Writing techniques encountered by Sudanese EFL Students: A contrastive Rhetoric approach

OMER BASHIR ELSHEIKH ELADANI
Sudan University of Science &Technology, Sudan
Dr. AMNA MOHAMMED BEDRI
Ahfad University for Women, Sudan

Abstract:

This study aims to investigate Sudanese advanced EFL students writing problems in terms of the contrastive rhetoric (CR) approach. CR is concerned with the study of aspects of differences and similarities between L1 and L2 writing techniques, this study attempts to explore Sudanese Advanced EFL students' English writing difficulties from linguistic and cultural backgrounds perspectives.

The researcher will use a descriptive analytic method. The data will be collected through two instruments: Teachers' questionnaire and Students English expository text which will be evaluated by an analytic scoring method. The Subjects will be consisted of Sudanese ESL teachers and ESL Advanced students from 10 Sudanese Universities majoring in English. The subjects will be female /male of different age groups.

Key words: Rhetoric, Culture, Arabic language

INTRODUCTION:

The study of writing has become part of the main stream in applied linguistics. Reasons for this change are may: the increased understanding of languages learners 'needs to read and write in the target language; the enhanced

interdisciplinary approach to studying second language acquisition through educational, rhetorical and anthropological methods; and new trends in linguistics (Connor, 1996,p5).

Writing in English is especially difficult for non-native speakers because they are expected to produce native-like written products (Casanave, 2003). And ESL students often mentioned that when they write in English as a Second Language (ESL) they translate, or attempt to translate, first language words, phrases, and organization into English.(Connor 1996,p3).

In the 1950s and 1960s, the theory of second language learning suggested that L1 interfered with L2 acquisition the dominant model of the contrastive analysis hypnosis' emphasized the negative interference effects of the first language on the second language, which was considered harmful.(Connor, 1996.p12).A new models of second language acquisition and learning emerged, which emphasized the importance of "interlanguage" (a system of language that is structurally between L1 and L2, Corder 1967)….these models, such as Krashen's model (1977), suggested that neither L1 nor L2 is a "bad" influences of second language acquisition. (Connor, 1996,p12).

Since Kaplan's seminal study in 1966, the field of contrastive rhetoric which is defined as " an area of research in second language acquisition that identify problems in composition encountered by second language writers, and by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language , attempt to explain them. (Connor 1996,) has developed and investigated the influence of L1 on L2 writing. According to Kaplan, "Rhetoric . . . is not universal . . ., but varies from culture to culture. . ." (p. 2). He claimed that the thought patterns which speakers of English appear to expect is a "sequence that is dominantly linear in its development" (p. 4) Conner (2002) claims that the current approaches to contrastive rhetoric have explained that the differences in L2 writing

derive from "multiple sources, including L1, national culture, L1 educational background, disciplinary culture, genre characteristics and mismatched expectations between readers and writers" (p. 504). Ferris (2001) maintains that "It is important for theorists and teachers to understand that significant differences exist across L2 contexts and populations" (p. 299). Foreign students, who have mastered syntactic structures have still demonstrated inability to compose a adequate themes ,terms papers and dissertations…the foreign student paper is out of focus because he is employing a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violout the expectations of the native speakers" Kaplan(1966:p12).

According to Allen's observation (1970), the organization of the text of Arabic is "circular and non-cumulative," and "Arab writers come to the same point two or three times from different angles so that a native English reader has the curious feeling that nothing is happening" (cited in Sa'adeddin, 1989, p. 36). In contrast, the text in English is expected to be linear, coherent and concise (Sa'adeddin, 1989). Derrick and Gmuca (1985) argue that there is no room for doubt in Arab students' writing.

Kaplan (1966, 1967, 1972, and 1988) believed that both rhetoric and logic are culturally tied. For him, argumentative writing by Arabs deviates from the linear and logical norms of English discourse not only because such a writing genre does not exist in Arabic, but also because the logic in its Aristotelian, syllogistic sense is an alien concept to Arabs. For Kaplan, ESL teachers could help Arab students meet the Western audience's expectations by not only teaching Western rhetorical conventions but also Western ―logical‖ thought patterns even if this meant teachers would ―run the very serious risk of being legitimately accused of brainwashing‖ (Kaplan, 1967, p. 16).

This present study is aimed at better understanding the differences in such context and this population and to address these differences in writing pedagogy. Although a number of

researchers have written and spoken about the writing problems of Arab students in the past, cultural interpretation has not been sufficiently addressed. The purpose of this study is to add to the body of knowledge concerning the influence of Arabic L1 and Muslim culture on L2 English writing. Failure to understand the writing techniques of a foreign language may result in uncontrollable rhetorical overlaps, ambiguity and distortion of the written text. According to Connor (2002:493), for example, maintains the contrastive rhetoric shows that language and writing are cultural phenomena in the sense that each language has its own rhetorical techniques, and linguistics and rhetorical patterns of the L1 interfere with the writing techniques of the L2.

For the most part, a lot of Sudanese ESL writers, in particular those at university level, lack English writing abilities because their exposure to English Western writing traditions is very limited. Thus, they find themselves faced with English writing problems at different levels such as stating the topic sentences plainly, an expression of the main ideas, evidence to support the main ideas and so on. What they may be good at is grammar-based writing and mostly a sentence-level transfer to English. ESL writers need to be acquainted with the rhetorical techniques that will complement and reinforce these linguistics aspects so as to meet the expectations of the native English speakers.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:

I have been an ESL teacher for more than 10 years in Sudanese schools, universities and training centers. In these years of experiences I have observed many problems on the language of my ESL Learners, but only one took my attention entirely and repeatedly: the inability of my ESL students to respond to questions directly in writing and speaking. For instance, in one of my speaking classes, where we usually prepare a discussion

topic and have the learners to exchange their ideas, opinions on that particular topic. When the discussion starts, most learners start stating their opinion" plainly" in a more Arabic-like style; either they exaggerate the answer or the extend till the answer seems" off-point" and moreover, their use of body language is inappropriate to what they say i.e doesn't convey any emotions or feelings of what they are saying and more interestingly when they state their opinions they do not provide any explanation, evidence , statistics, etc nothing to support their ideas. Sometimes it becomes hard to know what is their opinion is, and then you have to figure it out from the context. This problem appeared more seriously in the writing of my students when I started teaching college composition for college students.

Despite the effort in teaching the techniques of writing throughout the semester, the writing of 200 students or more was very disappointing in terms of the effort I made throughout the semester. Expect for very few learners, most of the writings was characterized by been very Arabic- like style, lacks topic sentences, supporting ideas, no clear argument, no coherence ,nor cohesion in paragraphing; two or three ideas exist in a paragraph , and regard the other writing details, punctuation, capitalization and more importantly the sense of Sudanese /Arabic style more vividly.

I started to ask myself" how L1culture affects L2 Learning? If it Does in what ways, and how does it affect language skills? in particular in a writing? , what features that transferred from L1 into L2? Whether this transformation positive or negative? And how I could help our ESL Learners in writing skill?

For me, as ESL teacher it's very important that my learners know exactly what is expected from them when they speak or write in English. To do so, I have started researching how culture affects L2 learning, and this leads me not just to

study English rhetoric but Also study Arabic rhetoric, where I realized why my learners made these mistakes.

Within the last two years, I have been studying and observing learners in both English & Arabic Rhetoric. For example, when I attend Friday prayer, I become more interested in how the speaker is constructing his arguments and claims in his speech, and as it happens I am a bilingual, so I tend to switch to English mode and when I do that, the whole speech appears to me it's just ..Well-constructed, well-decorated and the speaker tends to delay the theme of speech till a middle or the end. And also the speech is characterized is being more emotional i.e it does address the feelings and emotions rather than the mind. And the whole speech is quoted from only two sources The holy Q'ran and the speech of the prophet(PBH). But when I switch to Arabic mode, the speech "feels" very normal and even logical. And this remains me is the "West is West and East is East".

Therefore, in the view of this problem, this study investigates some difficulties that Sudanese advanced ESL students writers encounters due to differences in writing techniques between English & Arabic. The researcher intends to explore whether observed students writing performance is attributed to rhetoric variations or not. In other words, the study will examine these students' English writing problems which are believed to be related to a wide range of cross-linguistic and cultural differences at both the paragraph and textual levels. Bearing in mind, some attempts need to be made to investigate Sudanese ESL writers confusion of expository techniques of Arabic with those of written English discourse patterns.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

This study aims to

1- It's an attempt to investigate whether the transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing have negative impact on Sudanese's EFL students' writing performance?

2- It's an attempt to raise the awareness of various cultural and linguistics' trends in L2 writing.

3- It's an attempt to drew attention to the negative impact of L1 rhetorical techniques' transfer among Sudanese Advanced ESL students.

4- writing

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study, the following research questions are addressed:

1-To what extent does the transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing have negative impact on Sudanese's EFL students' expository writing performance?

2- To what extent does lack of cohesion devices characterize Sudanese ESL student's expository writing performance?

3-To what extent lack of coherence characterize Sudanese ESL student's expository writing performance.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

1- The transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing have a negative impact on Sudanese's ESL students' expository writing performance.

2- Lack of cohesion characterizes Sudanese ESL students' writing performance.

3- Lack of cohesive devices characterizes Sudanese ESL students' writing performance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The researcher will use a descriptive analytic method. The data will be collected through two instruments: **Teachers' questionnaire** and **Students English expository text** which will be evaluated by an analytic scoring method. The Subjects will be consisted of Sudanese ESL teachers and ESL Advanced students from fifteen Sudanese Universities majoring in English. The subjects will be female /male of different age groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing situation in Sudan:
EFL writing situation in Sudan can be traced back to the early days of the colonial era (1898), during which considerable attention had been attached to the teaching of English at different educational levels. That is to say, Sudanese EFL writers were exposed to English rhetorical techniques of writing, and encouraged to write free guided compositions. A great deal emphasis was laid on English literature and composition studies which made Sudanese EFL writers familiar with the basic Western rhetorical traditions of writing a long with other skills of language-namely oral fluency. At that period, most schools, including intermediate and secondary ones relied heavily on reading and composition textbooks mostly donated by the British. Therefore, when Sudanese EFL writers entered the tertiary level, they did not encounter serious problems of writing in English. (Mohammed, p34)

The general standard of English writing among Sudanese EFL learners from the 1930s up to the end of the 1960s was up the expectations as opposed to the deterioration that resulted from Arabicisation of the secondary curriculum in 1965, after the 21th October 1964 political change which ended the first military regime in Sudan. Indeed, in 1937

(Sandell, 1982:2). The Sudan education department reviewed Sudanese students' standard in English, and compared it with those recognized elsewhere and accordingly, a special version of Cambridge School Certificate was suggested. In addition, new English syllabi were directed toward reading and composition courses which were intended to deal with sentences of extreme complexity. Focus was also put on the "Art of Essay writing which reviewed notions such as (1) arrangement(2) beginning, middle and end(3) style,(4) balance and rhythm,(5) illustration and colour,(6) descriptive writing and (7) types of essays(ibid).

In 1948, attempts were made to revive English Language in the intermediate schools, especially following the appointment of John Bright as the Head of English Section at Bahkat al-Ruda institute. Prior to his appointment, EFL writing had been taught by using West's oral composition, which according to him, proved to be ineffective, because the main emphasis was on the vocabulary. rights' another argument was that while the learners were expected to be spending a lot of time enhancing their writing performance, the idea of writing individuals printed capital and small letters in which they were involved had little influence on writing. Therefore, it was decided to solve that setback by suggesting a new model of writing based on Marian Richardson's script which was largely applied in British schools (Sandel, 1982:30).

The Arabicization movement in the secondary level in 1965 had placed an enormous impact on the standard of English writing in Sudan. Therefore, since 1970 onwards, ELT status in Sudan had witnessed a series of dramatic changes due to unstable, unplanned and extemporaneous educational policies. Most importantly, it was thought that the process of Arabicization in higher education in 1990 in which Arabic replaced English as a medium of instruction in some tertiary institutions would enable Sudanse EFL learners to understand the college subjects and ,then, gain a better knowledge.

As Mugadam states "The Arabicization of school education was an answer to the national feelings and enthusiasm following October revolution in 1964 (Hurries). In other words, Arabicization of education was merely a political and national issue rather than educational or linguistic. This national political feeling led to the replacement of English with Arabic as a medium of instruction at university level in 1990. Recognizing the important role of English in the academic life of students, the Ministry of High education decided that English should be taught as a university required subject to all undergraduate students. Accordingly, specialized units were established in all universities throughout Sudan to teach English, mainly ESP. (Mugdaam.P 130)

Contrastive rhetoric:

In his controversial publication, entitled ―Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education,‖ Kaplan noted that the writing problems of ESL students are not only a byproduct of their transferring structural patterns from their native language, but are also due to transfer of rhetorical strategies. According to Kaplan, when such rhetorical strategies, brought in from the native culture, do not match audience expectations in the target culture, the ensuing writing fails to logically convey the message to the intended audience, namely, native speakers of the target language. Kaplan claimed that the reason for such failure in communication is that rhetorical structure, as well as the ―logic (in the popular, rather than the logician's sense of the word)‖ upon which it is based, is culturally bound (1966, p. 2). In other words, he believed that as children acquire their native language, they also acquire culturally acceptable forms of reasoning and rhetorical expression, which differ from culture to culture. Kaplan concluded that since logic and rhetorical structure are by no means a universal phenomenon but are culturally defined, a perfectly logical argument in one culture might be viewed as

sophistical or illogical in another. According to Kaplan (1966), when composing in English, a typical ESL learner who has not yet developed an understanding of the sociocultural constraints of English discourse, its underlying logical system, or rhetorical preferences falls back to those of his or her native language.

Kaplan categorized the student writing that he analyzed into five distinguishable ―rhetoric's‖ or ―cultural thought patterns,‖ namely English, Romance, Russian, Oriental, and Semitic based on differences in paragraph development. He visually represented his findings of cross-cultural variation in logic and writing with the following diagrams (Figure 1), which later became known as the ―doodle‖ diagrams.

Figure 1. Kaplan's rhetorical structures
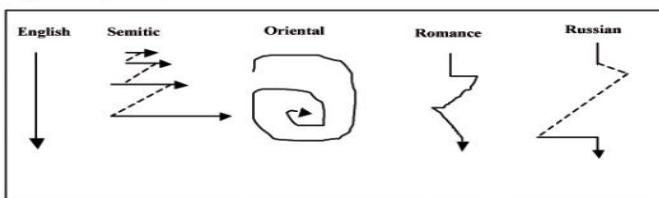
According to Kaplan, English writing follows a linear pattern of development that starts with a topic sentence followed by details that progressively support the main topic in a deductive fashion; Romance writing diverges from the main topic in the form of quasi-linear digressions; Oriental writing employs an indirect approach distinguished by inconclusive spiral progression of ideas; partial parallelism and subordination are the salient features of Russian writing. Kaplan claimed that as a Semitic language, Arabic ―is based on a complex series of parallel constructions, both positive and negative‖ (1966, p. 6) as contrasted to the ―linear‖ nature of the English expository paragraph. In a later publication, Kaplan maintained:… the primary focus of writing in Arabic rests on the language of the text, not on its propositional structure.

From contrastive to Intercultural:

In a later development in the field and after the criticism to the theory of rhetoric and described as been static, Connor(2004) argued for new definition and new name as intercultural instead as Contrastive: "the study of written discourse between and among individuals with different cultural backgrounds" (Connor, 2011, p. 1). IR examines the influences of first language, culture, and education on the production of texts with the aim of advancing cross-cultural communication research as well as informing writers, editors, translators, and language and composition teachers and learners, among other users and producers of text". So, the new term "intercultural rhetoric" to describe the current scope of cultural influences in writing and to detonate the direction the field needs to go.. In that sense, rhetoric helps examine the accommodation readers, writers, and speakers exhibit in communication. Furthermore, the term intercultural rhetoric was expected to suggest that no rhetorical tradition is pure but that everything exists between cultures... In other words, intercultural rhetoric studies may include both cross-cultural and intercultural studies. In addition, intercultural studies are sensitive to context and consider influences both due to inter-person and inter-culture influences. (Connor 2004).

Criticisms of and Advances in Contrastive Rhetoric

Contrastive rhetoric has also acquired many critics. Scholars have criticized Kaplan for reducing rhetoric to merely structural elements and not recognizing that rhetoric is multidimensional.. Spack (1997), who works with ESL students in the U.S., was concerned about the practice of labeling students by their L1 backgrounds, and Zamel (1997) disapproved of the tendency of contrastive rhetoric to view cultures as "discrete, discontinuous, and predictable." Scollon, in the same issue of the TESOL Quarterly as Zamel, criticized contrastive rhetoric research for being too focused on texts and

for neglecting oral influences on literacy, and thus being unable adequately to consider EFL situations like the one in Hong Kong (Scollon, 1997). Both Spack and Zamel invoke changing definitions of culture which juxtapose the forces of heterogeneity and homogeneity and seriously question the latter. This is not surprising, for the whole concept of culture has been intensely interrogated in applied linguistics with relevance to field such as contrastive rhetoric in the last few years.

Rhetorical Influences

Instead of merely viewing rhetoric as culturally influenced, Matsuda (2001), in response to Ying's 2000 article "On the Origins of Contrastive Rhetoric," addresses the issue of Kaplan's view of contrastive rhetoric as a synthesis of "three intellectual traditions, including contrastive analysis, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and the then-emerging field of composition and rhetoric" (p. 260). In his original article, Ying contends, contrary to previous scholars' claims, that "[t]he Sapir-Whorf view of language as a causal determination is not compatible with Kaplan's position that rhetoric is evolved out of culture" (Ying, 2001, p. 265). Matsuda then asserts that Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric hypothesis is affirmed by (but not originated from) the Sapir- Whorf hypothesis, which claims that language influences thought. Matsuda reasons that Kaplan's theory ultimately extended the discussion of linguistic elements beyond grammar and thought, and into the realm of culture (p. 258). According to Matsuda (1997), influences affecting rhetoric are culture, linguistic constraints (language), and education (p. 47). The linguistic explanation claims that linguistic factors are what influence a writer's rhetorical strategies and that we need to teach the syntax of the language to students for them to be able to produce rhetorically effective texts (p. 48).

The Influence of Arab Culture

Arabic-English studies can be traced to the late 1950s where the fundamental aim was to anticipate learning difficulties through contrasting languages on different levels: phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical, relying basically on structural linguistics (Mukattash, 2001). By the end of the 1980s, with the shift of contrastive studies towards an examination of communicative competence, texts and communication strategies, discussion broadened to include cultural   influences   on Arabic written discourse.   More recently, there has been increased interest in the influence of Islam, ancient Arab civilization and Standard Arabic on Arabs' thought patterns, their rhetorical choices and the process of learning an additional language, English.

Al-Khatib (2001; cited in Abu Rass, 2011) for instance investigated the way Arabs write personal letters in English. He found that their writing reflects a culture-specific tendency to include questions about the addressee's health, family and personal life which is something unusual for a native English speaker to do. Abu Rass (2011) refers to the great influence of Islam on Arab culture. She stresses that "Moslems usually accept principles covered in the Qura'n as Divine truth and reject others that differ from the Qura'nic principles and teachings, which embrace all aspects of life" (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207). As a result, Arab students never question the ultimate truth and have no room for doubt expecting their audience to be in complete Agreement.

In a related matter, Feghali (1997) argues that   "social life in the Arab region is characterized by 'situation-centeredness', in which loyalty to one's extended family and larger 'in-group'," takes precedence   as opposed to "U.S. Americans' self-reliant and 'individual-centered' approach to life" (p. 352). This sort of collectiveness is demonstrated in learners' writings in the use of pronouns such as "we" and "us".

Similarly, Smith (2005) examined the influence of audience and context on Arab and Chinese students' rhetorical choices by assigning them to write two letters: one for a home country professor, the other for an American professor. Smith (2005) found that Arab students' writing demonstrates 'solidarity' - which Feghali (1997) refers to as collectiveness - using "we" and "their" to show their group orientation and unity with their classmates. Furthermore, there was evidence of religious influence in terms of constant reference to God. In fact, one of the study participants commented: "In Arabic, you can relate everything back to God —In English you shouldn't do that, but in Arabic, you can do anything" (Smith, 2005, p. 90). According to Abu Rass (2011) religious expressions appear mainly on the top of letters using expressions like "in the name of God, the beneficent, and the merciful", in addition to others, such as "God willing", to express the desire for something good to happen in the future.

Cohesion & coherence

Phelps (1985) described coherence as "the experience of meaningfulness corrected with successful integration during reading, which the reader projects back into the text as a quality of wholeness in its meaning." De Beaugrande & Dressler (1981) posited that coherence is based on "a continuity of sense among the knowledge activated by the expressions of the text" (p.84). Brown & Yule (1983) also viewed coherence as related to the reader's interpretation of linguistic messages. Haliday and Hassan (1976) define text as semantic unit, usually larger than a sentence, a although not necessary so, cohesion , in their definition ,is created when a specific lexical item in a text must be interpreted through reference to a previous item in the text

Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion in English

Known as cohesion theory (Carrell, 1982), Halliday and Hasan's work has been widely cited and used as a foundation or a seminal text. For Halliday and Hasan, cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of the text (1976, p.8). For text to have texture, Halliday and Hasan's term for coherence, the text must include ties that link its parts together because it is these ties that form cohesive relations between sentences and elements in sentences, thus contributing to the coherence of the text (Liu & Braine, 2005). Halliday and Hasan defined such a tie as —the term for one occurrence of a pair of cohesively related items‖ (1976, p.3). In other words, no single element can be cohesive by itself since grammatical and lexical devices become cohesive only when they are interpreted in relation to some other element in the text. Halliday and Hasan divided cohesion into grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion includes devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction, whereas lexical cohesion is divided into reiteration (repetition, synonymy, among others) and collocation (co-occurrence of lexical items).

PREVIOUS STUDIES:

Contrastive rhetoric studies in Arabic

Arabic was among the first languages studied in the field of contrastive rhetoric in Kaplan's (1966) seminal study. In that study, he observed that paragraph development is based on a complex series of parallel constructions, both positive and negative (p.47). Kaplan identified four types of parallelisms: synonymous, synthetic, antithetic, and climatic. He claimed that the four types were found in his corpus, and they were practically responsible for the apparent awkwardness of Arab ESL writings. This degree of parallelism and coordination was considered to be responsible for the zigzag movement of the

Arab ESL paragraphs. He claimed that English readers consider mature writing to be subordinated rather than coordinated. Later, Ostler (1987) extended the work of Kaplan employing basically the same stance about Arabic coordination and parallelism. In her study, the main observation was that Arabic essays reflect the forms found in classical Arabic. She compared and contrasted the rhetoric of Arabic as opposed to English. She claimed that English developed naturally from coordination and parallelism [as markers of orality societies (underdeveloped)] to deletion and subordination [as markers of civilized, literate societies].

Harfmann (2004) made almost the same claim in terms of the use of parallelisms and coordination. After he analyzed 20 school essays in Arabic and compared them to 20 essays in German, he claimed that Arabic employed coordination, repetition, and parallelism to achieve cohesion as well as to appeal to the attention of the reader. He contended that such use was an oral trait. Yet, the results also showed that Arabic essays had a stronger tendency toward the written mode than the German essays (Harfmann, 2004, p. 45).

Ostler (1987) compared the ESL expository writing of 21 Saudi Arabian students in a controlled setting (namely, placement test) to 10 samples of English paragraphs randomly selected from published books by Anglo-American professional writers. All writing samples were analyzed for intrasentential stylistic differences via Hunt's (1965) T-Unit model and extra-sentential stylistic differences via Pitkin's (1969) Discourse Bloc analysis as modified by Kaplan (1972). Ostler reported that, unlike Anglo-American writers, Arab student writers wrote heavily stylistic texts marked with overuse of coordination and more subdivision (defined as number of Discourse Units per Discourse Bloc). Claiming to support Kaplan's hypothesis, Ostler suggested that the between-group variation in stylistic and rhetorical features is attributable to cultural differences. Ostler further ascribed the unique features of Arab ESL writing

to the influence of Classical Standard Arabic and the Quran on the rhetorical style of the Arabs. She points out that, unlike English writing, which focuses on idea content, Arabic writing stresses the language of the text rather than its propositional content.

Contrastive studies in Europe (Finland):

In their research on EFL writing in Finland, which studies cultural differences between Finnish and English - speaking researchers, Ventola and Mauranen (1991) have shown the value of text analysis in a contrastive framework. Revising practices by native English speakers of Finnish scientists' articles written in English were investigated, and the writing of Finnish scientists was also compared to the writing of native English -speaking scientists. It was found that Finnish writers used connectors less frequently and in a less varied fashion than native English speaking writers. The Finnish writers had difficulty using the article system appropriately, and there were differences in thematic progression. Moreover, Mauranen (1993) found that Finnish writers wrote less "text about text," or "metatext," and that they also placed their main point later in the text than native English speakers. Connor, Helle, Mauranen, Ringbom, Tirkkonen - Condit, and Yli -Antola (1995b) found that Finnish writers had the same difficulties when writing grant proposals. These findings showed that the English texts used more direct, assertive, and positive positions.

Contrastive studies in the Middle East:

Research in contrastive rhetoric is, of course, not exclusively Euro- American. In addition to numerous empirical studies of Arabic- English contrasts, contributions to contrastive rhetoric theory have been produced by Hatim (1997). According to Hatim, orality has been suggested as identifying the differences between Arabic and Western rhetorical preferences by

researchers such as Koch (1983). Koch has claimed that Arabic speakers argue by presentation, by repeating arguments, paraphrasing them, and doubling them. Hatim admits that Arabic argumentation may be heavy on "through – argumentation" (heavy on presentation with thesis to be supported, substantiation, and conclusion) unlike Western argumentation that, according to Hatim, is characterized by counter- arguments (thesis to be opposed, opposition, substantiation of counter- claim, and conclusion). Yet, the key is that for Arabic speakers, Arabic texts are no less logical than texts that use Aristotelian Western logic. To quote Hatim," It may be true that this [Arabic] form of argumentation generally lacks credibility when translated into a context which calls for a variant form of argumentation in languages such as English.

Another significant contribution to the study of non - European contrastive rhetoric has been made by the rhetorician Hottel - Burkhart (2001). Hottel - Burkhart writes that "rhetoric is an intellectual tradition of practices and values associated with public, interpersonal, and verbal communication –spoken or written –and it is peculiar to the broad linguistic culture in which one encounters it" (p. 94). What is considered an argument in a culture is shaped by the rhetoric of that culture. Hottel - Burkhart refers to the well - known interview of the Ayatollah Khomeni and the Italian journalist Oriana Fallacy, analyzed by Johnstone (1986). In the interview, Fallaci used a logical argument supportable by verifiable facts. Khomeni offered answers based on the words of God, in a tradition in which, according to Hottel - Burkhart, he was schooled. Not only in the content of an argument, but also in the arrangement and style of argument, were differences found between the two styles of argumentation

Contrastive studies in Asia:

Chinese- English and Japanese- English contrasts have been analyzed in several recent contrastive rhetoric studies. The

Chinese- English studies deal with writing for professional purposes, namely newspaper writing and the writing of sales and request letters. Three are reviewed here.

Scollon and Scollon (1997) compared the reporting of the same news story in Hong Kong newspapers and 3 Peoples' Republic of China papers. Four were English language papers, the rest were written in Chinese. The researchers focused on structural features and point of view as well as the attribution of content to sources. They found that both the classical structure "qi - cheng - zhuan - he" and inductive and deductive organizational structures were found in the stories, written in either language, concluding that "there is nothing inherent in the linguistic or cognitive structures of either Chinese or English which determines the use of these structures" (p. 107). A difference was found, however, in the practice of quotations across languages. According to the authors, concerning the question of quotation, our clearest finding is that quotation is at best ambiguous in Chinese. No standard practice has been observed across newspapers in this set and even within a newspaper, it is not obvious which portions of the text are attributed to whom. In contrast, the English newspapers present a face of clear and unambiguous quotation. (p. 107) Scollon and Scollon are careful to point out that the finding should be interpreted carefully. The seemingly rigorous Western journalistic standard, with rigid conventions for the attribution of authorship, does not necessarily translate into more scrupulous journalistic practice.

Zhu (1997) analyzed sales letters written in the People's Republic of China using a rhetorical moves analysis (Swales, 1990). The article contains a great deal of discussion on arguments over a linear versus a circular structure of Chinese discourse and finds that the 20 letters in the sample followed a linear development. Kong (1998) used analytic frameworks, a move structure approach and Mann and Thompson's rhetorical structure analysis (1988) to examine Chinese business request

letters written in companies in Hong Kong, English business letters written by native speakers, and English business letters by non - native speakers whose first language was Chinese (Cantonese). Differences were found in the occurrence and sequencing of the moves as well as the rhetorical structure between the Chinese letters and the English letters. The theoretical explanation in the article is rich and draws on theories of politeness and face systems. Differences are attributed to different face relationships involved in business transactions rather than inherent rhetorical patterns of the languages.

REFERENCES

1. Abdulati, H. (1975). Islam in Focus. Cited in Al-Khatib, M. (2001). The pragmatics of letter writing. World Englishes, 20 (2), 179-200.
2. Abu-Rabia, S. (1995) Multicultural and problematic social contexts and their contribution to L2 learning. Language, Culture and Curriculum, 8 (2), 183-199.
3. Abu Rass, R. (1994) The effect of Arabic Culture onArab Students' Writing. Unpublished Seminar Paper. University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
4. Al-Khatib, M. (2001). The pragmatics of letter writing. World Englishes, 20 (2), 179-200.
5. Casanava, C.P. (2003) Looking ahead to more sociopolitically-oriented case study research in L2 writing scholarship (But should it be called "post-process"?) Journal of Second Language Writing 12, 85-102.
6. Conner, U. (2002) New directions in contrastive rhetoric. TESOL Quarterly. 36(4). 493-510.
7. Derrick, M.M. & Gmuca, J.L. (1985) Concepts of unity and sentence structure in Arabic, Spanish and Malay. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the conference on college

composition and communication, (36th, Minneapolis, MN, March 21-23).

8. Feghali, E. (1997). Arab cultural communication patterns. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 21 (3), 345-378.

9. Fillmore, L. W., Ammon, P., Mclaughlin, B., Ammon, M.S.(1993). Learning English through bilingual instruction: Executive summary and conclusion. LRC 525, University of Arizona, 1-35.

10. Ferris, D.R. (2001). Teaching writing for academic purposes. In Flowerdew, J. & M. Peacock. Research perspectives on English for academic purposes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp 298-314.

11. Gilsenan, M. (1983). Recognizing Islam: Religion and society in modern Arab world. Cited in Feghali, E. (1997). Arab cultural communication patterns. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 21 (3), 345-378.

12. Johnstone, K. B. (1989). Presentation as proof. The language of Arabic Rhetoric. Anthropological Linguistics, 25 (1), 47-60.

13. Kaplan, R.B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. Language Learning. 16(1 & 2), 1-20. .

14. Khuwaileh, A.A. & Shoumali, A.A. (2000). Writing errors: A study in writing ability of Arabic learners of academic English and Arabic at university. Language, culture and curriculum. 13(2). 174-183.

15. Mauranen, A. (1993). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish-English economics texts. English for Specific Purposes, 2 (3), 3-22.

16. Nydell, M. (1987). Understanding Arabs: A guide for Westerners. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultual Press.

17. Sa'adeddin, M.A. (1989). Text development and Arabic-English negative interference. Applied Linguistics. 10 (1).

18. Ahmad, U. K. (1997). Scientific research articles in Malay: A situated discourse analysis. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
19. Scollon, R. & Scollon, S.W. 1997. Intercultural communication: a discourse approach. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
20. Al-Jubouri, A. (1984). The role of repetition in Arabic argumentative discourse. In J. Swales and H. Mustafa (Eds.), English for specific purposes in the Arab world(pp. 99-117). Birmingham, UK: The Language Studies Unit.
21. Chaffin, E(2006).assignment 2: Reading Resources and Reading skills. UAE, University.http:// www.ehl/chaffin.com/part/education/mtesol/74_f.pdf
22. Chein, S. (2007). The role of Chinese EFL learners' Rhetorical strategy use in relation to their achievement in English writing. English Teaching: Practice and critique .http:// educationwakato.ac.nz/research/files/etpc/pdf
23. Crane, P.A(2006).Texture in text. A discourse A nalysis of a New Article Using Halliday & Hasans' model of cohesion. http://docs.google.com/ac.jp/kiyou/gaidac 30/08/pdf