How to Teach Contrastive (Intercultural) Rhetoric: Some Ideas for Pedagogical Application

Deron WALKER

California Baptist University, USA

Abstract

Background: Despite years of intense criticism of contrastive (intercultural) rhetoric, theoretical debate, and controversy, there has been a recent resurgence in the number of high quality pedagogical studies concerning the teaching of intercultural rhetoric in university writing classes for East-Asian (Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) writers.

Aims: This article seeks to link theory to practice, synthesize the best methods and techniques from the aforementioned recent studies and begin a "how to" discussion for ESL / EFL writing instructors.

Literature Review: Recent research suggests techniques such as (1) students as ethnographers, (2) e-learning, (3) use of students' L1, and (4) teacher conferencing and peer response can enhance intercultural rhetoric and second language writing instruction as a result.

The "How To"…Classroom Implementation: The researcher discusses the aforementioned research-based techniques introduced in the literature review section and makes practical and specific suggestions for implementing them in writing classrooms.

Conclusion: A number of recent studies in East-Asia in particular (China, Japan, and Korea), have pointed to a pedagogically practical resurgence of intercultural rhetoric.

Keywords: contrastive rhetoric, intercultural, pedagogical

如何教授對比修辭學（跨文化）：教學法應用的幾點思考

Deron WALKER

美國加州浸會大學

摘要

*背景：*儘管多年來在對比修辭學（跨文化）的理論思辯存在激烈的批評和爭論，最近在東亞（中國、日本和韓國）的大學為作家開設的跨文化對比修辭學寫作班的高質量教學研究似有復甦的現象。

*目的：*本文旨在連接理論到實踐，從上述最近的研究找尋組成的最佳方法和技術，並開始了在 英語作為 第二語言/外語 的寫作導師間有關 如何實踐的討論。

*文獻綜述：*最近的研究結果顯示，有些技巧如（1）學生學習作為人類學的研究員，（2）利用電子媒體去學習，（3）利用學生的常用語言，和（4）教師會談及同儕的回應等 都可以加強不同文化間的言辭和第二語言寫作教學。

*"如何"…在課堂上的實施：*研究者討論上述以研究為基礎的技巧，放在文獻綜述部分中，提出實際和具體的建議，落實在寫作課堂中。

*結論：*最近在東亞，特別是（中國、日本和韓國）的一些研究，都指出了跨文化修辭教學法實際在復甦中。

關鍵詞：對比修辭學、跨文化、教學的

Introduction

This article addresses a significant issue in intercultural rhetorical studies. Although contrastive (intercultural) rhetoric was initiated with the explicit pedagogical purpose of helping English as a Second Language (ESL) writers to compose more rhetorically effective English expository essays (Kaplan, 1966, 1988), until recently the field has carried the epitaphs of being "disappointing" and "limited" (Liebman, 1988, p. 7) and "lacking in development and application to classroom study" (Walker, 2006, p. 94), a sentiment expressed by many other research studies as well (Casanave, 2004; Matsuda, 1997; Walker, 2008). Nevertheless, some recent researchers have reported pedagogically promising findings for implementing contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction for East-Asian students in or from China (Xing, Wang & Spencer, 2008), Japan (Yoshimura, 2002), and Korea (Walker, 2006).

A succinct pairing of distinct features of contrastive rhetoric was recently delineated by Xing, Wang and Spencer (2008, pp. 73-75) in their study of contrastive rhetoric and e-learning. The aforementioned researchers defined five features of contrastive rhetoric [English paired with East-Asian style appearing first] that warrant consideration and may be used as a baseline for contrastive rhetoric research and classroom application in East-Asia. These five features are as follows:

1. Inductive v. Deductive (Delayed Thesis)
2. "Start-Sustain-Turn-Sum" v. "Introduction-Body-Conclusion" (Paragraphs)
3. Circular v. Linear (Topic Sentences and Changes)
4. Metaphorical v. Straightforward (Use of Metaphors and Proverbs)
5. Explicit Discourse Markers (Transitions)

Simply stated, the researchers contend that from a western perspective East-Asian academic writing 1) features a delayed thesis statement; 2) turns more to unrelated subjects or other angles than proceeding in a linear fashion; 3) contains fewer topic sentences but incorporates more topic changes; 4) uses more metaphor and 5) employs fewer transition markers.

The purpose of this article is to synthesize pedagogically promising findings in contrastive (intercultural) rhetoric and suggests possible instructional techniques, which can be useful to promote contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction in classrooms in either ESL or EFL settings, especially with significant though not necessarily exclusive East-Asian student populations. This paper specifically discusses the potential usefulness of the following instructional techniques in promoting contrastive rhetoric in the writing classroom: (1) students as ethnographers, (2) e-learning, (3) use of students' L1, and (4) teacher conferencing and peer response. All of these techniques for delivering intercultural rhetorically-oriented writing instruction may benefit second language writing students in either ESL or EFL settings at either secondary or tertiary levels.

Literature Review
Pedagogical Techniques: Ethnography, E-Journals, Use of L1 and Teacher Conferencing and Peer-response
Ethnography.

The first technique this article will review for promoting contrastive rhetoric in the writing classroom is ethnography. Connor's (2004) call for ethnographic study was not an original idea. It echoes the work of Liebman (1988), who turned her students into ethnographers in revisiting and critiquing Kaplan's original article in contrastive rhetoric. Liebman (1988) was both researcher and participant in her naturalistic inquiry in which she turned two freshman writing classes, one native English Speaking (NES) and one English as a Second Language (ESL), into researcher-participants as well. Liebman's

classes explored "whether different communities have different rhetorics, and if so, how they differed" (1988, p. 7) by doing five formal writing assignments on intercultural communication that included a summary of Kaplan's (1966) article and a second paper either supporting or critiquing his views.

The student ethnographers in this study reached mixed conclusions which neither confirmed nor denied the tenets of contrastive rhetoric conclusively, but seemed to enlarge all participants' vision of it---even Liebman's (1988). In fact, many students were supportive of Kaplan's (1966) ideas. Most notably, it is interesting that all three Japanese students in Liebman's (1988) study confirmed the indirectness of Japanese rhetoric. All three students indicated that indirectness was taught in Japanese, attaching it to Japanese notions of politeness. One student, Junko Tanaka, elaborated, "[The Japanese] prefer to be modest and polite, what we call the old-fashioned way" (Liebman, 1988, p. 10). These cultural and historical explanations of Japanese academic writing conventions were consistent with what researchers have said about Chinese (Chu, Swaffar & Charnay, 2002; Matalene, 1985; Shen, 1989), Japanese (Hinds, 1983, 1987, 1990; Yoshimura, 2002), and Korean (Eggington, 1987, Walker, 2005, 2006) compared with American English conventions of academic rhetoric. Nevertheless, students were not unequivocal in their support of Kaplan's work (1966) but expressed many feelings of ambivalence about Kaplan's conclusions. One student, Kazumi Mase, summed up the complexity of the topic well:

> My first idea [when reading Kaplan] about linguistics was that a person that doesn't speak a language can never understand the structure of that language. However, as I've done my research I understand that my idea about the language was wrong. Although I've been speaking Japanese more than twenty years, I had never noticed that Japanese was such an indirect language until I researched it by myself (Liebman, 1988, p. 11).

While many of Liebman's students agreed with Kaplan's (1966) findings, a significant number of them voiced at least some skepticism or disagreement. Interestingly, more native English speaking (NES) than second language students dissented. Students' criticisms were similar to those voiced by Kaplan's scholarly critics contending that his original ideas concerning contrastive rhetoric were over-generalized, too simplistic, product-centered, and more focused on ideal standards rather than actual manifestations of student writing.

Although the results were mixed, Liebman (1988) stated that even though she began the ethnography with a "negative view toward contrastive rhetoric" (p.16), she concluded the study with the ability to see contrastive rhetoric as "a powerful and informative concept" (p. 16). Despite allowing her "own perspective [to] creep in, for so many of the papers do reflect [her] opinion" (p. 16), Liebman (1988) concluded that the students in her classes had benefited substantially from this ethnographic approach to their writing classes and the further sharing of their ideas in teacher conferences.

E-learning: the cutting edge.

The second technique this article will review for promoting contrastive rhetoric in writing classrooms is e-learning. These days everyone wants to incorporate technology into the classrooms to facilitate better classroom instruction. Not surprisingly, technology has demonstrated great potential to raise cultural awareness as it brings people together. Xing, Wang, and Spencer (2008) investigated the potential impact of e-learning on raising overseas students' cultural awareness and creating an interactive learning environment to improve the rhetorical composition of Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students.

Xing, Wang and Spencer's (2008) study involved 90 Chinese students. Sixty of these students were

doctoral students who were randomly assigned to either an experimental group (N = 30) or a control group (N = 30). The remaining students (N = 30) were undergraduate Chinese language majors (Chinese Writers Group) who formed a baseline for identifying rhetorical features in Chinese. Most of the participating students (60) were from Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT) while 15 students were from Harbin Teachers' University, and the remaining 15 students came from Heilongjiang University.

Additionally, there were 15 English lecturers from the United Kingdom (UK Writers Group) who also participated in this study. These lecturers taught a basic foundation English course, and their essays served as the English baseline for rhetorical comparison with the Chinese students. Students in both experimental and control groups received four hours of English language instruction per week. In addition, the experimental group used the e-course for supplementary writing instruction. Primarily, students in the e-course could gain awareness of and proficiency in the various rhetorical styles by viewing models of essays using Chinese and English rhetorical patterns and obtaining advice from tutors and other students on their writing via electronic chat rooms and bulletin boards.

The results of that study demonstrated that significant differences existed in the rhetorical styles between the Chinese students and UK writers (instructors). The Chinese doctoral students in both experimental and control groups improved their rhetorical proficiency on essays significantly in the study. The control group with conventional writing instruction improved in two of four areas (number of paragraphs and position of thesis paragraph) while the experimental group improved in three of four areas (two aforementioned plus number of discourse markers) although there were limitations in the e-learning course in availability of materials and limited opportunities to be online with native speakers. Thus, intercultural rhetorical instruction applied through the e-learning environment appeared to facilitate higher rhetorical proficiency in the target language of English for the Chinese doctoral students.

Use of L1.

Another technique for improving contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction would be to use the L1 more in writing instruction. One fairly recent pedagogically relevant study involving contrastive rhetoric in East-Asia was conducted by Yoshimura (2002), who believed that contrastive rhetoric-oriented instruction would best be delivered in students' L1, which in this case was Japanese. This study included 105 subjects, 74 male and 31 female, from a variety of majors studying in required general English courses at Kyoto Sangyo University, a private university in Kyoto, Japan. The researcher provided contrastive rhetoric-oriented instruction in Japanese to both treatment groups. One group wrote in Japanese and translated their essays into English (J>E). The other experimental group wrote directly in English (E>E) after receiving contrastive rhetoric-oriented instruction in Japanese. The control group received no contrastive rhetoric-oriented instruction and simply translated their essays from Japanese into English.

The treatment consisted of regular, formal, explicit instruction in contrastive rhetoric and the employment of an intercultural, rhetorically-based conscious-raising activity as reinforcement. Typically, in the conscious-raising activities, "good quality" American English essays were compared directly with Japanese student essays. Students were then required to "find the gap" building on Schmidt's (1993) work, which was primarily concerned with such awareness in oral language. Yoshimura's study (2002) applied Schmidt's (1993) techniques to conscious-raising in terms of rhetorical awareness, a concept first ventured by Sengupta (1999). This teaching treatment of contrastive rhetoric was further reinforced by writing practice.

After one semester of instruction, all students

were tested. Both experimental groups improved their fluency (total word production) and writing quality. The experimental groups specifically improved in rhetorical proficiency and discourse level accuracy as rated by three judges. The researcher concluded that the findings reported here supported previous research in the Japanese EFL setting (Mizuno, 1995; Otaki, 1996, 1999) that "indicate the beneficial effects of explicit classroom instruction in contrastive rhetoric" (Yoshimura, 2002, p. 120). Yoshimura (2002) further found that the first language could facilitate positive as well as negative transfer with contrastive rhetoric-oriented instruction as other researchers have also observed (Friedlander, 1990; Walker, 2005, 2006).

In a survey at the end of the study, Yoshimura's subjects indicated that contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction helped them to write more easily, start earlier, and produce more English of a higher quality. Yoshimura (2002) expressed the belief that this result may be attributable, at least in part, to the lowering of the students' affective filters (Krashen, 1982). The researcher explained that at the beginning of the study students' affective filters had been high due to their inexperience in L2 writing (Okada, Okumura, Hirota & Tokioka, 1995) and their previous "form-focused" instruction, which had heightened their anxieties about making errors. It seems that contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction gave the students more confidence when writing in English, and, as a result, helped them to relax and write more effectively.

The implications of Yoshimura's (2002) study are clear and important. As other researchers have suggested (Connor, 1996, Walker, 2004, 2005, 2006), contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction can enable students to improve their writing effectiveness, awareness of audience expectations in the target language, and ability to avoid negative transfer from the L1 to the L2. Equally important is the finding that writing instructors should not prohibit students from using their first language in their writing classes, as they often do. The researcher pointed out that for low-proficiency learners especially, the L1 could be a significant source of both comfort and assistance in tackling the enormously complex task of brainstorming, organizing, developing, and revising a composition in a second language. Thus, Yoshimura (2002) has significantly added to what we know about the potential for contrastive rhetoric-oriented composition pedagogy to be a powerful force in the EFL writing classroom in East-Asia.

Use of teacher conferencing and peer-response.

Another means of promoting contrastive rhetoric in writing instruction would be to use techniques such as teacher conferencing and peer response activities, possibly in tandem, to discuss rhetorical differences with students in a more targeted way, in reference to specific features of their own writing. Sixteen years after Liebman (1988), Walker (2004, 2006) conducted a quantitative study of 65 university level students in six English Grammar and Composition courses at Handong Global University in South Korea. This study employed the ethnographic approach---not by studying artifacts---but by holding interactive, contrastive rhetoric-oriented discussions in teacher conferences and peer-response sessions to reinforce contrastive rhetoric-oriented classroom writing instruction. This study of EFL university students established that 1) contrastive rhetoric instruction, taught even through the traditional composition methods of lecture and written feedback on essays (control group), can help students write more rhetorically effective English academic essays; 2) contrastive rhetoric-oriented instruction using teacher conferencing and peer-response activities in tandem can significantly increase the rhetorical quality of students' English academic essay writing, especially for lower-level (<3.5 average essay ratings on 7 point scale) English composition students (Walker, 2004, 2005, 2006).

It is important to note that this effect holds substantial

significance since it was the low-level students, those with the greatest need for improvement, who benefitted most from the teaching treatment. The implication of this finding is even more noteworthy because a vast majority of ESL/EFL university level writing students may indeed enter their undergraduate writing courses as low level writers, as was true in this study (41 of 65 subjects). Succinctly stated, contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction reinforced by teacher conferencing and peer-response activities could be helpful to a majority of second language writing students in many contexts (Walker, 2004, 2006).

Research on teacher conferencing informs us that teacher conferences make great forums for facilitating student higher order thinking, building struggling students' confidence, and reinforcing principles of English rhetoric taught in the classroom (Carnicelli, 1980; Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Oye, 1993; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Walker, 2004, 2005, 2006). Whether it is the native English speaking (NES) college freshman (Bartholomae, 1985) or the second language writer who has difficulty adjusting to the culture of American-style college education, one-on-one, "non-direct" discussions (Rogers, 1994) with students about their writing in teacher conferences can help students to internalize writing principles and apply them to their own writing through social interaction (Newkirk, 1995; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, the forum of teacher conferencing is an ideal place for students to receive sound, individualized attention and advice about their papers and also learn to make their own rhetorical decisions regarding what would be the best way to present their ideas to a given audience.

As for peer-response, some scholars have been quite positive about its potential advantages (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Mittan, 1989) while others have been more cautionary (Carson & Nelson, 1994, 1996; Connor & Asenavage, 1994). The Mendonca and Johnson study (1994), however, involved graduate students, not the

typical undergraduate composition students who are of the greatest concern in this article. Connor and Asenavage (1994) noted in their own study that peer-response had minimal impact on the revisions of the essays of the college freshmen they examined. Of even greater concern to ESL/EFL writing instructors, especially those working with East-Asian students, is the finding that student responses to peer-response activities in collectivist cultures such as Chinese, Japanese and Korean has, in many cases, ranged from lukewarm to hostile (Carson & Nelson, 1994, 1996).

Carson and Nelson (1994, 1996) have found that students from collectivist cultures may respond differently, seeing peer-response activities as either unhelpful or even intimidating. In collectivist cultures, it has often been observed that students may tend to give only positive feedback in order to maintain harmony in the group and avoid embarrassing a group member, especially one senior in status. Another limitation found in peer-response activities is that students who are unsure of what they are doing tend to make only surface corrections to the papers they review and offer few, if any, helpful suggestions regarding rhetoric or content (Leki, 1990). This conclusion concurs with Connor and Asenavage's (1994) disappointing finding that little revision came from peer comments (5%) in their study.

Despite some limitations and reason for caution, the incorporation of peer-response activities into the writing curriculum has become increasingly more popular in recent years, even in East-Asia. The underlying theoretical justification for this growing trend seems to be based on the Vygotskian (1978) concept that social interaction helps the student to internalize knowledge. In composition, for instance, this Vygotskian (1978) notion has found manifestation in Bruffee's (1986, p. 774) assertion that "new ideas are constructs generated by like-minded peers." In other words, the Vygotskian (1978) idea that social interaction helps students to internalize knowledge fits

well with the composition instructor's goal to increase audience awareness among student-writers through the creation of authentic discourse communities discussing and internalizing appropriate standards of academic writing. When peer-response activities work well, they offer students more opportunities to explore ideas and exercise higher order thinking skills, take a more active role in their learning, and become more adept at negotiating and expressing their ideas (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994). Peer-response activities may also enable students to gain a greater sense of audience through peer feedback, hone critical thinking skills needed to analyze and revise writing, and generate greater confidence in their own work by observing, first-hand, the difficulties that other students are having with their own writing.

The "How To": Pedagogical Techniques for Classroom Implementation

What do these studies tell us about implementing intercultural rhetorical instruction in our second language writing classrooms? These studies illustrate many principles and techniques that we can use to help raise students' awareness of cross-cultural aspects of written communication in particular. Employing intercultural rhetorically-oriented writing instruction with the help of these techniques can enable students to better comprehend how rhetorical styles vary among writers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and how these differences impact clear communication in writing. Conversely, simply lecturing about and discussing English rhetoric and differences between L1 and L2 composition styles may be of limited value. Often, more in-depth writing instruction appears necessary to reinforce and have students internalize contrastive rhetoric principles so that they could compose rhetorically smoother English essays.

This intercultural rhetorically-oriented writing instruction should begin in a student-centered manner. A classroom instructor might begin as Liebman (1988)

did by turning students into ethnographers to reexamine and analyze the findings of other scholars in intercultural rhetoric such as Kaplan (1966) or someone more recent. One might have international students read an article from a scholar concerning contrastive rhetoric or have students compare student essays written by native and non-native writers. The instructor can ask them to discuss their own experiences in learning the rhetoric of their L1, the difficulties they might encounter in gleaning the ideas presented in the foreign rhetoric of an English text, and the adjustments that they might make to meet the expectations of English audiences when they write in English. In addition to learning about intercultural rhetoric, students might then engage in rich discussions of language and culture and learn very valuable critical thinking and research skills. Students can discover the similarities and differences of rhetorical styles on their own, with gentle guidance from their instructor, which helps them to internalize cross-cultural conventions of academic writing (Walker, 2004, 2006).

Contrastive rhetoric-oriented ethnographic study can be reinforced in a variety of ways. On the prewriting side of the writing process, the use of journaling has been found to be effective for helping second language writers to build fluency in the L2, negotiate the nuances of intercultural rhetoric and construct a healthy identity as second language writers (Walker & Guan Lau, 2011). As Walker and Guan Lau (2011) suggested, journals may be used as a part of turning students into ethnographers by assigning students targeted questions concerning the essays and articles they read or as a means to reflect on their own writing processes. For instance, they might respond in a journal to questions about the thesis or conclusion of an essay written in an English rhetorical pattern and whether its features seem similar to or different than ones composed in their L1. Instructors might also ask students in a journal assignment to discuss how they organize their writings in English and

whether that might be similar to or different from how they learned to write essays in their native languages. In this age of technology, obviously, Xing, Wang and Spencer's (2008) work can optimize the old-fashioned journal assignment by moving it to the electronic discussion board. Likewise, students may be asked to post their journals in the electronic discussion board on an electronic Blackboard learning system. Students can then be instructed to respond at least once to another student's posting, which helps to create interactive discussions on the aforementioned journal topics.

On the revision side of the writing process, teacher conferences and peer-response sessions have been found to provide productive venues for facilitating student-ethnographic self-discovery with gentle mentoring and non-direct instruction that promotes the independent learning of the student (Walker, 2004, 2006). As previously mentioned, students may respond better to intercultural rhetoric if they are allowed to make discoveries for themselves. Instructors might act as sounding boards and facilitate discussion with intercultural rhetorically-oriented questions. For instance, if the student's thesis or essay organization does not follow a "linear" type of English style, the instructor can ask the student if s/he was using the kind of writing style that s/he commonly uses when writing in his/her L1. That is, some of the outstanding features of student writing might be purposefully discussed contrastively during peer-response and teacher conferencing sessions with the help of checklists, rubrics or guided questions.

As mentioned earlier, teacher conferences make great forums for facilitating student higher order thinking, building struggling students' confidence, and reinforcing principles of English rhetoric taught in the classroom (Carnicelli, 1980; Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Oye, 1993; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Walker, 2004, 2005, 2006). Whether it is the native English speaking (NES) college freshman (Bartholomae, 1985) or the second language writer who has difficulty adjusting to the culture of American-style college education, "non-direct" discussions (Rogers, 1994) with students about their writing in teacher conferences can help students to clarify ambiguities in the writing prompt or uncertainties about the direction of the organization and development of their ideas as well as assist them in internalizing writing principles and applying them to their own writing through social interaction (Newkirk, 1995; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Vygotsky, 1978; Walker, 2004, 2006). Research on the value of teacher conferencing, conducted through non-direct instruction, speaks with a virtual consensus as to the value of teacher conferencing to facilitate higher order critical thinking and discovery learning.

Succinctly stated, peer-response has also demonstrated great potential as it was an important part of Walker's (2006) intercultural rhetorically-focused teaching treatment in South Korea. This effect can be enhanced by tapping into the first language skills as in Yoshimura's (2002) study. One problem, however, with peer-response in EFL settings is that often students do not have sufficient oral English communication skills to discuss the complex ideas in their writing in the target language (L2). Thus, while students could be encouraged to do their best to discuss ideas in English, they might be permitted to use the L1 when necessary, even code-switching back to the L1 as needed. A bilingual instructor could be most helpful, especially with low-level English learners in basic or intermediate English writing courses.

Another issue of concern involved with implementing peer-response in writing classrooms revolves around the chemistry between groups of peer reviewers. Students must be able to work well together and relate well enough to form a trust that will allow them to offer and receive advice and corrective feedback on their writing from their peers. There are virtually an endless variety of ways to conduct peer-response in class. One can have students read

their papers aloud in a circle or exchange papers in groups based on similar or mixed ability levels among others. While there are many ways to do peer-response in class, instead of grouping students according to ability or in some other way, some instructors may prefer to allow students to choose their own reviewers so long as the comments they are getting and the peer interaction seem helpful. This more student-centered option to allow students to choose peer reviewers can work well since language acquisition and especially writing are such personal and sensitive academic endeavors. Therefore, allowing students to select their peer reviewers may help them feel relaxed and less inhibited and lower their affective filters (Krashen, 1982) so they can benefit more from the activity and avoid some of the relational awkwardness that especially Asian students have encountered with peer-response (Carson & Nelson, 1994, 1996).

Another difficulty with peer-response activities is that students may simply not have high enough oral English skills on the average to be able to discuss complex ideas they write about in the L2. Thus, despite pressures to get students to speak English more frequently, allowing students the trust and freedom to use their L1 judiciously and responsibly, speaking English when possible but code-switching strategically to bridge a gap in communication and meaning, can really help them to move their discussions forward and get more out of peer-response activities. Native English speaking instructors of writing in EFL classes can monitor groups with the assistance of a bilingual assistant. Even a native English speaking instructor with rudimentary skills in the student's L1 can often tell if students are on task or not by their body language and by following the essence of their conversations. Excellent students in the class or departmental assistants can be used to help facilitate peer-response activities with strategic use of the L1 when more assistance is needed.

Allowing students to use their L1 judiciously in class

can build a bridge in peer-response to help scaffold writing instruction in the second language and alleviate some of the stress students encounter with the activity if their speaking skills in English are limited. Moreover, as in Yoshimura's (2002) study, students, especially those at the beginning or low intermediate level, may write a first draft of their essay or at least their prewriting invention exercises (e.g. brainstorming, freewrites, etc.) in their L1 so that they get their ideas on paper quickly and easily. The relative ease of putting ideas on the paper in the early stages of writing often facilitates an easier and more comfortable drafting process, which then provides students with more time and energy for drafting and revising the paper in English. Whenever available, bilingual tutors in a writing center can then help the student to write or revise successfully as the L1 prewrite allows them to better understand what idea the student-writer was trying to communicate in the essay. Alternatively, advanced students in class can serve as bilingual peer tutors where writing center assistance is unavailable.

Peer-response works better when a lot of time and energy is taken to set it up. Students respond better when instructors thoroughly explain the expectations of the peer-response activity; inform students of the benefits of doing peer-response; outline the role of students as friendly coaches giving advice (not as overbearing teachers); explain why both positive and corrective comments are helpful to their peers; admonish peer reviewers to go beyond making surface corrections; help students be immersed into the activity by teaching them how to prioritize feedback; and provide students checklists that explicitly state clear criteria for good writing (Walker, 2004, 2006). It can also be helpful to allow students to be introduced to peer-response by initially working on neutral papers, ones that do not come from their peers. This should allow students to gradually adjust to critiquing papers more easily.

Conclusion

Again, while these techniques for delivery of contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction were proven effective with East-Asian writers at the university level, the writing instruction presented here would be easily adaptable to other levels and language backgrounds in either ESL or EFL settings. Although contrastive rhetoric-oriented writing instruction is certainly more challenging to implement in ESL rather than EFL settings because of the greater diversity of rhetorical backgrounds present among students, it is not impossible. The techniques themselves, as we have discussed, in terms of employing teacher conferencing, peer-response, e-journals and discussion boards, are already widely used in first and second language writing classrooms.

Wherever an instructor encounters a significantly large enrollment from a particular language and cultural background, Chinese or Spanish, for instance, the instructor can simply learn about the rhetorical features common to that background by studying samples of the writing and articles written that relate to that language group. Study buddies can engage in such discussions in their own first languages during peer-response activities where two or more are gathered of the same first language background. The instructor does not need to be an expert in the rhetoric of all languages since the beauty of ethnography is that instructors and students investigate the cross-cultural issues of rhetoric together as co-collaborators. One only needs to ask the right questions about writing, questions we already ask (concerning thesis placement, conclusions, transitions, etc.), and remember to inquire as to how it is done in the student's native language. These questions can provide natural segues to comparative dialogues between teacher and student that often prove enlightening to both.

References

Bartholomae, D. (1985). Inventing the university. In M. Rose (Ed.), *When a writer can't write:Studies in writer's block and other composing process problems* (pp.134-165). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Bruffee, K. A. (1986). Social construction, language and the authority of knowledge—A bibliographical essay. *College English, 48*(8), 773-790.

Carnicelli, T. A. (1980). The writing conference: A one-to-one conversation. In T. R. Donovan & B. W. McClelland (Eds.), *Eight approaches in teaching composition* (pp. 101-132). Urbana, IL: National Council for Teachers of English.

Carson, J. G., & Nelson, G. L. (1994). Writing groups: Cross-cultural issues. *Journal of Second   Language Writing, 3*(1), 17-30.

Carson, J. G., & Nelson, G. L. (1996). Chinese students' perceptions regarding peer-response   group interaction. *Journal of Second Language Writing,* 5(1), 1-19.

Casanave, C. P. (2004). Controversies in second language writing: Dilemmas and decisions in   research and instruction. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Chu, H. J., Swaffar, J., & Charnay, D. H. (2002). Cultural representations of rhetorical   conventions: The effects on reading recall. *TESOL Quarterly,* 36(4), 511-545.

Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second language writing.*   Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Connor, U. (2004). Intercultural rhetoric research: Beyond texts. *Journal of English for   Academic Purposes,* 3(4), 291-304.

Connor U., & Asenavage, K. (1994). Peer-response groups in ESL writing courses. How much   impact on revision? *Journal of Second Language Writing,* 3(3), 257-276.

Eggington, W. G. (1987). Written academic discourse in Korean: Implications for effective communication. In U. Conner & R. B. Kaplan (Eds.), *Writing across languages: Analysis of   L2 text* (p. 153-168). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Friedlander, A. (1990). Composing in English: Effects of a first language on writing in English   as a second language. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing* (pp.109-125). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hinds, J. (1983). Contrastive Rhetoric: Japanese and English. *Text,* 3(2), 183-195.

Hinds, J. (1987). Reader-writer responsibility: A new typology. In U. Connor & R. B. Kaplan   (Eds.), *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 text* (pp.141-152). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Hinds, J. (1990). Inductive, deductive, quasi-inductive: Expository writing in Japanese, Korean,   Chinese, and Thai. In U. Connor & A. M. Johns (Eds.), *Coherence in Writing: Research and pedagogical perspectives* (pp.89-109). Alexandria, VA: Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages.

Jacobs, S., & Karliner, A. (1977). Helping writers to think: The effect of speech roles in individual conferences on the quality of thought in student writing. *College English,* 38(5), 489-505.

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

Kaplan, R. B. (1988). Contrastive rhetoric and second language learning: Notes toward a theory of contrastive rhetoric. In A. C. Purves (Ed.), *Writing across languages and cultures: Issues in contrastive rhetoric* (pp. 275-304). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* New York, NY: Pergammon Press.

Leki, I. (1990). Potential problems with peer responding in ESL writing classes. *CATESOL,3,* 5-19.

Liebman, J. (1988). Contrastive rhetoric: Students as ethnographers. *Journal of Basic Writing, 7*(2), 6-27.

Matalene, C. (1985). Contrastive rhetoric: An American writing teacher in China. *College English, 47*(8), 789-808.

Matsuda, P. K. (1997). Contrastive rhetoric in context: A dynamic model of L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 6*(1), 45-59.

Mendonca, C. O., & Johnson, K. E. (1994). Peer review negotiations: Revision activities in ESL writing instruction. *TESOL Quarterly, 28*(4), 745-769.

Mittan, R. (1989). The peer review process: Harnessing students' communicative power. In D. M. Johnson & D. H. Roen (Eds.), *Richness in writing: Empowering ESL Students* (pp. 207-219). New York, NY: Longman.

Mizuno, A. (1995). The teaching of contrastive rhetoric toward the goal of logical internalization. *Sugino Joshidaigaku Kiyo, 32,* 87-96.

Newkirk, T. (1995). The writing conference as performance. *Research in the Teaching of English, 29*(2), 193-215.

Okada, T., Okumura, K., Hirota, T., & Tokioka, Y. (1995). *Eisakubun shido kenkyukai,* JACET, Kansai, Shibu, *Daigaku hi okera eisakushido no arikata: Eisakubun jittai chosa no hokoku.* (Research Group on Teaching Writing, Kansai Chapter, JACET. (Ed.) Teaching Writing at Colleges and Universities: A Survey Report).

Otaki, S. (1996). How to start and finish medical research writing: Cultural variations in English writing by Japanese. *Practical English Studies, 4,* 25-36.

Otaki, S. (1999). Contrastive rhetoric of academic and intercultural awareness. *Studies in Comparative Culture, 45,* 24-33.

Oye, P. (1993). Writing problems beyond the classroom: The confidence problem. In T. Flynn, & M. King (Eds.), *Dynamics of the writing conference: Social and cognitive Interaction* (pp. 111-119). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Patthey-Chavez, G. G., & Ferris, D. R. (1997). Writing conferences in the weaving of multi-voiced texts in college compositions. *Research in the Teaching of English, 31*(1), 51-90.

Rogers, C. (1994). *Freedom to learn* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp.21-42). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Sengupta, S. (1999). Rhetorical consciousness raising in the L2 reading classroom. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 8*(3), 291-319.

Shen, F. (1989). The classroom and the wider culture: Identity as a key to learning English composition. *College Composition and Communication, 40*(4), 459-466.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge,* MA.: Harvard University Press.

Walker, D. (2004). *Contrastive rhetoric teaching methods for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) university students* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

Walker, D. (2005). *What happens when Korean EFL learners write in English?* Paper presented at the 1st Kyungbuk National University-KOTESOL Conference: Globalization and Foreign Language Education, Taegu, South Korea.

Walker, D. (2006). Improving Korean university student EFL academic writing with contrastive rhetoric: Teacher conferencing and peer-response can help. *Journal of Asia TEFL, 3*(4), 71-111.

Walker, D. (2008). Postmodernism in intercultural rhetoric: Problematizing the deconstruction of an academic discipline. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching, 18,* 123-142.

Walker, D., & Guan Lau, J. (2011). Journaling and journeying toward academic excellence. Paper presented at the 9th Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Xing, M., Wang, J., & Spencer, K. (2008). Raising students' awareness of cross-cultural contrastive rhetoric in English writing via an e-learning course. *Language Learning and Technology, 12(2),* 71-93.

Yoshimura, T. (2002). *Formal instruction of rhetorical patterns and the effectiveness of using the L1 in argumentative writing in an EFL setting* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Temple University Japan.

Author

Deron WALKER, Ph.D., Associate Professor,
Department of Modern Languages and Literature,
California Baptist University
8432 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, CA. 92504 U.S.A.
Office: (951)343-4652; Home: (951) 536-2373
[dwalker@calbaptist.edu]