSPs reasonably without caring about the feasibility or practicability of the projects. Interestingly, while **group 1** was satisfied that the students composed well-written SBSPs which met the requirements of the course and some of them were impressive, **group 2** expressed their disappointment because the SBSPs could not demonstrate the students' business knowledge which was delivered in the course, or the plans could not serve as the embodiment of the students' seriousness in presenting a start-up idea, or they lacked logics in the construction of each idea or section inside, as one teacher shared, "The students' submissions after completing the course only met 37-40% of my expectations" (**Rec 5**). Such difference among teachers' perceptions may have led to the conflicts in the grading; therefore, the quality of this activity varied among assessors of the course and the SBSPs were more likely to be evaluated/graded inconsistently. Hence, there is a necessity for a unity in grading and assessment among teachers in charge.

b) Writers' techniques and readers' message reception

Based on the comparison of persuasion strategies used in three groups of SBSP samples categorized as Good, Fair and Needs Improvement (Table 4.21), the effectiveness of persuasion strategies employed in the SBSPs could have been tested. To be specific, the strategies used in the SBSPs were the writers' techniques in their persuasion process and the categories of the texts embodies the readers' persuasion reception which was expressed via their evaluation of the texts. If a SBSP was evaluated as Good, it means that plan was able to persuade the reader successfully, whereas those receiving Needs Improvement evaluation represented the plans of low persuasion level. Though the comparison was limited in the number of

compared samples, the result somehow reveals that the adoption of more persuasion strategies is more likely to convey higher levels of persuasion in the message. In this sense, the processes of persuading (the writers' side) and being persuaded (the readers' side) can be interpreted through the lenses of persuasion theories.

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), the writers' intention was influenced by two factors: personal (attitudinal, guided by belief and value) and social (normative) combined with other predictors such as *moral obligations*, *self-identity*, *affect*, and *prior behavior* (Hale et al., 2002), so the students' adoption of persuasion strategies in the current research could be interpreted to be based on their belief, moral obligations and self-identity. That is, they strictly followed the structure provided in the course guidelines and employed a high number of CE to ensure the rationality of their claims because they believed that following the guidelines would bring a high score and that was their teacher's expectation; or they inserted statistical/graphical evidence (CE) in order for visualized illustration and argument support (***Itv 5***, ***7***, ***8***), clarity and reliability enhancement (***Itv 2***, ***4***, ***6***, ***9***, ***10***) (*belief*). Besides, they used *we* instead of *I* because they assume it was a right thing for a groupwork project (*moral* obligation) (*ethos*). They also "*echo(ed) the reader*" (Cross, 1991) as they confessed to developing the plan in accordance with what they understood about their teachers in order to get high score. Those who treated the plan as their dream elaboration, besides, developed their plan practically and thoroughly (with the aim that it would be taken advantage of in the future) (*self-identity*).

Under the lens of Elaboration Likelihood Model (Areni & Sparks, 2005; Dainton & Zelley, 2005, 2019; Gardikiotis & Crano, 2015; O'Keefe, 2009, 2013, 2016), the persuasion attached in the SBSPs was transferred through two routes: the *central* and the *peripheral*. The readers (teachers) tend to receive *central-routed* messages with rich information, rational arguments and strong evidence to support claims (*logos*) (**Rec 2**, **3**, **4**, **5**), and this route was strong as they had high elaboration motivation to process the information provided, and also had sufficient ability to process such information (Areni & Sparks, 2005; Dainton & Zelley, 2019; O'Keefe, 2016). However, despite the wr iters' intention of adding evidence (CE) to strengthen their claims, the readers expected their dissatisfaction with a majority of the plans as they said the evidence was not convincing enough (**Rec 1**, **3**, **5**, referred in 4.3.2.1). Sometimes, when the elaboration likelihood was low, the *peripheral* route was preferred when the readers were influenced by feeling of liking the writers and their idea - *liking* heuristic (*pathos*) (O'Keefe, 2016). One teacher (**Rec 1**) confessed that his

evaluation was influenced by the emotion he had towards a specific SBSP decided by the idea and the exposure of real experience and he barely cared about the language use in the plan.

The interpretation of both processes of persuading and being persuaded has resulted in certain matches and mismatches between the perceptions of the writers and readers. They both have almost no awareness of the usage and effectiveness of persuasion strategies except the employment of CE (*logos)*. For example, most of the SBSP writers had limited attention to convey *ethos* because they rarely referred to the founders'/managers' expertise to strengthen the persuasion of the SBSPs in terms of credibility (AU). Besides, they almost skipped the values that the business can contribute to the society and sustainability-and-impact matters which seem to have received a lot of attention in recent days regarding the worth of a business towards the environment and their community. If they could have added such points, the RE could have been enhanced. Regarding the readers, most of them also expressed their focus on rationality and logic of the arguments (*logos*) and even emphasized that the other two factors cannot outweigh *logos* (**Rec 3, 5**). The matching between the writers and the readers of the SBSPs also lies in the fact that though several of the writers perceived themselves as language students (**Itv 2**, **3**, **9**, **10**), they focused on the demonstration of business knowledge rather than language areas by looking for consultants to make their information and evidence (e.g., financial statements) look real and reliable. This action aims to, in their opinion, meet their teacher's expectations, and the reality shows that their teachers indeed preferably expect to see their business knowledge rationally presented in the SBSPs. However, due to the students' limited business knowledge, they have not been able to reach the assessors' expectations. Therefore, though a number of students feel satisfied with their SBSPs, specifically with their efforts to complete the task, a majority of teachers express their concerns about both writing competence and business knowledge acquisition among students. This mismatch should be clarified in terms of a standard level of requirement fulfillment so that the future SBSPs can be more effective regarding both language and content, and a more detailed assessment rubric in which students and teachers can see what they need to do is inevitable.

4.3.2.4 Writing problems in SBSPs

The investigation of SBSPs reveals a number of problems that student writers were facing. The first problem is their writing competence which showed a variety of flaws and lack of coherence as well as cohesion. This problem matches what an instructor raised in the needs analysis at the beginning stage of the

study. In terms of the flaws, it is easy to find very ordinary grammatical mistakes in their texts, for example, "**We use this investment is worth for costs** such as rent and deposit, staff salaries, production costs, investments, furniture, restoration, insurance, promotions. **That amount of money as a motivator for the 4 of us to work hard for the business but also not under much pressure *likes* loan**" (***A1***), or the linguistic misusage of term "**productivity process**" to refer to the purchasing process (***C70***) and other mistakes that show inadequate practice or much lower competence compared to a fourth-year level of an English-majored student.

In terms of coherence, it is irrelevant to find a general reference of staffing in the move Market Analysis, like this "The success of a restaurant also depends on the quality of its staff. The restaurant should hire experienced chefs who are well-versed in Thai cuisine and also train its servers to provide excellent customer service" (***C75***), or the writer adds "Cash required" as an item of Expense estimation, as in the example in Figure 4.12 below. In another plan, in "We realize that we have **3 kinds** of competitors: the brand with a high price, the local brand with suitable price for the citizens in the area" (***A3***), only two instead of three items are mentioned. Similarly, 40% of the writers present Funding sources (the provision of capital needed for the business) under the move Financial highlights, which is used to estimate growth highlights of the business.

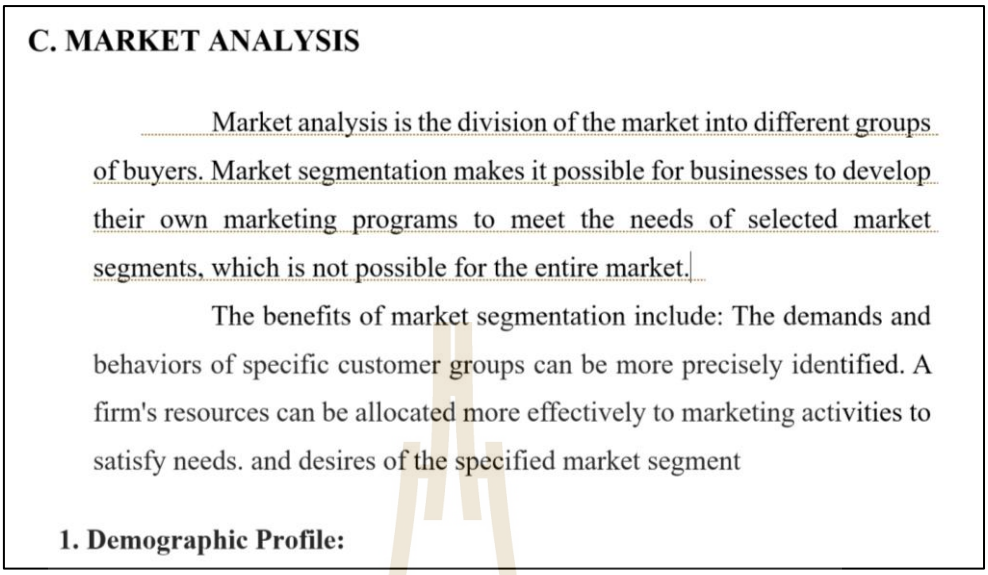
7.4 **Expense estimation**

Equipment/ Supplies	24,000,000
Cash Required	150,000,000
Business License	5,000,000
Advertising and Marketing	12,000,000
Total (VND)	**191,000,000**

Table 9: Primary costs needed

Figure 4.12 An example of lack cohesion (B37)

Cohesion is also challenged in other SBSPs. For instance, in Figure 4.13, besides the provision of a/an (incorrect) definition of market analysis (revealing a lack of disciplinary knowledge), the writer refers to market analysis and market segmentation, and later presents demographic profile, which are three different things but mechanically connected. Such choppy sentences are more likely to cause confusion for readers and decrease the persuasion level of the text.



C. MARKET ANALYSIS

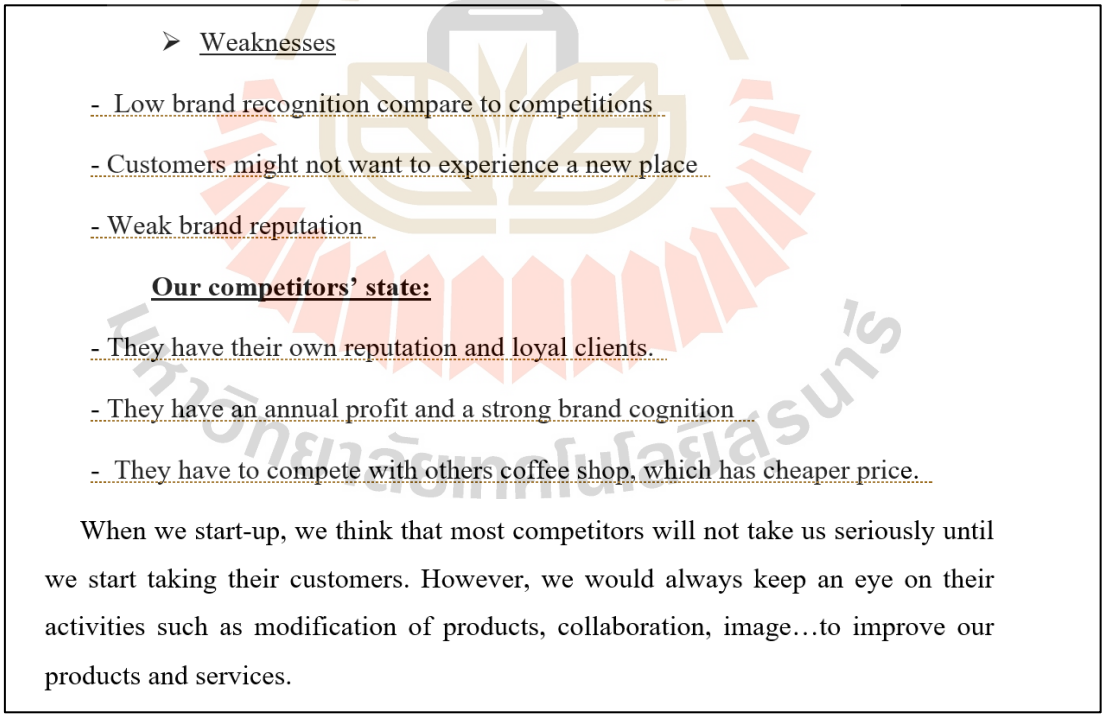
Market analysis is the division of the market into different groups of buyers. Market segmentation makes it possible for businesses to develop their own marketing programs to meet the needs of selected market segments, which is not possible for the entire market.

The benefits of market segmentation include: The demands and behaviors of specific customer groups can be more precisely identified. A firm's resources can be allocated more effectively to marketing activities to satisfy needs. and desires of the specified market segment

1. Demographic Profile:

Figure 4.13 An example of lack of cohesion (C71)

Furthermore, SBSP writers tend to mix writing formats unsystematically with no parallelism, e.g. a mixture of paragraph, phrases and bulleted lists, within their written text, as illustrated in Figure 4.14.



➢ Weaknesses

- Low brand recognition compare to competitions
- Customers might not want to experience a new place
- Weak brand reputation

Our competitors' state:

- They have their own reputation and loyal clients.
- They have an annual profit and a strong brand cognition
- They have to compete with others coffee shop, which has cheaper price.

When we start-up, we think that most competitors will not take us seriously until we start taking their customers. However, we would always keep an eye on their activities such as modification of products, collaboration, image…to improve our products and services.

Figure 4.14 An example of no parallelism (A4)

Another writing problem is the incorrect usage of in-text citation and a small number of reference lists presented at the end of the papers of Corpus 2.

Writers of the SBSPs seem to lack knowledge of how to cite a source and how to include a reference list after citing the source, or they added a reference list in an incorrect style (Figure 4.15), like the example below.



REFERENCES

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https://qandme.net/en/report/vietnam-cosmetics-trend-2020.html

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https://www.statista.com/statistics/987924/vietnam-monthly-spending-makeup-cosmetics/

(Statista, 2021) Monthly spending for skincare cosmetics in Vietnam

https://www.statista.com/statistics/988831/vietnam-monthly-spending-skincare-cosmetics/

(Statistic, 2021) Market value of the cosmetics industry in Vietnam

https://www.statista.com/statistics/1022424/vietnam-market-value-of-cosmetics-industry/

Figure 4.15 An example of References list in the SBSPs

Most of them do not cite the sources of their claims though they may use quotation marks to make it a direct quote; meanwhile, those who make use of the citation often misuse it and ignore the reference list, such as "According to Nieuwsbericht 2019, it is believed that Vietnam made it to the top 3 in Asia in terms of F&B development" (***A2***). On the contrary, in the interviews, when being asked about their obstacles in the process of writing their SBSP, the students denied citation and references as their writing obstacles as they confirmed to "had no writing obstacles because we dealt with the writing well" (**Itv 3**) or "we followed APA style because we used to experience similar writing in another course entitled General Business" (**Itv 6**). Unfortunately, their claims were opposed to the reality of their SBSPs, which were exposed to very few in-text citations and low frequency of References. This contrast reveals their uncertainty of language background knowledge which is supposed to be ideally strong as they are going to graduate from university.

In addition, the insufficient disciplinary knowledge is another obstacle that makes the content of the SBSP less effective. The writers tend to write

generally and provide vague claims, sometimes supported with irrelevant information. They do not thoroughly understand business concepts and terms, so their writing is confusing, for example "As a small business, we will have **a small staff**. [...] **A small sales staff** will assist co-owners with securing sales, assisting customers and general maintenance of stock on the floor" (***A1***). Here is another example.

> The initial capital of 5 billion are enough to cover everything for the store and maintain it for a year. To calculate for **those risks**, we have measures to call capital from investors. Since this is our first startup, the goal is to find small investors, start-ups, and fundraising companies. The difficulties for us in the early days of opening is to generate revenue and keep it going for a year, then we could persuade them to lend money. Another way, borrowing from banks, but for small businesses like us, getting loans from banks is very difficult because there is **no proofs that we will be able to repay those loans**" (*A4*)

This paragraph belongs to M9 (Application and Effects of Loan and Investment, but it seems to provide irrelevant information that is hard to persuade the readers ("there is **no proofs that we will be able to repay those loans**"). The reason for this lack is revealed in the interviews as 50% of the student interviewees considered themselves language students exploring business aspects and they did not have confidence regarding their business knowledge. However, while the other 50% admitted themselves as business students "[creating] rich content" (**Itv 6**) and "presenting a viable business idea" (**Itv 5**), the reality of their SBSPs' content seems to reveal the opposite truth.

The last problem identified is students' support information management which refers to the frequent adoption of documents in Vietnamese language in the SBSPs to illustrate their contents, or using data collected from the Internet (e.g. from an American context) for the illustration of their situation (in Vietnam) without any modification or adaption. This reality was also referred to by a teacher interviewee (**Rec 5**) who expressed a deep disappointment while reading the SBSPs. In fact, as the researcher has some screenings beforehand, the number of plans using such irrelevant documents is very high in Corpus 2, showing the recklessness of the students in choosing the illustration materials.

In short, the not-very-high quality of the SBSPs in Corpus 2 regarding both business content and writing competence has been found (1) by the researcher who sees that substantial word counts cannot guarantee high-quality plans because a lot of them still add inappropriate and lengthy information besides the detailed

abovementioned flaws. This reality was also confirmed (2) by the evaluation of four over five teachers during interviewees and (3) through the assessment of one teacher interviewee (using the rubric developed for this specific corpus) which categorized only 11 SBSPs as "Good" plans (from 33-42 scores), 53 SBSPs as "Fair" (23-32 scores) and 6 as "Needs Improvement" (under 23); no plan was assessed as Excellent. Regarding students' writing competencies, none of the plans was assessed with maximum score (5 scores) for 3 writing criteria (presentation and structure, clarity and style and consistency). Most of the "Good" ones received 4 scores for each writing criterion while those marked "Fair" received 3 or 2. The "Needs Improvement" generally received 2 for each writing criterion. The assessment results using the rubric have raised a writing alert among students who are in the last year of an undergraduate program that their writing skills should be enhanced to improve their professionalism after graduation. The writing of a BSP which is an academic writing (AW) genre at the moment will assist them to compose other business writing (BW) genres, e.g. business reports or marketing plans, in the future after they enter a real business world. Whatever genre they have to deal with, they need to cover basic characteristics of writing genres which emphasize clarity, logical organization, convincing manner by being "clear, complete, concise and compelling" in addition to being well-organized and visually effective (Vásquez, 2013, p. 99). Moreover, in a real business world, their professionalism which should be represented by the display of their expertise in order to convince their audience of their ideas other than to let the audience assess whether their expertise is correct or incorrect will be decided by their usage of proper formats and structures with a right purpose in appropriate contexts for suitable target audience. Therefore, the students need to take advantage of the activity of writing a BSP which is really helpful for them to "write to learn" how to display their knowledge acquisition of what have been taught (Smart et al., 2013; Vásquez, 2013).

4.3.2.5 Current trend and ESP writing

In the field of EFL learning and academic writing, thanks to the creation and rapid development of new technologies and the Internet, students' writing habits have changed considerably (Moore et al., 2016; Peters & Cadieux, 2019). Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and other AI-based writing tools, especially after ChatGPT was widely introduced, have marked a quantum leap as a revolution of natural language processing and machine learning. The easy accessibility to AI language models makes the process of text generation and refinement simpler and faster than ever before in history. A model's capabilities are no longer limited to assisting students with their writing. Instead, it writes on their behalf. In this case, authenticity, creativity,

and attribution are under consideration as students across disciplines are more likely to use such intelligent text generators whenever possible (Eaton et al., 2021). The assessment of such written work then becomes a considerable challenge for teachers, and they have to find ways to assign tasks which are able to integrate students' effort and automatic text generation (Alharbi, 2023).

In the current study, the composition of the SBSPs is supposed to be AI-free, which is the result of the researcher's observation and confirmed by student interviewees as they revealed that they had barely heard about the usage of AI tools among their community and they had also had almost no access to any AI tools at that time when the tools were not popularly available. This justification is proved by the identification of a number of writing problems in the SBSPs which could have been easily addressed by an AI language model. Their writing problems may/may not affect the meanings they intended to, which explains for the fact that a number of teachers ignored their students' writing flaws while reading the SBSPs. However, unless such problems are dealt with properly to make the writers aware of their negative effects, they may influence the professionalism of the writers as they become professionals in real future business situations. In addition, with the popularity of AI assistance in this 4.0 era and the composition of a perfect text is no longer an issue beyond their reach to many stakeholders, the dependence on AI tools is becoming more and more serious. A situation when writers are negatively affected, which was raised by a teacher interviewee (**Rec 4**), tends to be foreseeable. In such a situation, students are more likely to be attached to laziness and loss of individual styles while the accuracy of the AI tools is still limited (Wale & Kassahun, 2024). Then, the scenes of students struggling with writing on paper or professionals weakly dealing with presentations under no AI assistance are predictable. Obviously, free exposure to AI support has two sides which include both strengths and drawbacks, and in educational contexts, teachers are supposed to carry more duties and responsibilities to find ways to balance the weight of both sides. What they have to deal with is to maintain effective support and at the same time minimize the chances when their students abuse AI in their writing. In the context of SBSP writing, AI language models such as ChatGPT are also anticipated to be able to help the writers improve their texts to a maximum level of effectiveness, and the writing problems identified in Corpus 2 of this current study may not be repeated in the future SBSP collection. However, students should be made aware of the negative outcomes they may receive once their dependence on AI language generators escalates.

4.4 Summary

Chapter 4 presents the findings for the three research questions by detailing the evidence-based framework (EBF) of a typical business/start-up plan (BSP), the move-step structure of students' BSPs (SBSPs), and the persuasion strategies used within these plans. The EBF identifies core structural elements and their sub-components essential for a typical BSP. The analysis of SBSPs reveals the organizational patterns in the Executive Summary, Business section, Financial Data section, Supporting Documents section, and References section, alongside a pattern frequency analysis to highlight commonalities in the corpus. The chapter also explores the persuasion strategies employed by students and identifies common writing problems that impede clarity and effectiveness. This comprehensive analysis provides insights into the structural and rhetorical development of BSPs as an emerging genre.

Chapter 4 also discusses the components of business/start-up plans (BSPs) and students' business/start-up plans (SBSPs), highlighting the similarities and differences between them. It examines the reality of SBSPs, focusing on the rhetorical structure (move-step) within these plans and comparing SBSPs to other writing genres. The discussion explores the impact of various factors on writing SBSPs and their influence on students' performance. It also delves into the persuasion strategies used in SBSPs, analyzing how these strategies are employed, the features of the messages conveyed, and the two sides of the persuasion process. This includes examining students' general aims versus teachers' expectations, as well as the techniques used by writers and how readers receive and interpret these messages. The chapter provides a detailed analysis of the effectiveness and challenges in students' business plan writing, offering insights into improving educational practices and enhancing students' skills in developing persuasive and structurally sound business/start-up plans. The chapter also discusses current trend of using AI in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) writing, emphasizing the importance of integrating practical and theoretical knowledge to enhance students' writing skills.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

This chapter briefs the key findings of the thesis and addresses the three primary research questions concerning Business/Start-up Plans (BSPs) within an Evidence-Based Framework (EBF) by (1) identifying essential components synthesized from pedagogical and professional guidelines, forming the EBF, (2) delineating specific moves and steps in Student Business/Start-up Plans (SBSPs) and (3) highlighting persuasive strategies employed by students in the SBSPs. Besides, the chapter concludes with a discussion on the implications for educational practice and professional training, acknowledges the limitations of the study, and offers recommendations for future research to broaden the applicability and impact of the findings.

5.1 Summary of the current study

The current research has synthesized an evidence-based framework (EBF) of a business/start-up plan (BSP) which includes a collection of 21 structural elements with 10 high-frequency elements identified as the cores of a BSP, 1 regarding the format (Table of Contents), and the other 9 regarding the content of the plan (Executive Summary, Company Overview/Business Description, Product/Service Plan, Market and Industry Analysis, Marketing Plan, Management Plan, Operations Plan, Financial Plan, Appendices/Appendix). Using this EBF, the researcher has identified move-step structure of BSPs written by English-majored undergraduate students who enrolled in a Start-up course. Table 5.1 is a synthesis of moves and steps identified in an SBSP.

Table 5.1 Synthesized move-step structure of an SBSP

Section	Moves and steps*	Frequency (No = 70)	Category
Executive Summary	**Move 1: Company brief introduction**	**48 (68.6%)**	**Conventional**
	M1S1: Business background ES18	48 (68.6%)	Conventional
	M1S2: Logo explanation	*2 (3%)*	*Optional*
	M1S3: Location justification	*2 (3%)*	*Optional*
	Move 2: Business description	**62 (88.6%)**	**Conventional**
	M2S1: Industry overview ES30	55 (79%)	Conventional
	M2S2: Opportunity ES12	65 (93%)	Conventional
	M2S3: Concept description ES14	57 (81%)	Conventional
	M2S4: Problems to be solved ES19	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M2S5: Value proposition ES17	59 (84%)	Conventional

Table 5.1 Synthesized move-step structure of an SBSP (Cont.)

Section	Moves and steps*	Frequency (No = 70)	Category
	M2S6: Highlights potential competitors ES20	37(53%)	Optional
	M2S7: Competitive Advantage ES5	35 (50%)	Optional
	M2S8: SWOT analysis	*7 (10%)*	*Optional*
	M2S9: Key to success ES25	29 (41%)	Optional
	Move 3: Product/Service	**44 (62.9%)**	**Conventional**
	Move 4: Objectives, mission and vision	**44 (62.9%)**	**Conventional**
	M4S1: Mission ES8	42 (60%)	Conventional
	M4S2: Near- and long-term objectives/goals ES4	41 (59%)	Optional
	M4S3: Vision ES22	33 (47%)	Optional
	M4S4: Core value ES26	19 (27%)	Optional
	Move 5: Target markets ES2	**49 (70%)**	**Conventional**
	Move 6: Financial plan	**50 (71.4%)**	**Conventional**
	M6S1: Sources and uses of funds ES16	49 (70%)	Conventional
	M6S2: Funding/Capital requirements ES6	50 (71%)	Conventional
	M6S3: Summary financial projections ES1	35 (50%)	Optional
	Move 7: Management plan	**10 (14.3%)**	**Optional**
	M7S1: The management team ES7	10 (14.3%)	Optional
	Move 8: Implementation plan	***6 (8.6%)***	***Optional***
The Business	**M1: Description of Business**	**70 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M1S1: The industry CO10	21 (30%)	Optional
	M1S2: Opportunity	*28 (40%)*	*Optional*
	M1S3: Business name CO14	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S4: Mission statement CO1	28 (40%)	Optional
	M1S5: Legal structure CO2	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M1S6: Type of business CO16	59 (84%)	Conventional
	M1S7: Near- and long-term objectives/goals CO3	35 (50%)	Optional
	M1S7: Location and facilities CO6	65 (93%)	Conventional
	M1S8: Business model CO13	28 (40%)	Optional
	M1S9: Products and services CO7	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S10: Target customer profile CO15	52 (74%)	Conventional
	M1S11: Value proposition CO25	39 (56%)	Optional
	M1S12: Operation strategy CO17	23 (33%)	Optional
	M1S13: Competitive advantage CO12	30 (43%)	Optional
	M1S14: The principal owners/ownership structure CO8	35 (50%)	Optional
	M1S15: Problem being solved CO29	29 (41%)	Optional
	M1S16: Strengths and weaknesses CO21	25 (36%)	Optional
	M1S17: Future (growth) plans CO23	21 (30%)	Optional
	M1S18: Personal history and business background of the managers CO11	14 (20%)	Optional
	M1S19: Market entry strategy CO27	14 (20%)	Optional
	M2: Products/Services PS	**70 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M2S1: Description/features of products/services PS1	68 (97%)	Conventional

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Table 5.1 Synthesized move-step structure of an SBSP (Cont.)

Section	Moves and steps*	Frequency (No = 70)	Category
	M2S2: Benefits/value proposition PS2	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M2S3: A prototype of product/service (early sample/model) PS4	36 (51%)	Optional
	M2S4: Need for the product/service (problem to be addressed) PS8	38 (54%)	Optional
	M2S5: Implementation plan PS13	31 (44%)	Optional
	M2S6: Description of production and packaging process PS17	45 (64%)	Conventional
	M2S7: Unique selling points PS5	35 (50%)	Optional
	M2S8: Vision	*14 (20%)*	*Optional*
	M2S9: Industry PS24	14 (20%)	Optional
	M2S10: Competitive advantage PS10	35 (50%)	Optional
	M2S11: Pricing and Competitive Positioning Strategy PS14	28 (40%)	Optional
	M2S12: Current state of development of the product/service PS15	28 (40%)	Optional
	M2S13: Usage PS12	50 (71%)	Conventional
	M3: Market and Industry Analysis MIA	**69 (98.6%)**	**Conventional**
	M3S1: Potential and target customers' characteristics MIA3	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M3S2: Target market MIA4	58 (83%)	Conventional
	M3S3: Market segmentation MIA5	30 (43%)	Optional
	M3S4: Opportunity MIA8	35 (50%)	Optional
	M3S5: Industry description and market environment MIA1	39 (56%)	Optional
	M3S6: Competition analysis MIA2	55 (79%)	Conventional
	M3S7: Strengths and weaknesses MIA7	38 (54%)	Optional
	M3S8: Industry and market forecasts MIA13	28 (40%)	Optional
	M3S9: Key to success	*7 (10%)*	*Optional*
	M3S10: Problems/needs MIA6	23 (33%)	Optional
	M4: Marketing Plan	**70 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M4S1: Distribution strategy MKP3	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M4S2: Promotion strategy MKP2	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M4S3: Pricing strategy MKP1	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M4S4: Product/service portfolio and strategy MKP6	67 (96%)	Conventional
	M4S5: (Target) market definition MKP5	65 (93%)	Conventional
	M4S6: Overall marketing strategy MKP7	47 (67%)	Conventional
	M4S7: Positioning strategy MKP4	34 (49%)	Optional
	M4S8: SWOT analysis MKP11	38 (54%)	Optional
	M4S9: MKT objectives MKP19	25 (36%)	Optional
	M5: Location	**70 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M5S1: Proposed (geographical) location MKP16	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M5S2: Justification	*56 (80%)*	*Conventional*
	M5S3: Facilities	*35 (50%)*	*Optional*
	M5S4: Rent	*35 (50%)*	*Optional*
	M6: Competition	**70 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M6S1: Competition analysis MKP9	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M6S2: Competitive advantage MKP17	43 (61%)	Conventional
	M6S3: SWOT analysis MKP11	23 (33%)	Optional

Table 5.1 Synthesized move-step structure of an SBSP (Cont.)

Section	Moves and steps*	Frequency (No = 70)	Category
	M6S4: Differentiators MIA16	17 (24%)	Optional
	M7: Management and Operations	**68 (97.1%)**	**Conventional**
	M7S1: Organizational structure/chart MNP3	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M7S2: Positions and duties/responsibilities MNP2	63(90%)	Conventional
	M7S3: Personal history of the principals MNP1	21 (30%)	Optional
	M7S4: Salaries, compensation and benefits MNP6	21 (30%)	Optional
	M7S5: Personal recruitment, training and development plan MNP8	28 (40%)	Optional
	M7S6: Operations strategy OP15	49 (70%)	Conventional
	M7S7: Scope of operations OP16	46 (66%)	Conventional
	M7S8: Production process OP2	15 (21%)	Optional
	M7S9: Outsourced support services OP9	25 (36%)	Optional
	M8: Personnel	**10 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M8S1: Organizational structure/chart MNP3	21 (30%)	Optional
	M8S1: Staffing requirements OP4	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M8S2: Positions and duties/responsibilities MNP2	50 (71%)	Conventional
	M8S3: Personnel recruitment, training and development plan MNP8	49 (70%)	Conventional
	M8S4: Salaries, compensation and benefits MNP6	60 (86%)	Conventional
	M8S5: Operations strategy OP15	21 (30%)	Optional
	M9: Application and Effect of Loan or Investment	***68 (97.1%)***	***Conventional***
	M9S1: Funding request FP5	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M9S2: Funding sources FP6	64 (91%)	Conventional
	M9S3: Forecast expenses FP13	60 (86%)	Conventional
	M9S4: Potential return on investment FP10	21 (30%)	Optional
Financial Data	**M1: Projected financial statements**	**70 (100%)**	**Obligatory**
	M1S1: Profit and lost projection/income statement FP1	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S2: Projected balance sheet FP3	70 (100%)	Obligatory
	M1S3: Cash flow projection FP2	63 (90%)	Conventional
	M2: Break-even calculation/analysis FP4	69 (98.6%)	Conventional
	M3: Sources and uses of funds FP5	59 (84.3%)	Conventional
	M4: Important assumptions FP8	6 (8.6%)	Optional
Supporting Documents	E1: Intellectual property (trademarks, licenses, patents, etc.) AP4	30 (43%)	Optional
	E2: Advertising/marketing materials AP3	38 (54.3%)	Optional
	E3: Agreements (Leases, contracts, purchase orders, letters of intent, etc.) AP2	29 (41.4%)	Optional
	E4: Resumes of owners/key employees AP1	15 (21.4%)	Optional
	E5: Management chart AP15	6 (8.6%)	Optional
	E6: Any historical financial information that exists AP19	12 (17%)	Optional
	E7: Details of market studies AP6	14 (20%)	Optional
	E8: SWOT analysis	8 (11.4%)	Optional
	E9: Blueprints/plans AP9	7 (10%)	Optional

Table 5.1 Synthesized move-step structure of an SBSP (Cont.)

Section	Moves and steps*	Frequency (No = 70)	Category
	E10: Details of market, finance, operations AP13	14 (20%)	Optional
	E11: Company description	*9 (12.9%)*	*Optional*
	E12: Growth plan	*3 (4.3%)*	*Optional*

The step order may vary. The italicization means the steps are newly identified.

Regarding persuasion strategies used in the SBSPs, CE (Concreteness and Evidence) is the most popular strategy employed, followed by PO (Positivity), LI (Liking), TR (Trustworthiness), CC1 (Commitment and Consistency) and the other 6 strategies, but among the three Aristotelian appeals of persuasion, *pathos* is the most frequently used compared to the other two appeals *ethos* and *logos*.

5.2 Implications of the study

The constructional investigation of the BSP as an emerging genre and the SBSPs in reality has brought some implications in theory, profession and pedagogy.

First of all, the theoretical implications of this study extend to the establishment of an EBF describing the essential components of a business/start-up plan. By rigorously identifying and analyzing these components, this framework proposed as an outcome of the current research contributes to the theoretical understanding of effective business planning practices. Furthermore, it provides a structured foundation for future research endeavors aimed at explaining the interplay between these components and their impact on business success and sustainability. Moreover, understanding the move-step structure and persuasion strategies used in BSPs contributes to the theoretical understanding of effective communication and persuasion in academic contexts and particularly for this emerging genre. It helps in the elaboration of the underlying principles and mechanisms behind successful business communication strategies, enriching theoretical frameworks in entrepreneurship education and communication studies.

Secondly, the professional implications of this research are significant for practitioners involved in business development and entrepreneurship. The EBF generated from this study offers practical guidance for professionals tasked with crafting comprehensive BSPs. By identifying key components, professionals can streamline their planning processes to achieve success, enhance strategic decision-making, and improve overall business outcomes. Additionally, this framework serves as a valuable resource for educators and trainers in entrepreneurship programs,

enabling them to impart practical, real-world skills to aspiring entrepreneurs and students. Furthermore, after this study, professionals in business development, marketing, and entrepreneurship can benefit from insights into effective persuasion strategies and communication techniques. By incorporating identified strategies into their own BSPs, professionals can enhance their ability to communicate persuasively and effectively to stakeholders.

The pedagogical implications of this study are relevant to entrepreneurship education and curriculum development in general. The EBF developed from this research provides educators with a structured approach to teaching business planning concepts. By incorporating the identified components into their curricula, educators can offer students a comprehensive understanding of the components involved in developing effective business or start-up plans. Moreover, the EBF serves as a practical tool for experiential learning, allowing students to apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios. Through hands-on exercises and case studies based on the framework, educators can cultivate critical thinking skills and entrepreneurial mindset among their students, preparing them for success in the dynamic business landscape.

In this context, the first primary concern arises from the observation that the content of the SBSP lacks depth compared to the identified EBF. This reveals the low levels of disciplinary knowledge that the EFL students possess. Therefore, it is necessary to help them enrich the contents of their plans by the elaboration of lessons in order for them to thoroughly understand business concepts. For example, almost all the student interviewees confirmed that they had no distinction between Objectives and Goals which should be included in the Executive Summary or The Business section (TBM1); meanwhile, three out of five teachers also admitted that they did not notice the distinction and barely required their students to write about that. This foundation issue of a business which received little attention from both teachers and students reveals that certain elements of a BSP have been neglected during teaching and learning. Therefore, the breakdown of each section offered by the EBF can be a useful material to provide them with more insights into a BSP structure. Also, incorporating move-step structures and persuasion strategies into classroom activities and assignments can help students develop their communication and persuasion skills in a hands-on manner, preparing them for future entrepreneurial endeavors. Besides, analyzing real-world business plans can serve as valuable case studies for students, allowing them to learn from both successful and unsuccessful persuasion strategies. In addition, in order to deal with time constraints and a huge amount of knowledge to be delivered in the course, extra workshops specifically designed for financial data

performance should be offered so that students have more opportunities to explore and practice this challenging business area because they are originally English majors whose business knowledge is more likely to be superficial.

Secondly, flaws and writing mistakes which have been identified in the current study can be used as strong examples to inform the students of their writing levels that need to be improved. Hence, supporting writing courses may be a solution to help them improve their writing skills because in order to complete a qualified SBSP, students need to pass a certain level of good quality writing. In addition, the improvement of students' writing skills must be accompanied by an improvement of writing styles. That is, students need to be reinforced with writing in formal styles, providing evidence and giving citation of what they quote. The fact that students are not aware of grouping photos, pictures and graphs as figures, or have no idea of where to put the caption of a figure/table, means that they really need to be provided with knowledge of writing scientifically, especially the knowledge of citation and references to make their writing products more academic and professional, and consequently acceptable and convincing.

Also, in order to be able to propose a convincing BSP, students should be provided with knowledge of persuasion strategies which have been concluded from the study. The results regarding persuasion strategies in this research can help students obtain a higher level of writing convincing business arguments, especially in a typical and specific genre as the BSP. That is, besides including logical evidence to support their claims, they should involve other features of *ethos* and *pathos* appeals to strengthen the persuasion via the influence of credibility and emotions. For example, the Management section should clarify qualities, educational background and working experience (AU) as well as the outstanding features of the managers/Board of Directors, for the readers to make sure that the business is going to be run by qualified people. Besides, the writers should emphasize the scarcity of their product/service in the market (SC) to attract customers. They also can enhance persuasion by highlighting the values and impacts of their product/service (IV) or increasing the involvement of their customers in a social community so that they can obtain social evidence regarding their product/service. By combining three Aristotelian appeals, their BSPs are more likely to achieve a higher level of persuasion and get acknowledged by their target audience.

Furthermore, the values of the course and the necessity of writing a BSP as a term-end assignment were confirmed by both students and teachers interviewed. However, besides the BSP, they also proposed a combination of theoretical and

professional activities. To be specific, they both recommended having practice sessions in the course when students have an opportunity to start a real business regardless of its scale (**Itv 5**, **6**, **7**, **Rec 1**, **3**, **4**). By doing so, they will learn how to transfer their business knowledge into hands-on practice and thoroughly understand business concepts via practical activities. This expectation is understandable because business has practical impacts on daily life, but the training is really challenging. While understanding business knowledge requires substantial effort and is inherently complex, studying theory without practical application poses significant obstacles for students, leading to a superficial understanding of the subject. Therefore, it is recommended that a certain amount of practical activities should be included in this course.

In addition, in terms of the course development, the results regarding both the structure of a BSP and persuasion strategies can function as a reliable source for EFL business instructors to refer to while teaching a Start-up course and for the course developer to revise the guidelines to be more practical and professional according to the expectation of the concerned discourse community on this specific genre. Besides, proposed course guidelines with specific examples of each section are expected to assist students' knowledge comprehension and visualization (**Rec 3**). Furthermore, the rubric developed in this study to evaluate the quality of SBSPs can be used for further assessment of the course provided that it is screened and validated by all the teachers who have experience in teaching this course. It is expected to help maintain consistency among assessors of the future SBSPs.

Last but not least, a Discussion section should be included at the end of the SBSP. This section, which may include justification of their proposed business strategies in previous sections and/or a proposed set of criteria to evaluate SBSPs as a success or failure is used to verify students' disciplinary knowledge, to confirm that they indeed understand the reasons of their proposed strategies and action plans without imagining an unrelated content or copying a business idea from somewhere unnoticed. A separate Discussion section is expected to require students' critical thinking and deeper elaboration of their idea instead of a general reference and repetition of knowledge only. Besides, a Discussion section can include a sub-component proposing a set of criteria on which a SBSP is based to be evaluated as a success or failure. This set of criteria is expected to help improve the quality of other future SBSPs.

5.3 Limitations and recommendations

Unsurprisingly, the current study has experienced a number of limitations. First of all, the study was conducted within a specific context with a limited number of students' BSPs, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. A study that can collect data from various universities representing Vietnamese contexts is expected to provide more robust and comprehensive results and enhance applicability of the findings to different contexts. Secondly, the identification and analysis of moves, steps, and persuasive strategies involved a degree of subjective interpretation which might introduce bias and affect the consistency of the results. Moreover, the study primarily focused on the written aspects of business/start-up plans, potentially overlooking the influence of oral presentation skills and multimedia elements, which are also crucial in real-world business settings. Last but not least, the study did not extensively compare SBSPs across different academic disciplines, which could potentially provide additional insights into the unique or shared characteristics of business/start-up plans written by business majors and non-business majors.

In order to address the limitations, future research is expected to include a larger and more diverse sample size, encompassing various educational institutions and cultural backgrounds to enhance the generalizability and validity of the findings. Besides, future studies should consider the impact of oral presentation skills and the use of multimedia tools on the effectiveness of business/start-up plans. This holistic approach would better reflect real-world practices. In addition, cross-disciplinary research is encouraged to compare SBSPs across different academic disciplines, especially between business majors and non-business majors, which would help identify unique requirements and strategies relevant to various fields, offering a more comprehensive understanding of business/start-up plan composition. Furthermore, based on the findings, educational institutions should develop and implement enhanced instructional methods that address common writing problems and improve students' persuasive strategies. Workshops, targeted feedback, and practical exercises could be effective in this regard. Last but not least, the investigation of the role of technology in supporting the development and composition of SBSPs could provide valuable insights. Future research could explore how digital tools and platforms influence the structure and persuasiveness of business/start-up plans, which seems to be another trend in ESP writing.

5.4 Summary

Chapter 5 concludes the thesis by summarizing the study, discussing its implications, and addressing its limitations and recommendations. The study investigated the components and rhetorical structures of business/start-up plans (BSPs) and students' business/start-up plans (SBSPs), analyzed the reality of SBSPs, and explored the persuasion strategies used within these plans. The implications of the study are significant for understanding the composition of BSPs, highlighting the essential elements and structures that contribute to typical business planning. Despite its contributions, the study has limitations, such as the sample size and the focus on a single educational context. Recommendations for future research include expanding the sample, exploring different educational settings, further investigating this emerging genre in other disciplines and considering the impact of oral presentation skills and the use of multimedia tools on the effectiveness of business/start-up plans. Overall, the study provides valuable insights for educators, students, and practitioners in the field of business communication and education.

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APPENDICES

มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีสุรนารี

APPENDIX A

List of codes

TC	Table of Contents
ES	Executive Summary
CO	Company Overview
PS	Product or Service Plan
MIA	Market and Industry Analysis
MKP	Marketing Plan
MNP	Management Plan
OP	Operations Plan
MnO	Management and Operations Plan
FP	Financial Plan
AP	Appendices

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Appendix B

Table A.0.1 Twenty-one structural elements of a BSP drawn from the guidelines

No.	Elements of a BSP	Explanation	Communicative purposes
1	Title/Cover Page	is the first page of the business plan, typically including the title of the document, company logo, and other relevant information such as the date and contact details.	to provide clear identification, attribute authorship, convey professionalism, and set the tone for the document's content, while potentially promoting interest in the business venture.
2	Table of Contents	provides an organized list of the sections and subsections within the business plan, along with their corresponding page numbers.	to provide a structured overview of the document's contents, facilitating navigation, guiding readers to specific sections of interest, and enhancing accessibility and comprehension of the business plan's organization and flow
3	Cover Letter	is a personalized introduction to the business plan, addressed to potential investors, lenders, or other stakeholders.	to introduce the business plan, establish a personal connection with the recipient, and provide a brief overview of the document's purpose and key highlights
4	Executive Summary	offers a condensed overview of the entire business plan, highlighting key points and insights to grab the attention of readers and provide a quick understanding of the business venture.	to concisely summarize the key components of the business plan to provide a comprehensive overview for stakeholders.
5	Company Overview	outlines essential details about the business, including its history, mission, vision, legal structure, location, and key personnel.	to provide detailed information about the business, offering readers a clear understanding of the company's background and context within the industry.
6	Product or Service Plan	describes the specific products or services offered by the business, including features, benefits, pricing,	to provide a comprehensive overview of its product or service portfolio

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No.	Elements of a BSP	Explanation	Communicative purposes
		and any unique selling propositions.	
7	Market and Industry Analysis	delves deeper into the market dynamics, customer demographics, market size, trends, growth prospects, competitive landscape, and potential opportunities and threats.	to evaluate the market current status, informing strategic decisions and market positioning within the broader industry context
8	The Economics of the Business	analyzes the economic aspects of the business, including cost structures, revenue streams, profit margins, and overall financial viability.	to analyze the financial aspects of the business model to assess the financial viability and sustainability of the venture.
9	Competition	identifies and assesses competitors operating in the same market or industry, analyzing their strengths, weaknesses, and strategies.	to identify and analyze key competitors, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and develop strategies to differentiate the company's offerings and gain a competitive advantage in the market
10	Marketing Plan	outlines the strategies and tactics the business will use to attract and retain customers, including market segmentation, targeting, positioning, and promotional activities.	to outline the company's marketing strategies and tactics, guiding the implementation of effective marketing campaigns
11	Technology Plan	details the technology infrastructure and resources required to support the business operations, including software, hardware, and IT systems.	to describe the company's technology infrastructure, development roadmap, innovation strategy, and intellectual property protection measures, highlighting how technology will support business objectives and drive innovation.
12	Development Plan	outlines the roadmap for developing and launching new	to outline the company's product development roadmap,

No.	Elements of a BSP	Explanation	Communicative purposes
		products or services, including research, design, prototyping, testing, and implementation.	milestones, resource requirements, and timelines, guiding the execution of product development initiatives and ensuring alignment with business goals
13	Management Plan	describes the organizational structure of the business, including key personnel, roles, responsibilities, and governance.	to demonstrate the team's ability to execute the business plan successfully.
14	Operations Plan	details the day-to-day operations of the business, including production processes, supply chain management, facilities, and logistics.	to detail the day-to-day operations of the business, ensuring efficient and effective business operations
15	Financial Plan	provides a comprehensive overview of the financial aspects of the business, including revenue projections, expense forecasts, cash flow statements, and break-even analysis.	to present comprehensive financial projections, demonstrating the financial feasibility and growth potential of the business
16	Financing Requirements	outlines the funding needs of the business, including startup costs, working capital requirements, and potential sources of financing.	to outline the company's funding needs, sources of capital, financing strategy, and proposed terms for potential investors or lenders, facilitating discussions about securing financing for the business
17	Risks	identifies and assesses potential risks and challenges that could impact the success of the business, along with strategies for mitigating or managing these risks.	to identify potential risks and uncertainties that could impact the success of the business, assess their likelihood and potential impact, and develop risk mitigation strategies to minimize their effects

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No.	Elements of a BSP	Explanation	Communicative purposes
18	Summary	provides a brief recap of the key points and highlights from the entire business plan, serving as a final reminder of the business proposition and its potential.	to recap the key points and highlights of the business plan, providing a concise overview for readers who may not have time to review the entire document in detail
19	Overall Schedule	outlines the timeline and milestones for the implementation of the business plan, including key activities, deadlines, and dependencies.	to outline the timeline, milestones, and key activities for implementing the business plan, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives and facilitating project management and monitoring
20	Sustainability and Impact	addresses the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations of the business, including sustainability initiatives, corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts, and impact assessments.	to assess the environmental, social, and economic impact of the business operations, outline sustainability initiatives, and demonstrate the company's commitment to responsible business practices
21	Appendices	include supplementary materials that provide additional information or support for the main sections of the business plan, such as market research data, financial statements, resumes of key personnel, and legal documents.	to provide supplemental information, data, supporting documents, or detailed analyses referenced in the main body of the business plan, enhancing the comprehensiveness and credibility of the document

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APPENDIX C

Table A.0.2 Sub-components of the Executive Summary in detail

Code	Sub-components of ES	Communicative purposes
ES1	Summary financial projections/Financial plan	to provide a financial plan/condensed overview of the expected financial performance of the business over a specific period, typically including projections for revenue, expenses, and profitability in order to offer insights into the company's growth potential and financial performance.
ES2	Target market/customer	to define the specific demographic or customer segment that the business aims to serve, along with relevant market insights, in order to guide marketing and sales strategies
ES3	The product/service	to succinctly describe the company's offerings, highlighting their key features, benefits, and uniqueness
ES4	Near- and long-term objectives/goals	to outline the short-term and long-term goals or objectives that the business aims to achieve in order to guide decision-making and resource allocation
ES5	Competitive Advantage	to emphasize the unique aspects or strengths that differentiate the business from competitors in the market, to articulate the company's competitive edge, demonstrating how it stands out from competitors and attracts customers.
ES6	Funding/Capital requirements	to outline the financial needs or requirements of the business, including startup costs, ongoing expenses, and potential sources of funding in order to provide clarity to potential investors/lenders
ES7	The management team	to introduce the key members of the management team, highlighting their qualifications, experience, and roles in driving the company's success
ES8	Mission	to articulate the fundamental purpose or mission of the business
ES9	Business description	to provide an overview of the business, including its nature, industry, and any unique features, setting the stage for the rest of the business plan.
ES10	Strategic plan (to achieve goals)	to outline the strategies and actions the business intends to take to accomplish its goals, providing a roadmap for success.
ES11	Profits and cash forecast	to highlight the anticipated profitability and liquidity of the business over a specified period, helping stakeholders assess the financial viability and sustainability of the venture.
ES12	Opportunity (need, solution to problem, market size, trends)	to articulate the market situation, including the need or problem being addressed, the solution provided by the company, market size, and trends, demonstrating the demand for the company's offerings
ES13	Expected return on investment with timeframes	to present the expected return on investment (ROI) for investors, along with the projected timeframes for achieving profitability or milestones, providing clarity on the potential rewards for investing in the company
ES14	Concept description	entails a detailed description of the business concept or idea, including its features, benefits, and potential value proposition to customers or clients.
ES15	Investment offering	to outline the investment opportunity presented by the company, including the amount of capital sought, investment terms, potential returns, and use of funds, attracting potential investors and aligning their expectations with the company's financing needs and growth plans

Code	Sub-components of ES	Communicative purposes
ES16	Sources and uses of funds	to outline the sources of funding for the company's operations, as well as the intended uses of these funds, providing transparency and accountability to investors or lenders
ES17	Value proposition	to articulate the value proposition of the company's offerings, highlighting the benefits and advantages they provide to target customers, distinguishing the company from competitors
ES18	Business background (name, location, legal status, business model, contact)	to provide essential background information about the company, including its name, location, legal structure, business model, and contact details, facilitating communication and understanding.
ES19	Problem to be solved	to identify and describe the problem or need that the company's products or services address, highlighting the pain points or challenges faced by customers and the solution provided by the company
ES20	Highlights potential competitors	to identify and analyze potential competitors operating in the same market or industry for the understanding of the competitive landscape and the formulation of competitive strategies to differentiate the business from rivals.
ES21	The marketing plan	to outline the strategies and tactics, including target market analysis, marketing channels, promotional activities, and budget allocation, driving customer acquisition and retention
ES22	Vision	articulates the long-term vision or aspirational goals of the business, providing a sense of direction and purpose for the organization.
ES23	Key elements of your operations	to highlight the essential components of the company's operations, including production processes, supply chain management, facilities, and equipment, ensuring efficient and effective business operations
ES24	Keys to success	to identify and prioritize the critical success factors for the company's business model, operations, and market strategy, guiding decision-making and resource allocation
ES25	Purpose of the plan	to clarify the purpose and objectives of the business plan, including its intended audience and how it will be used, providing context and direction for readers
ES26	Core values	to succinctly communicate the fundamental values and principles that guide the company's actions and decision-making processes, shaping its culture and identity
ES27	Key risk factors	to identify and assess the key risks and uncertainties that could impact the company's operations, financial performance, or ability to achieve its objectives, informing risk management strategies and contingency planning
ES28	Marketing strategy	to outline the company's marketing strategy, including target market segmentation, positioning, branding, pricing, distribution channels, and promotional tactics, guiding the implementation of effective marketing campaigns.
ES29	Resources needed	to specify the resources required to execute the company's business plan successfully, including financial, human, physical, and technological resources, facilitating resource allocation and planning
ES30	Industry overview	to provide a brief overview of the industry in which the company operates, including market size, growth trends, key players, regulatory environment, and

Code	Sub-components of ES	Communicative purposes
		competitive landscape, providing context for the company's positioning and strategy.
ES31	Overview of technology	to summarize the role of technology in the company's operations, product development, and competitive strategy, highlighting technological capabilities and innovations driving business growth and differentiation
ES32	Revenue model	to describe the company's revenue model, including sources of revenue, pricing strategy, revenue streams, and monetization tactics, outlining how the company generates income and achieves profitability
ES33	Position	to clarify the company's market positioning and competitive advantage, including its unique value proposition, target market segments, and differentiation strategies, informing strategic decision-making and market positioning
ES34	Economics of the opportunity	to analyze the economic aspects of the business opportunity, including market demand, pricing dynamics, cost structure, and profit potential, assessing the financial attractiveness and viability of the venture
ES35	Key financial indicators (KFIs)	to present the key financial metrics or indicators that the business will use to monitor performance and track progress towards its goals, e.g., revenue growth, profitability, and return on investment (ROI), providing stakeholders with insights into the company's financial status and performance trends.

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APPENDIX D

Table A.0.3 Sub-components of the Company Overview in detail

Code	Sub-components of CO	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
CO1	Mission statement	to outline the purpose and vision of the company, including its core values and guiding principles.	26	52
CO1.1	*Purpose of the venture*	*to provide details about the opportunities or needs that the company aims to address through its products or services.*	*18*	*36*
CO1.2	*Vision*	*Similar to ES23*	*16*	*32*
CO1.3	*The values of the venture*	*Similar to ES27*	*8*	*16*
CO2	Legal structure	to inform form of business ownership (e.g., sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)	19	38
CO3	Near- and long-term objectives/goals	Similar to ES2	18	36
CO4	Current position/status	to present an overview of the company's current position, including its stage of development, market presence, and key milestones achieved.	17	34
CO5	History of the business/industry	to summarize background information about the company, including its history, founding date, key milestones, and relevant industry background.	15	30
CO6	Location and facilities	to brief about the company's physical location(s) and facilities, including office space, manufacturing facilities, or distribution centers.	15	30
CO7	Products and services	Similar to ES1	15	30
CO8	The principal owners/ownership structure	to outline information about the principal owners or stakeholders of the company and the ownership structure, including any significant shareholders or investors.	15	30
CO9	Nature of the business	to describe the nature of the company's business activities regarding what it is, its functions, what it does and to whom	14	28
CO10	The industry	Similar to ES32	11	22
CO11	Personal history and business background of the managers	Similar to ES7	10	20
CO12	Competitive Advantage	Similar to ES3	9	18
CO13	Business model	to present an overview of the company's business model (a manufacturer, retailer, wholesaler, service provider, or some combination)	9	18
CO14	Business name	to provide the name of the company or venture	8	16
CO15	Target customer profile	Similar to ES20	7	14

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Code	Sub-components of CO	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
CO16	Type of business	to classify the type of business regarding industry sector (retail industry, healthcare sector, technology sector, or hospitality industry, etc.)	7	14
CO17	Operation strategy	to outline the company's operational strategy, including production processes, supply chain management, and quality control measures	6	12
CO18	Personnel needed	to provide details about the staffing requirements and key personnel needed to support the company's operations and growth objectives	6	12
CO19	Reason for profitability/key success factors	to demonstrate factors contributing to the company's profitability and success, such as market demand, competitive advantages, or operational efficiencies	6	12
CO20	Start-up Plan/Summary	to present an overview of the company's start-up plan, including initial investment requirements, timeline, and key milestones	5	10
CO21	Strengths and Weaknesses	to provide an analysis of the company's strengths and weaknesses, including internal capabilities and areas for improvement	5	10
CO22	Uniqueness of the product/service	to describe unique features or attributes of the company's products or services that differentiate them from competitors	5	10
CO23	Future (growth) plans	to outline plans and strategies for future growth and expansion	4	8
CO24	Target timeline to achieve objectives	to demonstrate a timeline outlining the company's objectives and milestones	4	8
CO25	Value proposition	Similar to ES17	4	8
CO26	Intellectual Property Description	to brief about any intellectual property assets owned or licensed by the company, such as patents, trademarks, or copyrights	3	6
CO27	Market entry strategy	to introduce the strategy for entering new markets including market research, market segmentation, and distribution channels	3	6
CO28	Market growth strategy	To describe strategies for driving market growth and increasing market share, including product innovation, marketing campaigns, and strategic partnerships	3	6
CO29	Problem being solved	Similar to ES19	2	4
CO30	Technology	Similar to ES33	3	6
CO31	(Records and) insurance coverage	to specify information about business records and insurance coverage held by the company, including financial records, legal documents, and insurance policies	2	4
CO32	Business advisors	To present details about any business advisors, consultants, or mentors who provide guidance and support to the company's management team	2	4

Code	Sub-components of CO	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
CO34	Business strategy	to provide an overview of the company's overall business strategy, including its approach to achieving its objectives and goals	2	4
CO35	Financial status	to summarize the company's financial status, including revenue, expenses, profits, and financial projections	2	4
CO36	Target customer strategy	to introduce strategies for targeting and acquiring customers, including marketing tactics, sales channels, and customer relationship management	2	4
CO37	Threats	to identify and assess potential threats or challenges that could impact the company's success, such as competitive pressures, regulatory changes, or economic downturns	2	4
CO38	Core competencies and challenges	to describe the company's core competencies and capabilities, as well as any challenges or obstacles it faces	2	4
CO39	Distribution Channel	to describe the distribution channels used to deliver the company's products or services to customers, including direct sales, retail distribution, or online platforms	1	2
CO41	Key partnership (if any)	to present details about any strategic partnerships or alliances that the company has formed with other businesses or organizations	1	2
CO42	Market share strategy	to outline strategies for capturing, protecting market share and increasing market penetration, including pricing strategies, product differentiation, and competitive positioning	1	2
CO43	Resources (physical, financial, human)	Similar to ES31	1	2
CO44	Sales strategy	to outline the company's approach to selling its products or services and generating revenue, including sales channels, distribution methods, pricing strategies, sales tactics, customer acquisition strategies, and sales team structure	1	2

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APPENDIX E

Table A.0.4 Sub-components of the Product/Service Plan in detail

Code	Sub-components of PS	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
PS1	Description/features of products/services	To provide a detailed description of the products or services offered by the company,	26	52
PS2	Benefits/value proposition	Similar to ES17	14	28
PS3	Competitive Comparison	to compare the company's products or services with those of competitors, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and points of differentiation	11	22
PS4	A prototype of product/service (early sample/model)	to provide a demonstration of a prototype or early sample/model of the product or service to illustrate its functionality and potential.	9	18
PS5	Unique selling points	Similar to CO22	9	18
PS6	Technology	Similar to ES33	9	18
PS7	Proprietary rights	Similar to CO26	9	18
PS8	Need for the product/service (problem to be addressed)	Similar to ES19	8	16
PS9	Future products	to discuss future product developments or expansions planned by the company, including potential new offerings or product enhancements	8	16
PS10	Competitive advantage	Similar to ES2	7	14
PS11	Sourcing/Sources of supply	to describe the sourcing or supply chain for materials, components, or resources required to produce or deliver the products or services	6	12
PS12	Usage	to explain how customers use or interact with the products or services, including typical use cases or applications	5	10
PS13	Implementation plan	to outline the plan for implementing the products or services, including production processes, distribution channels, and go-to-market strategy	5	10
PS14	Pricing and Competitive Positioning Strategy	to discuss the pricing strategy for the products or services and how it positions the company competitively in the market	5	10
PS15	Current state of development of the product/service	to provide an assessment of the current stage of development or readiness of the products or services for market launch	5	10
PS16	Sales literature	to present a description or samples of sales literature, marketing materials, or product documentation used to promote the products or services to customer	4	8
PS17	Description of production and packaging process	to outline an overview of the production process and packaging methods used for the products or services.	4	8

Code	Sub-components of PS	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
PS18	General plan for growth	to present an outline of the company's general plan for growth and expansion related to the products or services.	4	8
PS19	Guarantees and warranties	to provide information about any guarantees or warranties offered with the products or services to assure customers of quality or satisfaction	3	6
PS20	Product or Service Strategy	to demonstrate overall strategy for developing, marketing, and selling the products or services to achieve business objectives	3	6
PS21	The company and the concept	to specify the connection between the company's overall mission, vision, and values, and how they align with the products or services offered	3	6
PS22	Readiness for market	to present an assessment of the readiness of the products or services for market launch, including any preparations or improvements needed	2	4
PS23	Anticipated demand	to estimate the anticipated demand for the products or services in the target market, based on market research or customer feedback	2	4
PS24	Industry	Similar to ES32	2	4
PS25	Applications	to present the description of the various applications or uses of the products or services across different industries or customer segments	2	4
PS26	Product life cycle	to introduce the analysis of the product life cycle stage, including introduction, growth, maturity, and decline, and strategies for managing each stage effectively	2	4
PS27	Target customer profile	Similar to ES20	2	4
PS28	Limits and liabilities	to identify and assess any limits or liabilities associated with the products or services, such as regulatory constraints or legal risks	1	2
PS29	A sales breakdown by product, region, and industry type	to analyze of sales performance and distribution of products or services by product type, geographic region, and industry sector	1	2
PS30	Duration and impact of product/service on competitive ad.	to evaluate the expected duration and impact of the products or services on the company's competitive advantage in the market	1	2
PS31	Market entry strategy	Similar to CO27	1	2

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APPENDIX F

Table A.0.5 Sub-components of the Market and Industry Analysis in detail

Code	Sub-components of MIA	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
MIA1	Industry description and market environment	to provide an overview of the industry landscape, including key trends, size, growth rate, dynamics, and regulations, to contextualize the business's place within the industry	34	68
MIA2	Competition analysis	to assess the competitive landscape within the industry, including the strengths, weaknesses, strategies, and market positions of competitors, guiding strategic decisions and differentiation efforts.	32	64
MIA3	Potential and target customers' characteristics	to identify and describe the characteristics, behaviors, preferences, and needs of potential and target customers, guiding marketing and product development strategies	26	52
MIA4	Target market	Similar to ES6	23	46
MIA5	Market segmentation	to analyze and delineate the different segments within the market based on demographic, geographic, psychographic, or behavioral factors, enabling tailored marketing approaches	21	42
MIA6	Problems/needs	to identify and understand the problems, challenges, or unmet needs within the target market, guiding product development and value proposition creation	9	18
MIA7	Strengths and weaknesses	to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the business, highlighting areas of competitive advantage and areas for improvement	9	18
MIA8	Opportunity	to identify and evaluate opportunities for growth, innovation, and market expansion within the industry, informing strategic planning and investment decisions	8	16
MIA9	Target market segment strategy	to develop and articulate strategies for effectively reaching and serving the identified target market segments, guiding marketing, sales, and product development efforts	7	14
MIA10	Customer decision criteria	to clarify the factors and criteria that influence customers' purchasing decisions within the target market, guiding product positioning, pricing, and marketing messaging	5	10
MIA11	Estimated market shares and sales	to forecast and estimate the company's potential market share and sales volume within the target market, providing insights into revenue projections and market penetration strategies	5	10
MIA12	Value proposition	Similar to ES17	5	10
MIA13	Industry and market forecasts	to provide projections and forecasts of industry trends, market growth, and demand patterns, informing strategic planning and resource allocation	7	14

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Code	Sub-components of MIA	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
MIA14	Market share	to assess the company's current and projected market share relative to competitors, gauging its competitive position and market penetration potential	4	8
MIA15	The total market potential	to estimate the maximum achievable sales level for a product or service within the target market, providing context for revenue projections and growth opportunities	4	8
MIA16	Differentiators	to identify and highlight the unique features, capabilities, or offerings that distinguish the business from competitors, shaping its positioning and marketing messaging	3	6
MIA18	The current level of demand	to assess the current demand for the company's products or services within the market, informing production, inventory, and sales planning	3	6
MIA19	Barriers for market entry	to identify and analyze barriers, obstacles, or challenges to entering the market successfully, guiding market entry strategies and risk management efforts	2	4
MIA20	Risk analysis	to evaluate and mitigate potential risks and uncertainties associated with market dynamics, competitive pressures, regulatory changes, and other external factors, informing risk management strategies and contingency plans	2	4

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APPENDIX G

Table A.0.6 Sub-components of the Marketing Plan in detail

Code	Sub-components of MKP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
MKP1	Pricing strategy	to outline the approach to setting prices for products or services, considering factors such as costs, competition, and perceived value, to achieve revenue and profitability goals	37	74
MKP2	Promotion strategy	to detail the tactics and channels used to advertise and promote the brand, products, or services to the target market, aiming to increase awareness, generate leads, and drive conversions	37	74
MKP3	Distribution strategy	to define the methods and channels through which products or services will be delivered to customers, ensuring efficient and effective distribution to reach the target market	30	60
MKP4	Positioning strategy	to define how the brand or products are positioned in the minds of target customers relative to competitors, emphasizing unique value propositions and differentiation factors	30	60
MKP5	(Target) market definition	to clearly define and describe the characteristics, needs, and preferences of the target market segments, guiding marketing efforts and resource allocation	22	44
MKP6	Product/service portfolio and strategy	to describe and outline the range of products or services offered by the business, as well as the strategies for product development, differentiation, and lifecycle management	21	42
MKP7	Overall marketing strategy	to provide an integrated overview of the marketing approach, including key objectives, strategies, tactics, and resource allocation, guiding coordinated efforts across marketing functions	19	38
MKP8	Sales plan	to outline the specific actions, tactics, and timelines for executing the sales strategy, breaking down the sales strategy into actionable steps, such as setting sales targets, defining sales territories, identifying sales tactics (like cold calling, email campaigns, or networking), and allocating resources (such as sales personnel and budgets)	17	34
MKP9	Competition analysis	Similar to MIA2	12	24
MKP10	Marketing budget	to allocate resources and funds to various marketing initiatives and activities, ensuring effective use of budget to achieve marketing objectives	10	20
MKP11	SWOT analysis	to assess the internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats facing the business, guiding marketing strategy development and risk management	8	16
MKP12	Service and warranty policies	to outline the policies and commitments related to service quality, customer support, and warranty provisions, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty	7	14
MKP13	Market/customer research	to gather and analyze data on market trends, customer preferences, and competitive dynamics, informing marketing strategy development and decision-making	6	12

Code	Sub-components of MKP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
MKP14	Milestones	to set specific, measurable milestones and objectives for marketing initiatives, providing benchmarks for progress tracking and performance evaluation	6	12
MKP15	Proposed (geographical) location	to specify the physical locations or regions targeted for marketing activities, considering factors such as market demand, competition, and logistical considerations	6	12
MKP16	Trends	to identify and analyze relevant market trends, consumer behaviors, and industry developments, informing strategic planning and marketing adaptation efforts	5	10
MKP17	Competitive advantage	Similar to ES3	4	8
MKP18	Market and sales potentials	to estimate the size and growth potential of the target market, as well as the business's sales potential within that market, guiding revenue forecasting and growth strategies	3	6
MKP19	MKT objectives	to define clear, measurable marketing objectives aligned with overall business goals, providing direction and focus for marketing efforts	3	6
MKP20	Marketing supporters	to identify stakeholders, partners, or resources that support marketing initiatives, facilitating collaboration and resource mobilization	1	2
MKP21	Marketing challenges	to anticipate and address potential challenges or obstacles to marketing success, developing contingency plans and risk mitigation strategies	1	2
MKP22	Revenue model	to outline the business's revenue generation strategy, including pricing structures, revenue streams, and monetization tactics, supporting financial planning and forecasting.	1	2
MKP23	Strategic alliances	to identify potential partners or alliances that can enhance marketing effectiveness, broaden market reach, or create competitive advantages, fostering collaboration and synergies	1	2

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APPENDIX H

Table A.0.7 Sub-components of the Management Plan in detail

Code	Sub-components of MNP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
MNP1	Personal history of the principals	to provide background information on the key individuals involved in the management of the company, including their qualifications, experiences, and expertise	38	76
MNP2	Positions and duties/responsibilities	to outline the roles, responsibilities, and duties of each member of the management team, clarifying their contributions to the overall operation of the business	36	72
MNP3	Organizational structure/chart	to visually represent the hierarchy and relationships within the management team and the broader organization, illustrating reporting lines and decision-making processes	29	58
MNP4	Board of Directors/Advisors	to introduce the members of the board of directors or advisory board, highlighting their expertise, contributions, and governance roles within the company	26	52
MNP5	Ownership and Legal Structure	to detail the ownership structure of the company, including the legal entity type, ownership percentages, and any relevant legal agreements or documents	18	36
MNP6	Salaries, compensation and benefits	to outline the compensation packages, including salaries, bonuses, and benefits, offered to members of the management team, demonstrating the company's commitment to fair and competitive compensation practices	15	30
MNP7	Gaps	to identify any gaps or deficiencies in the management team's skills, expertise, or experience, and outline strategies to address these gaps through recruitment, training, or other means	10	20
MNP8	Personnel recruitment, training and development plan	to articulate the company's strategies and plans for recruiting, training, and developing talent within the management team, ensuring the team's continued growth and effectiveness	10	20
MNP9	Subcontractor/ business partners/Principal shareholders	to introduce key subcontractors, business partners, or principal shareholders involved in the management or operation of the company, highlighting their contributions and relationships with the business	6	12
MNP10	Diversity of team members	to showcase the diversity of the management team in terms of background, skills, perspectives, and experiences, emphasizing the value of diversity in driving innovation and decision-making	2	4

Code	Sub-components of MNP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
MNP11	Employment and other agreements and stock options and bonus plans	to document any employment agreements, stock options, bonus plans, or other compensation arrangements in place for members of the management team, ensuring transparency and clarity regarding their remuneration	2	4
MNP12	Future additions to management team	to outline plans for future additions to the management team, including the criteria for recruitment, anticipated roles, and timelines for expansion, demonstrating the company's strategic vision and growth plans	2	4
MNP13	Identity of the owner	to disclose the identity of the owner or owners of the company, providing transparency and accountability regarding ownership interests and control	2	4
MNP14	Other investors	to identify any other investors or stakeholders with significant influence or ownership interests in the company, informing stakeholders about the broader ownership structure and relationships	2	4
MNP15	Other shareholders, rights, and restrictions	to detail the rights, privileges, and restrictions associated with ownership stakes held by other shareholders, ensuring clarity and understanding of shareholder agreements and governance arrangements	2	4
MNP16	Potential management risks/issues and solutions	to identify potential risks, challenges, or issues related to management and propose proactive solutions or mitigation strategies to address them effectively	2	4
MNP17	Back-up management plan	to develop contingency plans and protocols for addressing situations where key members of the management team are unavailable or incapacitated, ensuring business continuity and resilience	1	2
MNP18	Corporate Social Responsibility	to outline the company's commitments and initiatives related to corporate social responsibility, including environmental sustainability, social impact, and ethical business practices, reflecting the company's values and commitment to stakeholders	1	2
MNP19	Location	to specify the location of the company's headquarters, offices, or other facilities, providing context for the operational and strategic considerations associated with the company's physical presence	1	2

APPENDIX I

Table A.0.8 Sub-components of the Operations Plan in detail

Code	Sub-components of OP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
OP1	Production facilities and capacity	to communicate the existing facilities and their capacity to produce goods or deliver services, providing insight into the operational capabilities of the business	30	60
OP2	Production process	to detail the steps involved in the production process, outlining how products or services are created or delivered efficiently and effectively	30	60
OP3	Suppliers	to identify the suppliers and vendors from whom the business procures raw materials, equipment, or other resources, ensuring a reliable supply chain	23	46
OP4	Staffing requirements	to specify the types and number of employees needed to operate the business successfully, ensuring adequate staffing levels for smooth operations	16	32
OP5	Additional equipment/machinery needed	to outline any additional equipment or machinery required to enhance production capacity or improve efficiency	15	30
OP6	Factors affecting the business operation	to identify external factors such as market conditions, regulatory requirements, or technological changes that may impact business operations	10	20
OP7	Quality control	to describe the measures in place to ensure the quality and consistency of products or services, safeguarding customer satisfaction and brand reputation	10	20
OP8	Inventory	to detail the inventory management practices and systems employed to track and manage inventory levels effectively	8	16
OP9	Outsourced support services	to specify any outsourced services or functions that support business operations, such as accounting, IT, or maintenance services	8	16
OP10	Location	to communicate the location of the business premises and its strategic significance in supporting operations, including factors such as accessibility, proximity to suppliers and customers, and zoning regulations	6	12
OP11	Costs and expenditures	to provide an overview of the costs associated with operating the business, including fixed and variable costs, to support financial planning and budgeting	4	8
OP12	Credit policies	to outline the policies and procedures for extending credit to customers, managing accounts receivable, and ensuring timely payment	4	8
OP13	Factors affecting production process	to identify internal and external factors that may impact the production process, such as equipment breakdowns, supply chain disruptions, or changes in demand	4	8

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Code	Sub-components of OP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No =50	%
OP14	License, permits and recent by-laws compliance	to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements by obtaining the necessary licenses, permits, and adhering to relevant by-laws	4	8
OP15	Operations strategy	to define the overall strategy and approach for conducting business operations, aligning operational activities with broader business goals and objectives	4	8
OP16	Scope of operations	to clearly define the range of activities that the operations team is responsible for, encompassing several areas such as location, equipment, labor and process	4	8
OP17	Storage and shipment	to detail the storage facilities and logistics arrangements for storing inventory and shipping products to customers, ensuring timely delivery and efficient distribution	4	8
OP18	Customer satisfaction feedback	to establish mechanisms for gathering feedback from customers to monitor satisfaction levels and identify areas for improvement in operations	2	4
OP19	Introduction	to provide an introduction to the operations plan, setting the context and highlighting its importance in achieving business objectives	2	4
OP20	Memberships and affiliations	to identify any industry associations or affiliations that the business is a part of, showcasing credibility and network connections	2	4
OP21	Projected annual overhead requirements	to forecast the overhead expenses required to support ongoing operations, assisting in financial planning and budgeting	2	4
OP22	Projected annual production/operation inputs requirements	to estimate the inputs required for production or operations over a specified period, aiding in resource planning and procurement	2	4
OP23	Sales outlets	to specify the channels or outlets through which products or services are sold to customers, including brick-and-mortar stores, online platforms, or distribution partners	2	4
OP24	Warranties and refund	to outline the warranties and refund policies offered to customers, ensuring transparency and building trust in the brand	2	4
OP25	Make or buy consideration	to evaluate the decision to manufacture products in-house or outsource production to third-party suppliers, considering factors such as cost, quality, and capacity	1	2

APPENDIX J

Table A.0.9 Sub-components of the Financial Plan in detail

Code	Sub-components of FP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
FP1	Forecast income statement/profit and loss	to communicate projected revenues, expenses, and net income over a specific period, providing insights into the financial performance of the business	45	90
FP2	Forecast cash flow statement	to outline projected cash inflows and outflows, enabling stakeholders to understand the timing and adequacy of cash resources to meet financial obligations	40	80
FP3	Forecast balance sheet	to present projected assets, liabilities, and equity at a specific point in time, offering a snapshot of the financial position of the business	39	78
FP4	Breakeven analysis	to determine the level of sales needed to cover all costs and achieve a net profit of zero, aiding in decision-making regarding pricing, cost control, and profitability	25	50
FP5	Funding request	to specify the amount of funding required to support business operations or growth initiatives, along with the purpose and timing of the funding request	23	46
FP6	Funding sources	to identify potential sources of capital, such as equity financing (venture capital, angel investors, crowdfunding), debt financing (loans, bonds, credit lines), internal funds (retained earnings), or other financial instruments.	23	46
FP7	Sources and uses of funds	to identify the sources from which funds will be obtained and how they will be utilized, ensuring transparency and accountability in financial management	22	44
FP8	Important assumptions	to document the key assumptions underlying the financial projections, helping stakeholders understand the basis for the forecasts and their associated risks	11	22
FP9	Business ratios	to calculate and analyze financial ratios such as liquidity ratios, profitability ratios, and leverage ratios to assess the financial health and performance of the business	10	20
FP10	Potential return on investment	to estimate the expected return on investment for investors or stakeholders, providing insight into the attractiveness of the opportunity	6	12
FP11	Financial summary	to summarize the key findings and projections from the financial plan, highlighting the most critical financial metrics and insights	6	12
FP12	Long-term plan	to outline the long-term financial goals and strategies of the business, guiding decision-making and resource allocation for sustainable growth	5	10
FP13	Forecast expenses	to detail projected expenses across various categories, aiding in budgeting, cost control, and financial planning	5	10
FP14	Repayment terms	to define the terms and conditions for repaying any loans or financing obtained by the business, ensuring clarity and agreement between the borrower and lender	5	10

Code	Sub-components of FP	Communicative purposes	Frequency No=50	%
FP15	Forecast product demand	to estimate the demand for products or services over a specific period, informing production and inventory management decisions	3	6
FP16	Forecast revenue	to predict the revenue generated from sales of products or services, providing a basis for financial planning and performance evaluation	3	6
FP17	Key Financial Indicators	to identify and analyze key financial indicators such as profitability, liquidity, and solvency metrics to assess financial performance and health	3	6
FP18	Revenue model	to describe the methods and assumptions used to generate revenue, including pricing strategies, sales channels, and revenue recognition policies	3	6
FP19	Statement of operations	to present detailed information on revenue, expenses, and net income for a specific period, facilitating performance analysis and decision-making	3	6
FP20	Current financial status	to provide an overview of the current financial position of the business, including assets, liabilities, and equity, to inform stakeholders about the existing financial condition	1	2

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APPENDIX K

Table A.0.10 Elements of the Appendices in detail

Code	Elements of Appendices	Frequency No = 50	%
AP1	Agreements (leases, contracts, purchase orders, letters of intent, etc.)	25	50
AP2	Intellectual property (trademarks, licenses, patents, etc.)	23	46
AP3	Resumes of owners/key employees	21	42
AP4	Advertising/marketing materials	20	40
AP5	Letters of reference	17	34
AP6	Details of market studies	15	30
AP7	Loan repayment schedule	15	30
AP8	Photographs	12	24
AP9	Management chart	10	20
AP10	Public relations/publicity	10	20
AP11	List of consultants, including your attorney and accountant	8	16
AP12	Client listings	10	14
AP13	Personal or business credit history	6	12
AP14	The implementation schedule	6	12
AP15	Blueprints/plans	5	10
AP16	Details of market, finance, operations	5	10
AP17	Supplier price lists	4	8
AP18	List of assets that can be used as collateral	3	6
AP19	List of equipment	3	6
AP20	Any historical financial information that exists.	1	2
AP21	Competitive brochure	1	2
AP22	Competitive price list	1	2

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APPENDIX L

Table A.0.11 Student Business/Start-up Plan Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Needs Improvement (1-2)
Executive Summary	Concise and comprehensive overview of the business concept, market analysis, and financial summary. Demonstrates a clear understanding of key elements.	Summarizes key aspects of the business plan effectively. Identifies market opportunities and outlines financial projections.	Provides a basic overview of the business plan components but lacks depth or clarity.	Executive summary is vague or incomplete. Fails to highlight critical elements of the business plan.
Business Description	Provides a comprehensive overview of the business model (*including the purpose, target market, industry positioning*). Articulates a unique and innovative business concept with clear differentiation from competitors. Provides a detailed rationale for the concept's viability. Demonstrates a clear vision for the business venture.	Describes the business model effectively. Proposes a distinctive business idea with potential market appeal. Demonstrates understanding of market gaps or opportunities. Provides a solid overview but may lack depth in certain strategic aspects.	Description lacks strategic depth or could be more specific. Concept shows potential but lacks strong differentiation or detailed rationale	Description is superficial or lacks clarity regarding the business model. Business concept lacks uniqueness or clear market relevance, with limited evidence of market understanding.
Product/Service	Provides a comprehensive and detailed description of the product or service, emphasizing features, benefits, and unique selling points (USPs). Demonstrates thorough understanding of customer needs and value proposition.	Describes the product/service effectively, highlighting key attributes and customer benefits. Provides a solid overview of the offering but may lack depth in certain aspects.	Description lacks depth or could be more specific in conveying product/service details and customer value.	Description is insufficient or lacks clarity regarding the product/service offering, hindering understanding of its value proposition.
Market and Industry Analysis	Conducts thorough market research demonstrating a deep understanding of target audience, industry trends, and competitive landscape. Provides insightful conclusions based on data analysis.	Presents a comprehensive analysis of the market landscape, identifying key opportunities and challenges. Draws reasonable conclusions supported by evidence.	Market analysis is adequate but may lack depth or fail to draw robust conclusions from the research findings. Analysis is somewhat generic.	Market analysis is superficial or overlooks important market dynamics, incomplete/ with limited evidence of informed decision-making.
Marketing Plan	Develops a strategic and well-aligned marketing and sales plan (*including product/service positioning, pricing, promotion, and distribution strategies*) tailored to the target market and business goals.	Outlines effective marketing and sales strategies with clear implementation steps. Demonstrates understanding of customer acquisition and retention strategies.	Strategies are outlined but could benefit from more detail or specificity in execution. Alignment with business objectives is	Marketing and sales strategies are underdeveloped or not fully aligned with business objectives, lacking innovative or effective approaches.

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Needs Improvement (1-2)
	Includes innovative promotional tactics and customer acquisition strategies.		evident but may need refinement.	
Management and Operations Plan	Constructs a detailed and feasible operations plan covering production, logistics, staffing, technology, and management structure. Considers scalability, efficiency, and leadership roles within the organization.	Presents a coherent operations and management plan with realistic goals, resource allocation, and organizational structure. Addresses potential operational and managerial challenges effectively.	Plan lacks some detail or fails to fully address key operational and managerial aspects critical for successful implementation.	Plan is incomplete, unrealistic, or overlooks critical operational and managerial considerations, posing significant implementation risks.
Financial Plan	Provides a detailed financial forecast with realistic revenue projections, expense estimates, and break-even analysis. Demonstrates financial literacy and viability of the business model.	Outlines financial projections including revenue, expenses, and profitability. Presents a clear understanding of financial metrics.	Presents basic financial projections but lacks depth or detail. Some financial data may be inaccurate or unrealistic.	Financial projections are incomplete or unclear. Limited grasp of financial metrics.
Presentation and Structure	Organizes information logically with a clear structure, facilitating ease of understanding. Utilizes visuals and formatting effectively to enhance presentation quality.	Presents information in a structured and visually appealing manner, using appropriate sections, headings, and formatting techniques.	Structure is adequate but could be more refined for improved clarity and visual impact. Visual elements and formatting choices may need enhancement.	Presentation lacks coherence, structure, or visual appeal, hindering comprehension and detracting from the overall professionalism of the plan.
Writing Clarity and Style	Demonstrates exceptional writing quality with a professional tone, precise language, and grammatical accuracy. Communicates complex ideas effectively, maintaining reader engagement throughout the plan.	Expresses ideas clearly with appropriate language and minimal errors. Writing is mostly concise and maintains a professional tone.	Writing is generally understandable but may contain occasional grammatical or stylistic issues that detract from overall clarity.	Writing is unclear, overly informal, or riddled with grammatical errors, impeding comprehension and detracting from the plan's professionalism.
Consistency	Demonstrates strong coherence and alignment across all sections of the business plan. Information is logically organized and interconnected throughout.	Shows good coherence and alignment between most sections of the business plan. Some transitions or connections may be slightly unclear.	Sections of the business plan are somewhat connected but lack consistent flow or logical progression. Transitions between sections are disjointed at times.	Sections of the business plan are largely disconnected. Flow between sections is confusing or absent.

Scoring:

- **Excellent (43-50):** Exceeds expectations with exceptional depth, insight, and clarity.
- **Good (33-42):** Meets expectations with solid understanding and presentation.
- **Fair (23-32):** Adequately meets criteria but with room for improvement.
- **Needs Improvement (below 23):** Below expectations, lacking depth or clarity.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Ngoc Thi Nham was born in Thai Binh, a northern province of Vietnam in 1984. She received a BA in English from Ho Chi Minh City University of Education in 2006 and an MA degree of TESOL from Victoria University, Australia in 2010. She started the PhD program at Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima,Thailand in 2018. Her research interests include discourse analysis, pragmatics, phonetics and EMI.

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