

Assessing Vietnamese EFL Students' Writing in the Light of World Englishes

Aprillette C. Devanadera

Southern Luzon State University, Lucban, Philippines

Abstract

This study is anchored on Swale's Theory of Genre Analysis and employed Labov and Waletzky's Personal Experience Narrative (PEN) as a narrative framework in analyzing Vietnamese EFL students' patterns of writing. The study reveals that Vietnamese student's rhetorical structure follows a three-step-pattern which is introducing the character, introducing the situation and finally telling what happens. This pattern deviates from what is perceived standard or western's style of writing which is preferred in most universities in the Philippines. The result may be a good basis for planning new prospectus and teaching materials suited for Vietnamese and other EFL students. This study also hopes to raise awareness among language teachers to the different rhetorical patterns of EFL students.

Keywords: *World Englishes, rhetorical patterns, narrative essays, Asian Englishes,*

Labovian narrative analysis, EFL students

Introduction

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Integration provides great opportunities in meeting the influx of globalization through education, labor and economy among its members. ASEAN Integration aims to bridge the development apparent among its constituent members – Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Singapore, and Indonesia. Canagarajah (2007) posits that one of the global demands for the teaching of English is that English has become the lingua franca of most countries. English is also established as the official working language of ASEAN countries (Gonzalez, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 2012).

Kachru (2005) argues that English is no longer just *in* Asia but *of* Asia and has become an Asian language. According to Bautista (1997), most countries in Asia accepted English as their own and used it to suit their needs. This is because people in Asia with varied norms and scopes of proficiency also use English language for practical purposes. Kachru (1997) also discusses the functional

dynamics of '*Asian Englishes*' and how it has changed the construct of English in Asia which stimulated scholars to study Asian Englishes such as Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong English etc. in the field of World Englishes.

Asian Englishes are expected to be spoken as more students coming from different countries are estimated to study English in the Philippines which is considered to have the most budget English teacher in the world. Thus Filipino English teachers, including the researcher, will eventually experience challenges in teaching students from other ASEAN countries. With the presence of ASEAN Integration, the Philippines can expect an increasing number of Asian students who consider studying in the Philippines not only because they want to learn how to speak English but more so to learn how to write in English. Among the ASEAN countries that recognize the implication of English language in meeting the global demand is Viet Nam that belongs to Kachru's Expanding Circles.

Prior to Kachru's (1996) 'Concentric Circles Model of World Englishes', several studies in language learning focused on errors when it does not conform to the perceived standard English which belongs to the Inner Circles like USA, UK, Australia, and New Zealand. The study of Heydari & Bagheri (2012) reveals that EFL/ESL learners' most frequent errors are negative influence from the learners' mother tongue which need to be corrected. Adopting appropriate teaching strategies were suggested to correct ESL/EFL errors. It was also posited by Heydari & Bagheri that re-conducting more research in error analysis is significant for scholars and researchers seeking for the best teaching strategies suitable for ESL/ EFL students to learn better.

However, with the concept of World Englishes, errors from non-native speakers of English have become more of a deviation. Groves (2010) argues that deviations from the standard English are now becoming a central feature among varieties of English in non-native speakers. He further asserts that frequent use of deviant forms (from what is accepted as 'standard') from a broad range of people in that local community, is now more appropriately called feature of variety of English in that community rather than error. According to Groves (2010), it can be a manifestation of the creativity of the language in that particular community.

Several studies were conducted to show features of Asian Englishes. Wee (2010) asserted that the Colloquial Singapore English (CSE) has a new particle 'ya' with a discourse pragmatic function that constitute a grammatical category to female Singaporeans who were observed as the main users of the new particle 'ya', a distinct feature of CSE. On the other hand, Wong (2007) explained that Hong Kong speakers of English use tag question '*Is it?*' as deviations from British and American English usage. Wong in his study found out that deviation on the use of '*Is it?*' account for more than 80 percent of tag questions found in the ICE-HK. In the Philippines, Gonzalez (1997) illustrated the features of Philippine English (henceforth PE) in describing its phonology, lexicon, syntax

and discourse through discussing the history of English in the Philippines from the time Mckinnon organized the first teaching of English among soldier volunteers that eventually led the teaching of English in the public elementary schools. Bautista (2000a) in her study responded to Gonzalez' (1983, cited in Bautista 2000a) famous question on how error can be considered a feature of Philippine English. Bautista presented deviations as grammatical features of PE used by educated Filipinos. While these studies focused on the features of Englishes from the Outer Circles which English is used as a second language, it is equally important to conduct studies on the variety of English from the Expanding Circles like Viet Nam for which English is used as a foreign language.

English in Viet Nam

The country of Viet Nam has recently recognized the significance of the English language as an international language that will aid Vietnamese people to enhance their global competitiveness. Nguyen, T.T.L. (2016) in his study explained that the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued 'Project 2020' in Viet Nam to enhance the English competency of Vietnamese people. Nhan (2013, cited in Berowa, Devanadera & David, 2018 p.7) stressed that 'Project 2020' envisions that by the year 2020 Vietnamese students will be able to confidently use the English language. It basically envisions that by year 2020 all Vietnamese students can confidently use the English language both in speaking and writing in their daily communication and in serving their country. Berowa et. al (2018) argue that 'Project 2020' motivates Vietnamese students to study English in other countries like the Philippines in order to achieve the objectives of the government by the year 2020.

In the study of Van (2007, cited in Berowa et.al), he mentioned that the Vietnamese government mandated the introduction of English in their primary education curricula and encouraged tertiary institution to implement the use of English as a medium of instruction in schools. There are two national universities and three regional universities for which the implementation should start. These are Viet Nam National University in Hanoi and in Hao Chi Minh City; Thai Nguyen University, Hue University and Da Nang University from the regions of Viet Nam. Despite of this move from the government, Anh (2010) found out that most Vietnamese graduates were not being employed in foreign countries for having poor English in speaking and writing. On the other hand, Tran & Baldauf, (2007) revealed that Viet Nam has poor quality of teaching language class setting in learning English.

Asian countries are beginning to forge partnership with international educational institutions. Thus, Vietnamese students move to other countries to learn how to speak and write in English. In the year 2008, one of the universities

in Viet Nam forged partnership with one of the universities in the Philippines. The partnership allows Vietnamese students to study in the Philippines through student exchange program. College students in the Philippines are confronted with academic demands that require them to communicate in English which is also the medium of instruction (MOI) for most courses in the universities. Thus, Vietnamese students are expected to experience challenges and adjustments while they pursue their education in a foreign country like the Philippines, significantly with their use of English in communicating with Filipinos. Therefore, the Vietnamese students will have to accomplish academic tasks both oral and written in English and not in their native language. These adjustments on the use of language are significant source of stress that may affect the social and academic performance of students. For one, Vietnamese students will have to learn a writing pattern dissimilar to them.

The researcher as a teacher of English observed that written compositions of her foreign students have distinct pattern in writing. In the Philippines teachers are more concern in checking the grammatical errors in the students' composition instead of looking for content error. The researcher believes that it is equally important to give attention to the rhetorical patterns of students' written composition in assessing cultural differences. According to Dayag (2007) varieties of English may not be comprehensible to other Asian Englishes. The researcher prior to her exposure on the concept of *World Englishes* marks her foreign students' composition as unsatisfactory for not conforming to the western way of writing essay. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) explained that the western way of writing composition is when a student must first introduce what the story is about, then explain the main ideas in a body of paragraph and finally give conclusions on what the story is about. Thus, conforming to the introduction, body and conclusion pattern which follows a western way of writing regarded as the standard for which the researcher supports its use in her teaching of writing. This perceived standard for Philippine writing according to Martin (2009) is a result of Filipinos' four decades of exposure to the Anglo-American pedagogical canons.

At this juncture, the researcher would like to explain that these reasons stimulated her to determine the distinct pattern in the narrative essays of Vietnamese students. It is her utmost hope that the study will create awareness on the knowledge of different writing patterns across cultures. It is also hoped that English teachers will be aware of other writing styles and be sensitive in assessing written compositions of foreign students in the light of World Englishes.

Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What rhetorical patterns emerge from personal narrative essays of Vietnamese

students in the Philippines?

2. What are the implications of this study to EFL students?

Methodology

This paper is anchored on Swales's Theory of Genre Analysis (1990) where Swales describes genre as a set of communicative events with different communicative purposes. He also posits that while there are varieties of writing tasks which are represented by different genres and communicative purposes. In this paper, the communicative purposes of the narrative essays of the participants may be unique to their discourse community. Swales espoused the 'Move Step model' in analyzing research paper abstracts which is now referred as Create a Research Space (CARS). Swales (1990 in Guinto 2012) also claims that most research papers adopted three obligatory moves and several optional steps in presenting their abstracts.

On the other hand, to determine the rhetorical pattern used by 30 Vietnamese students in their personal narrative essays the framework developed by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and was again outlined in the book '*Some further steps in narrative analysis*' by Labov in 1997 (henceforth Labov 1997) is used as an instrument in preparing a coding guide. Labov and Waletzky (1997) describe narrative as a way of reporting past events which according to him is a temporal juncture. This is important in understanding that the purpose of narrative is to tell about something. The framework shows the relationships of ordered clauses of events that form complicating action in a narrative. This framework is useful in following the path of narrative construction which according to Labov and Waletzky is a fully formed narrative if it follows the six-part structure: beginning with an abstract, orientation, evaluation, complication, resolution and coda. For Labov and Waletzky, a complex narrative is a result of the combination and evolution of simpler elements. Though the limitation of his analysis is geared towards the actual narratives of large numbers of unsophisticated speakers, Tolliver (1997) argues that the framework is still useful in examining sophisticated literary narratives.

Boyno, Akil and Dolas used Labov and Waletzky's framework in analysing how language works in a narrative story that aimed to help EFL students read with understanding language in a narrative. Boyno et al. further suggested assigning EFL learners with writing stories by following the framework.

On the other hand, Guinto (2012) also used Labov and Waletzky's framework in analysing the preferred writing patterns among 29 Filipino young writers in the Youngblood section of Philippine Daily Inquirer. He found out that the 29 young Filipino writers follow these patterns: introducing the temporal

setting; introducing the situation; recapitulation of series of events; releasing tension; giving comment on the story from outside; and connecting the world of the story to the present. He argued that these young Filipino writers' narrative essays are leading towards the standard Western way of writing.

In the present study, the researcher also used the same framework of Labov and Waletzky in determining the rhetorical structure that emerged in the narrative essays of Vietnamese students.

Features of Labovian Narrative Analysis

According to Tolliver (1997) the framework provided by Labov and Waletzky is pertinent for examining natural, oral and simple narratives. It also emphasized the concepts of reporting past events and temporal juncture to understand the importance of evaluating narratives. The six-part narrative analysis framework of Labov and Waletzky that begins with an abstract, orientation, evaluation, complication, resolution and coda is used as a guide in coding the rhetorical patterns that emerged in the narrative essays. The six-part analysis framework was then used in the coding to describe the moves and steps utilized by the Vietnamese students in writing. The following descriptions guide the researchers in coding where M stands for moves while S stands for steps.

M1 - Abstract

An abstract presents an initial clause that reports the entire sequence of events in the narrative. The steps in M1-Abstract are as follows:

Step 1 Announcing the beginning of the story

Step 2 Stating the sequence in the story

Step 3 Presenting the summary of the story

M2 -Orientation

Orientation or orientation section refers to the structure feature that serves to orient listeners in respect to person, place of the events, time, identities of the participants and their behavioural situation. In the narrative clauses, phrases or lexical items frequently appeared as an orientation function. The steps in M2 – Orientation are as follows:

Step 1 introducing the characters

Step 2 introducing temporal setting

Step 3 introducing the situation

M3 - Complication

A simple narrative is a result of a sequential clause that ends the complicating action. The step in M3 – complication includes *Step 1 recapitulating series of events*

M4 - Evaluation

Evaluation section is significant to establish personal interest in a narrative event. This section is concern with the information for human needs and desires. The steps in

M4 – evaluation are as follows:

Step 1 reporting what is un/interesting in the story

Step 2 stating additional details about the characters

Step 3 suspending action

Step 4 comparing the sequence of events

M5 - Result or Resolution

The result or resolution is a structure of complicating and resolving actions that are considered as the ending of narratives. The steps in M3 – resolution are as follows:

Step 1 releasing the tension of the events

Step 2 finally telling what happens or will happen

M6 - Coda

A coda is a structure of events in the narratives that describe the time of speaking with a functional device in examining verbal perspective for returning to the present moment. The steps in M6 – coda are as follows:

Step 1 announcing the ending of the story

Step 2 providing summary of the story

Step 3 stating the connections of the events

Instrumentation

According to Labov and Waletzky, a fully formed narrative follows the six-part structure: (1) abstract – Announces the beginning of the story; (2) orientation – introduces characters, temporal setting, and situation; (3) complicating action – recapitulates series of events leading to the climax; (4) evaluation – reports what is un/interesting in the story; (5) result or resolution – releases the tension and finally tells what happens; and (6) coda – announces the ending of the story. This framework was used as a coding guide to determine the rhetorical pattern in the narrative essays of Vietnamese. Following the six-part structure of the framework, the emerging rhetorical moves from the narrative essays are determined through the aid of simple statistical techniques such as frequency and percentage. The researcher also identified whether the ‘moves’ and ‘steps’ are preferred or optional. The Slovin’s formula was used in considering

whether the move/step is preferred or optional. The move/step is considered as ‘preferred’ if it appears in at least 27 or 90% in the narrative essays. The total number of 27 or 90% is the result from the computation using Slovin’s formula with 0.05% level of significance which is the standard probability level of significance. Therefore, the move/step appearing at least 27 in the essay is statistically worth to be labeled ‘preferred move’. If the moves and steps from the narrative essays proved to be preferred, the researcher then regarded these as the emerging rhetorical pattern in the narrative essays of Vietnamese students.

Data Collection Procedure

The 30 Vietnamese students from Viet Nam were asked to write their life experiences as a college student in the Philippines through their personal narrative essay. As regard to the choice of the topic, the researcher believes it is of significance that the topic is familiar, realistic and achievable since only limited time was given to the students. All of the participants are native speakers of Vietnamese language. They use Vietnamese language in communicating orally and in writing with their Vietnamese friends and family. The Vietnamese students are all third year college students, ages 20-23 years old.

Results and Discussions

The data on Table 1 summarizes the rhetorical patterns that emerged in the 30 narrative essays written in English by Vietnamese students. As reflected in Table 1, there are two steps from M2 - Orientation and only one step from M5 - Resolution which emerged to be the preferred move/step in the analysis. The steps were introducing the characters and situation followed by telling what happens/will happen. It is apparent from the result of the study that Vietnamese students tend to ignore the other moves like M1, M3, M4 and M6 that got low frequency. The move/steps that got at least 27 frequency were considered the preferred moves/steps by Vietnamese college students in writing narrative essays.

Table 1. Labovian narrative analysis of the rhetorical structure for the personal narrative essays

Move step	f	%
QD		
Move 1 Abstract		
Step1 Announcing the beginning of the story	4	13.3
O		
Step 2 Stating the sequence in the story	1	3.33

O	Step 3 Presenting the summary of the story	0	0
O	Move 2 Orientation		
	Step 1 introducing the characters	30	100
PM	Step 2 introducing temporal setting	10	33.4
O	Step 3 introducing the situation	27	90
PM	Move 3 Complication		
	Step 1 recapitulating series of events	1	3.34
O	Move 4 Evaluation		
	Step 1 reporting what is un/interesting in the story	11	36.7
O	Step 2 stating additional details about the characters	13	43.4
O	Step 3 suspending action	4	13.4
O	Step 4 comparing the sequence of events	0	0
O	Step 5 Explaining what happened	1	3.33
O	Move 5 Result or Resolution		
	Step 1 releasing the tension of the events	6	20
O	Step 2 finally telling what happens or will happen	27	90
PM	Move 6 coda- announces that the story is finished.		
	Step 1 announcing the ending of the story	16	53.6
O	Step 2 providing summary of the story	0	0
O	Step 3 stating the connections of the events	0	0
O			

Legend: f – frequency; % - percentage; QD – qualitative description; = PM or Preferred Move O=Optional
R – rank Note: f – Frequency or number of instances the move/step are observed in the corpus.

The Rhetorical Patterns from the Narrative Essays

In reference to the six moves and 19 steps from the framework, two moves and three steps were found to be the preferred moves by Vietnamese students when writing a narrative essay. While three moves and 16 steps were found to be optional, there are four steps which are not present in the 30 essays and got 0 or 0%. These are M1S3 – presenting the summary of the story; M4S4 - comparing the sequence of event; M6S2- providing the summary of the story and M6S3 stating the connections of the events. There are also some optional moves/steps that appear in most of the narrative essays but fall short of count to be considered preferred for the 30 essays. It was mentioned in the methodology that moves/steps should be present in at least 27 or 90% from a total of 30 essays to be considered as the ‘preferred move’ or the emerging rhetorical pattern.

For instance, in Move 6 Step 1(M6S1) - announcing the ending of the story only appears in 16 essays or 53.6%. Therefore, this move is not considered as a preferred move but worth to be given emphasized in the study. The researcher observed that from the 16 essays, the Vietnamese students have similarities in announcing the ending of the story. This is apparent from the following extracts:

- Essay (2) THANKS for letting me share my story.
- Essay (4) THANK YOU for reading my essay.
- Essay (21) This is my story. THANK YOU.
- Essay (24) It is not long but I think it is enough. THANK for reading!

The researcher would like to argue that this move although not considered as a preferred move is worth to be given emphasis for reasons that this phenomenon as observed by the researcher is never present in the narrative essays of her Filipino students. This is consistent with the study of Huong, (2012) that politeness for Vietnamese people is a crucial factor for effective communication valued in Viet Nam’s social context. However Huong stressed that politeness of Vietnamese people heavily rely on the social status of the hearer or the speaker. The study of Huong elucidates why some Vietnamese students end their narrative essays with ‘thank you’. In the light of World Englishes, the manner for which some Vietnamese students end their essay can be attributed to cultural differences.

Furthermore, Table 1 explains that from the six moves adopted from the framework in Labovian Narrative Analysis, only two moves were found to be preferred in the narrative essays which are Move 2 – Orientation and Move 5 – Result or Resolution. It is clear that from 19 possible steps from the Labovian Narrative Analysis, only three steps emerged from the essays of Vietnamese

students which are Step 1 from M2 - Introducing the characters; Step 3 from M2 – Introducing the situation and Step 2 from M5 - Telling what happens or will happen.

Again, the data from Table 1 reveals that in Move 2- Orientation, two steps were preferred, i. e. – Step 1- Introducing the characters with frequency of 30 or 100 % and Step 3- Introducing the situation with frequency of 27 or 90% respectively. While from Move 5- Result or Resolution, only one step was preferred, i. e. - Step 2 finally telling what happens or will happen with 27 or 90 %.

In the conduct of the study, 30 Vietnamese students when asked to write their life experiences as a college student in the Philippines through their personal narrative essays prefer to first introduce themselves. It is shown in table 1 wherein M2S1 – Orientation-introducing the characters got 30 or 100%. While M1S1 – Abstract - announcing the beginning of the story only got 4 or 13.3%. Vietnamese students do not announce the subject or topic of their composition but prefer to directly introduce the characters in their essays. The preferred move/step of Vietnamese students can be observed from the following extracts:

Essay (13) M2S1 – Introducing the characters

*Hello, my name is Thao. My english name is June.
My family include four people: my father, my father,
my old brother and me. I don't have sister so
that's a bit boring sometimes.*

Essay (4) M2S1 – Introducing the characters

*I'm Trang, English name is Hailie, Im from Viet Nam,
I'm 22 years old We have 4 people in my family. My
parents, my older brother and me. My parents working
in the farm. My brother work for my government....*

The two samples from the gathered data explain that Vietnamese students tend to disregard the first move suggested in Labov and Waletzky's framework which is announcing the beginning of the story or introducing the topic or subject of the text. Instead, they directly proceed in introducing the characters in the story which can be attributed to their desire to establish to the readers that they are Vietnamese students. It also prepares the audience that the character and the writer is the same person being described in the essay. The data from Table 1 also reveals that M2S3 – Orientation - introducing the situation got the second highest frequency with 27 or 90%. Therefore after introducing the characters in the essay, Vietnamese students then directly introduce the situation. This can be observed in the following extract:

Essay (2) M2S3 – Introducing the situation

Essay (4) *In 2013, my parents decided to send me to the Philippines for studying as an overseas student. It changed my life much.....*
 M2S3 – Introducing the situation
I'm went to the Philippine when I was so young At the time I was 19 years old. I felt miss my hometown and my parent so much. I met some new friend and after so many thing I know the life it not always beautiful.....

The introduction on the situation of the characters prepares the readers of what is bound to unfold in the succeeding sentences. It also introduces the difficult situation of a Vietnamese student studying in a country different from theirs. Consequently, it was also found out that M5S2 – Result or Resolution – telling what happens and what will happen is the third and last preferred move by Vietnamese students in writing their personal narrative essays with 27 or 90% occurrence in the data on Table 1. The following excerpt is from the gathered data:

Essay (13) M5S2 – Telling what happen or will happen
NOW, my ambition is be a rich business at the same time, so I need to study and be mature. I hope that my life will be better and better.

The excerpt from essay (13) follows the discussion of Dalisay (2006) that a resolution or results are events of realizations being retold by the writer with signals like now, so, in other words, anyway, in the future and many other signals. These events of realization can also be an anticipation of what they would like to happen in the future which can be observed in this excerpt:

Essay (9) M5S2 – Telling what happen or will happen

NOW It's been three year I stayed here. I will try study hard and save my experiences more. My dream is I can manage a small company in the future.

At this point, Table 2 reveals the distinct rhetorical patterns of Vietnamese students that may be deemed less acceptable to the perceived 'standard' in writing. It is observed that only three steps emerged from the rhetorical pattern which exhibits shorter and simpler way of writing a narrative essay. According to

Silva (in press) ESL/EFL learners write with short paragraphs with less sophistication. It is evident in the narrative essays of Vietnamese students who complained during the conduct of the study that they lack enough ‘vocabulary’ to write their essay. The preferred moves and steps were ranked after the analysis. The findings are as follows:

Table 2. Rhetorical pattern that emerged from the personal narrative essays of Vietnamese Students

Move step	f	%
QD		
M2S1: Orientation: introducing the characters PM	30	100
M2S3: Orientation: introducing the situation PM	27	90
M5S2: Result: finally telling what happens or will happen PM	27	90

From the data on table 2, it can be perceived that the rhetorical pattern that emerged from the narrative essays are preferred by almost 30 Vietnamese students that follow this pattern in writing - iintroducing the characters, introducing the situation and finally telling what happen or what will happen. The rhetorical pattern that emerged from the 30 narrative essays of Vietnamese students does not follow the –introduction, body and conclusion. This pattern of writing also differs from the findings of Guinto (2012) who asserted that the 29 young Filipino writers still write in the manner leading towards the standard western practice. The differences of the moves and steps employed by 30 Vietnamese students and 29 young Filipino writers in the study of Guinto may be attributed to Kachru’s Concentric Circles of Englishes where Philippines is positioned in the Outer Circle and English is a second official language. It is notable to mention that young Filipino writers are consistently exposed to the use of English as a medium of instruction in schools making them proficient in speaking and writing in English. Also, in the Philippines, Martin (2009) argues that the prospectus in writing courses still adheres to the Western pedagogical canons. Viet Nam on the other hand, has only begun the implementation of English in their educational system for it recognizes the significance of English as a lingua franca. To (2010) reveals in his study that Vietnamese have limited English competence because the teaching and learning of English in Viet Nam is still in crisis. Thus Vietnamese students move to other Asian countries to study

and learn English.

Implications to EFL students

This study is initially intended to be of help for EFL students. It is the researchers' utmost hope that this study will provide insights to language educators to consider the result of the study as a viable contribution in the curriculum planning for English programs for foreign students. It is essential to re-consider prospectus and practices fitting for EFL students particularly in writing. There is also a need for instructional materials that should provide understanding to the rhetorical patterns that emerged from the study. As Silva (1994) argued that materials that are successful in teaching native speakers of English may not be necessarily efficient in teaching ESL/EFL learners. It might even be a disadvantage for them.

The main objective of this study is to determine the rhetorical pattern used by 30 Vietnamese students in writing narrative essays which may be of help in addressing the concerns among language teachers. Results show that Vietnamese students narrative essays deviate from the deemed standard of writing favored in most universities in the Philippines. The Vietnamese students tend to ignore the steps for a good composition such as introduction -announcing the beginning or the topic of the story, body- developing the topic of the story and conclusion - providing the summary of the story. The pattern for which the 30 Vietnamese students use in writing is directly introducing the character and situation followed by telling what happens or will happen. This three-step pattern used by Vietnamese students is deviating from what is perceived a good composition. It is significant to reiterate that the personal narrative essays of Vietnamese students were written inside the classroom and were never checked by the teacher that may have numerous imperfections but according to Pajares & Johnson (1996) may be the most reliable source for a study.

Therefore the rhetorical patterns that emerged from the study could give language teachers ideas on what needs to be done in addressing the issues that concern the written composition of their EFL students. For one, they can propose appropriate strategies in teaching EFL students in the early phase of their writing class. It is also crucial that after language teachers are exposed to the result of the study, they will not only understand but will have a tolerance for rhetorical differences manifested in the essays of their EFL students. The result of the study will also raise awareness and understanding among teachers of English to the different facets of writing essays embedded in the cultural background of the students. Connor (1996) posits that different rhetorical patterns of the students are not indicators of educational deficiencies but more of a cultural influence. This is important for the teachers in planning their writing activities suited for EFL

students that will help them adjust their writing styles. The writing activities should encourage students to celebrate their culture and individuality but should also equip them to engage their compositions to the target audience. EFL students, specifically Vietnamese students should also be made aware on the result of the study for them to better understand their pattern in writing. Although it is still commendable that English teachers guide their students to write compositions more acceptable and comprehensible by the target readers, encouraging them to elaborate and explain their ideas without hesitation is important to EFL students. The researcher also strongly suggests in this paper the importance of constructing effective evaluation that will fairly assess the compositions of EFL students.

Conclusion

In this paper, it was established that there is a rhetorical pattern preferred in writing narrative essays distinct among 30 Vietnamese students enrolled in the Philippines. This pattern deviates from what is perceived standard leading towards western's style of writing –introduction, body, conclusion which is preferred in most of the universities in the Philippines. Instead, these students prefer to write their essay following these structures: (1) introducing the character; (2) introducing the situation and lastly; (3) telling what happens or what will happen. It is apparent that Vietnamese students produced only short narrative essays by following three steps that emerged from the study. This pattern may not have the qualities of a good composition nevertheless it shows the identity of Vietnamese essays as a unique discourse community. It is equally important to raise consciousness among language teachers to a different rhetorical pattern coming from the Outer Circle for which English is considered a foreign language. Therefore the pattern that emerged from the study should encourage teachers of English to assess and evaluate student writing with understanding. It is strongly suggested that other scholars interested in writing structure may examine rhetorical patterns of other *Asian Englishes*. The result may be a good basis for curriculum development and revision of teaching materials in EFL programs. Likewise, future studies should continue to examine other rhetorical patterns of Asian Englishes from students' composition to teachers' journal articles. Thus Asian students should not only be made aware of different writing styles but more so language teachers should foster celebration of the ASEAN's cultural differences in the practice of *Asian Englishes*

References: _

Anh, K. H. K., (2010) Use of Vietnamese in English language teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers, *English Language*

- Teaching*, 3,(2), 119-128.
- Bautista, M. L. S. (2000a). The Grammatical features of educated Philippine English. In M.L.S. Bautista, T.A. Llamzon and B.P. Sibayan (Eds.), Manila Linguistic Society of the Philippines
- Berowa, A., Devanadera, A. & David, S. (2018). Attitude toward English among Vietnamese students in the Philippines, *The Asian EFL Journal*, 20(2), 6-19.
- Boyno, M., Akil, E., Dolas, F., (2013). The application of the Labovian narrative analysis to a short story in an EFL class, *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 37, 113-122
- Canagarajah, S. (2007) Lingua Franca English, multilingual communities, and language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*. 91, 923-939
- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dalisay, J. (2006). *The knowing is in the writing: Notes on the practice of fiction*. Quezon City, Philippines: UP Press.
- Dayag, D. T. (2007). Exploring the intelligibility of Philippine English. *Asian Englishes*, 10(1), 4-231
- Gonzalez, A. (1997) The History of English in the Philippines. In M.L.S. Bautista (Ed.), *English as an Asian Language: The Philippine context* (pp.25-40) NSW, Australia
The Macquarie Libray Pty Ltd.
- Groves, J. (2010). Error or feature: The issue of interlanguage and deviations in non- native varieties of English. *HKBU Papers in Applied Language Studies*, 14, 110- 129.
- Guinto, N. (2012) Defying rhetorical orthodox: *The Filipino youth and the structure of their narrative Essays*, Annual International Conference in Journalism and Mass Communication, GSTF Official conference proceedings, Global Science and Technology Forum.
- [Heydari, P. & Bagheri, M. \(2012\)](#). Error Analysis: Sources of L2 Learners' Errors, *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(8), 1583-1589.
- Huong, V.T.L. (2012) Linguistic and cultural features of requests: Some implications for teaching and learning English as a Foreign language, *Journal of Science, Hue University*, 70 (1), 71-85.

- Kachru, B. (1996). The paradigms of marginality, *World Englishes*, 15(3), 241-255.
- Kachru, B. (1997) English as an Asian Language. In M.L.S Baustista (Ed.), *English as An Asian Language: The Philippine context (pp.1-23)* NSW, Australia The Macquarie Libray Pty Ltd.
- Kachru, B. (2005). *Asina Englishes: Beyond the canon*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2012). English in ASEAN: Implications for regional multilingualism, *Journal of Nations (ASEAN): Features and strategies. English Today*, 24(2), 27- 34.
- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1997). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. In *Oral Versions of Personal Experience: Three Decades of Narrative Analysis*. Bamberg M. (Ed.).
- Labov, William and Joshua Waletzky. (1967). Narrative analysis. In J. Helm (Ed.), *Essays on the Verbal and Visual Arts*. Seattle: U. of Washington
- Martin, I. (2009). Colonial education and the shaping of Philippine literature in English. In Bautista, M.S. & Bolton, K., *Philippine English: Linguistic and literary perspectives*. (pp 245-259), Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Nguyen, T. T. L. (2016). Reconsidering the first steps of CLIL implementation in Vietnam. *European Journal of Language Policy*, 8(1), 29-56.
- Nhan, T. (2013). Promoting content and language integrated learning in gifted high schools in Vietnam: Challenges and impacts, *The Internet Journal Language, Culture and Society*, (38), 146-153.
- Pajares, F. & Johnson, M. (1996). The role of self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and apprehension. *Research in the teaching of English*, 28(3), 318-329.
- Seidlhofer, B.(2004) Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 209-239.
- Silva, T. (1994). An examination of writing program administrators' options for the placement of ESL students in first year writing classes. *Writing Program Administration*, 18, 37-43.
- Silva, T. (in press). Differences in ESL and native English speaker writing: The research and its implications. In J. Butler, J. Guerra, & C. Severino (Eds.), *Writing in multicultural settings*. New York: Modern Language Association.
- To, T.T.H. (2010). Insights from Viet Nam, In R. Johnstone (ed.) *Learning through English: Policies, Challenges and Prospects. Insights from East Asia*. (pp. 96- 114).Malaysia: British Council.

- Tolliver, J. (1997). From Labov and Waletzky to contextualist narratology, *Journal of Narrative and Life History* (7) 1-4.
- Tran, T. T. T., & Baldauf, R. B. (2007). Demotivation: understanding resistance to English language learning the case of Vietnamese students. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 4(1), 79-105.
- Tupas, R.F. (2006). The problem of culture in the teaching of professional education, *STETS Language and Communication Review*, 5(1), 1-11.
- Van de Craen, P., Ceuleers, E., Lochtman., K., Allain, L. and Mondt., K. (2007). *An interdisciplinary research approach to CLIL Learning in primary schools in Brussels*. Vrije Universiteit Brussel: Belgium.
- Wee, L. (2010). The particle ya in Colloquial Singapore English. *World Englishes*, 29 (1), 45-48.
- Wong, M. (2007). Tag questions in Hong Kong English: A corpus-based study. *Asian Englishes*, 10(1), 44-61.

Note on Contributor

Aprillette C. Devanadera is an Assistant Professor I of Southern Luzon State University. She holds a master's degree in Applied Linguistics as area of specialization. Currently, she is finishing a doctorate degree in Applied Linguistics at De la Salle University, Manila, Philippines. Her research interests are in the field of World Englishes, Discourse Analysis and Linguistic Landscape. She can be reached at aprillette_devanadera@dlsu.edu.ph