

書かれたテキストと対照レトリック、 異文化コミュニケーション

Written Text, Contrastive Rhetoric, and Intercultural Communication

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本稿は異なる文化におけるレトリックが文化的に敏感に研究されるべきことを繰り返し主張し、レトリックが研究される一つの手法として非文学的な書かれたテキストに焦点を当てることを喚起しようとするものである。このことを異文化間コミュニケーションでなされているように、応用言語学において実践され、いかにその分野の発見が対照レトリックに関連しているかに示されているように、対照レトリックへの探求を含むものである。

Introduction

In 1979, Cecil Blake published an exploratory paper entitled *Rhetoric and Intercultural Communication*, written to “initiate a discussion on what might broadly be referred to as comparative rhetoric” (p. 85). He argued that rhetoric, by definition the “effective expression in all discourse, or simply...discourse with persuasive intent” (p. 86) with “the function of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas” (p. 93), would exist in any society. His concern was with a lack of study of the art of effective and suatory communication in other cultures despite the fact that people everywhere communicate and have standards by which effective communication is judged. He also noted that because of its historical and cultural underpinnings, the standards of the Aristotelian tradition of Western rhetoric alone are not necessarily the best ones for such and endeavor. In short, he calls for a new focus, for the reshaping of old tools and the invention of new ones to carry out the job:

“If rhetoric or effective suatory expression is existent in all societies, then the philosophies peculiar to those societies govern the rhetorical structure and practice of each. Applying stringent Western requirements for effective investigation into non-Western rhetoric would result in warping the non-Western society to suit the narrow whims of the scholar.” (p. 86)

To accomplish effective comparative studies, Blake saw the need to know relevant information about the general culture, tradition, philosophy, and social organization of the society under study. In addition, he recognized the importance of identifying the constituent parts peculiar to a given rhetoric, such as the

cultural equivalents or variations of Western rhetoric's *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* and the value and emphasis they have relative to each other in the non-Western rhetorical tradition, to facilitate study and comparison. He also pointed out that, because knowledge of the structure through which the people amplify their messages is at least as important as knowledge of language alone, identifying rhetorical patterns and structures of the group under study is essential.

Since Blake's paper was published, the call for a stronger focus on contrastive rhetoric in intercultural communication has occasionally been repeated (Koester and Holmberg, 1983) but apparently has not been heeded by many. Studies involving contrastive rhetoric or in whole or in part have appeared (i.e. Anderson, 1991; Becker, 1986; Johnstone, 1989; Okabe, 1983; Reynolds, 1987; Yum; 1991), but perusal of the major journals and publications in the field of intercultural communication will show that it still a peripheral subject. Of the studies that do deal with cultural or intercultural aspects of rhetoric, most deal almost exclusively with how cultural factors affect the rhetoric of spoken interaction. This is hardly surprising. From its inception, intercultural communication has clearly focused on spoken language, a cultural universal with a host of intriguing complexities which transcend the words themselves: the non-verbal channel, the cultural and value systems that affect social and communicative interaction, the immediacy of the exchange and the constant adjustment and readjustment it involves.

One must look very hard indeed, however, to find studies in intercultural communication of another common form of language communication which, although not universal, permeates our existence and communicates within and across cultures: written text. Yet, the written word is a common medium through which business is conducted, education is attempted, policies are contested, and negotiations are made. These texts are not literary texts, but the more mundane forms through which people conduct their business, get their information, and shape their opinions: business and personal letters, newspaper articles and editorials, essays, and scientific articles. They are not simply collections of grammatically coordinated words arranged on paper; they are artifacts reflecting historical influences and the communication values that a culture has and the preferred ways those influences and values are rhetorically expressed. These facts have become increasingly clear in studies conducted in applied linguistics. Especially relevant are findings from the subdisciplines of discourse analysis, its sister discipline text analysis and, most important to this discussion, the field of applied linguistics directly related to rhetoric, contrastive rhetoric.

This paper, like Blake's, is exploratory, and has two purposes. The first is to reiterate Blake's call for a culturally sensitive study of rhetoric in different cultures, especially with regards to cultural values which affect communication and rhetoric. The second is to issue a new call for a focus on non-literary written text as a means through which rhetoric can be studied. This involves an exploration into contrastive rhetoric as it is practiced in applied linguistics to demonstrate how findings in that field are relevant to contrastive rhetoric as it is pursued in intercultural communication.

In this paper, I will consider how some of the findings and methods from the text-based studies of contrastive rhetoric as practiced in applied linguistics might be of use in the study of rhetoric in intercultural communication, especially if considered in conjunction with cultural and historical influences and values. I will begin with a description of the field of contrastive rhetoric in applied linguistics and a discussion of key concepts. Following that, I will consider how cultural values affect rhetorical practices, specifically citing Japan as an example. This will involve looking at the predominant historical influence of Confucianism on Japanese communication values and then comparing and contrasting Japanese communication values with American values which affect rhetorical strategies. An understanding of the effects that historical influences and values have on preferred rhetorical pattern provides the background for examining of one preferred Japanese rhetorical style of writing, the *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* pattern of composition. My goal is to show how the findings from contrastive rhetoric as it is practiced in applied linguistics can inform and enhance contrastive rhetoric as pursued in intercultural communication if the latter field is willing to accept written text as a communication mode worthy of study.

Contrastive Rhetoric in Applied Linguistics

While intercultural communication was emerging and defining itself as an independent field of inquiry, so too was the field of contrastive rhetoric. Its beginnings are generally traced to a seminal article, published in 1966, by Robert Kaplan. Kaplan was motivated by the pragmatic concerns of a teacher. As administrator of an English as a Second Language program, he constantly encountered writing by students that indicated problems in English use that transcended simple linguistic analysis and also appeared to be common to writers from specific language backgrounds. Regularities related to language and culture became apparent as more texts were studied and, in his article, Kaplan concluded that the “strangeness” in the second language (L2) writing resulted from differences in cultural thought patterns which manifested themselves in patterns of presentation, organization, and argumentation that violate native speaker expectations for written English (Connor, 1996; Kaplan, 1988). He provided diagrams to represent these differences. English paragraph organization is depicted as linear. He proposed an Oriental pattern that is circular, with the discussion working itself around the topic in an ever closing spiral instead of directly and immediately connecting to it, an “approach by indirection” (Kaplan, 1966). He also diagrammed Semitic, Romance languages, and Russian, which, while all being different in important ways, allow for higher degrees of parallel development than English and for digressions from the topic or theme which are considered tangential by English standards.

Kaplan’s paper was a catalyst for debate and further research in what would come to be called contrastive rhetoric. His early work has been criticized in some quarters for being ethnocentric, for privileging native English speakers’ writing and language, for focusing on product and not process, and for not taking educational and developmental factors into account (Connor, 1996). Kaplan himself has

gone on to develop and revise his ideas, distancing himself from some of his earlier claims while still holding to the general idea that cultural factors exert an important influence on preferred rhetorical patterns (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996; Kaplan, 1967; Kaplan, 1983; Kaplan, 1988), which are in turn commonly reflected in second language (L2) writing.

Since Kaplan's pioneering work, contrastive rhetoric has rapidly developed. It adheres to a weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. The strong version holds that one's native language influences thought and controls it; the weak version dispenses with the notion of control while continuing to acknowledge language's influence on thought (Kaplan, 1988; Connor, 1996). In terms of methodology, it has benefited most notably from discourse analysis and its related, written-text based area of textual linguistics. One of the single most important aspects of all these disciplines is the departure from the prevalent focus in linguistics on analyzing texts at the sentence level, in terms of grammar and syntax:

“Contrastive rhetoric does not primarily concern itself with such matters as the basic placement of modifiers or with basic word-order questions or with superficial differences in tense, aspect, or mode. Rather, it is concerned with matters relating to topicalization, to the various ways of achieving cohesion..., to the combination of surface linguistic features which reflect identifiable discourse functions, and to the mechanisms through which coherence is achieved.” (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996, p. 182)

The notion of coherence is an especially important one to contrastive rhetoric, and will be discussed below.

The social constructivist approach

Of the various approaches to rhetoric and composition, the most relevant to the study of intercultural rhetoric is the social constructivist approach. In this approach, rhetoric and composition are seen as processes grounded in the context and social situation in which they are produced. Important to social constructivism is the concept of a “discourse community,” a group which defines certain conventions about writing and rhetoric that a person addressing that community will have to take into account (Connor, 1996). The concept of the discourse community is decidedly similar to (some say identical to) sociolinguistic's concept of “speech community.” A discourse community can be large, as is the one implied when an author writes with “the average reader” in mind, or relatively small, such as the audience for a specialized scientific journal. Most discourse communities are language and culture or sub-culture specific; thus, the “average” reader becomes “the average Japanese reader” or “the average American reader.” However, discourse communities can cross cultures and languages, as is the case when specialists from different countries write articles in English for international journals. The important point is that discourse communities have sets of expectations for “proper” and

“effective” communication that affect preferred rhetorical patterns.

Text linguistics and text analysis

Contrastive rhetoric has especially benefited from findings in the field of text linguistics. The field developed when certain linguists concluded that a full understanding of texts required more than the syntactic and morphological analysis traditionally done in linguistics, and therefore sought new tools and methods. The field of discourse analysis was developing at the same time, and developments in it influenced text linguistics in turn. Today it is often treated as a text-based form of discourse analysis in that analysis goes beyond the sentence level to consider relationships between larger units of meaning, and because it considers the situation in which the discourse is grounded (Connor, 1996). Of the various basic concepts of text linguistics related to text structure, the two most relevant to this discussion are cohesion and coherence.

Text structure, cohesion, and coherence

Text is more than the collection of grammatically correct sentences on paper. A text is multidimensional, the product of a complex interaction of syntactic, semantic, and discursal features, and not merely “an exploded sentence” (Kaplan, 1988, p. 279). In general, text structure can be analyzed at three basic levels: micropropositional (the relationship between elements at the sentence level), macropropositional (the relationship between sentences and elements at the paragraph level), and top-level (the organizing principles of the text as a whole) (Meyer and Rice, 1984). At the micropropositional level the concern is with the interrelationship between propositions. When the interrelationship is properly executed according to the standards of the language of the reader, the text is said to be *cohesive*. Cohesion exists when one element depends on or presupposes another for interpretation, and involves the use of explicit linguistic devices to show the relationship between sentences and larger units of text (Connor, 1996)

At the macropropositional level the focus turns to the topic level of the discourse, to the way ideas are organized and the relationships between them. At this level, logical relationships predominate. For example, the following sentences are technically coherent at the micropropositional level but the set is poorly structured (by English standards) in terms of macrostructure:

I recently bought a new computer. Computers are used in education and business. The President of the nation uses a computer. Unfortunately, computers crash a lot. The computer I bought was on sale.

Coherence is one of the key concepts related to top-level structure, the overall organizing principles of a text. It derives from a fit of text to context (Connor, 1996), in which the arrangement of words and ideas on paper correspond with a real-world setting which includes the assumptions of the discourse

community of the author and reader. Included here are rhetorical relations, patterns, structures, and text genre. It is especially at the macropositional level that language and cultural influences can and do come into play. When the writer and the reader come from different social or cultural backgrounds, there is the chance that the writer will use a text structure that violates expectations of the target discourse community.

Audience

Regardless of the purpose of the act of writing a text, audience is a primary concern. The writer, using a medium that does not allow for the interplay, adjustment, and repair that is possible in spoken communication, must make guesses about the audience and must shape the form and content of the written text according to the degree to which he/she believes they share universes of knowledge. In other words, the severely constrained information feedback loop imposed by writing makes audience considerations of the utmost importance. Writers must determine, to the best of their knowledge, what combination of semantic, syntactic, and discursal elements will likely best appeal to the projected audience. They must also anticipate potential problems and objections and then work to structure messages and arguments in a way that circumvents them (Kaplan, 1988). These strategies take us into the realm of rhetoric and, therefore, into the realm of culture. While paradigms are lacking, (Kaplan 1988) believes that cultural factors can be divided into two basic interlocking systems. The first derives from the writer's own community of speakers (and thus involving the linguistic system), and the second from the cultural conventions of writing. Furthermore, culturally defined writing conventions affect the frequency and distribution of text types as well as the form text types take and the functions they serve.

Summary

Contrastive rhetoric in applied linguistics contends that culture influences the way texts are written and the way rhetoric is expressed in texts. That writing and rhetoric as socially mediated practices is acknowledged in the constructivist approach to contrastive rhetoric and composition, which holds that the form which written discourse takes is influenced in large part by the standards imposed by discourse communities. The standards of discourse communities and the absence of the feedback loop available in oral discourse in turn place strong demands on authors to anticipate reader knowledge and expectations when writing. These expectations, however, differ from culture to culture and from one discourse community to another. Still, key concepts such as microstructure, macrostructure, and top-level structure appear to be applicable to expository text in any language, as do the concepts of cohesion and coherence, and can be used to analyze texts from different discourse communities. The findings of such studies can contribute to a greater understanding of intercultural communication, especially because they indicate cross-cultural differences in language use and rhetorical patterning which lead to communication disruption or breakdown.

However, one important problem in contrastive rhetoric in applied linguistics is a lack of appreciation of the impact that cultural values have on communication values and the preferred rhetorical patterns that develop from them. There have been a few studies involving value orientations, but the approach in general has been discounted as cultural stereotyping (Connor, 1996). This unfortunate dismissal of communication values reveals a weakness in contrastive rhetoric as it is practiced in applied linguistics precisely where there is a strength in intercultural communication studies.

This discussion now returns to Blake's suggestion that the cultural, historical, and philosophical underpinnings of a language need to be taken into account for a fuller understanding of the rhetoric of any culture. To that end, I will return to contrastive rhetoric in intercultural communication to examine some of the cultural and historical foundations of Japanese communication values to see how they affect preferred rhetorical patterns. I will then depart again from the domain of intercultural communication and its focus on spoken interaction, and enter that of contrastive rhetoric in applied linguistics to consider how this complex of cultural and historical factors and values are manifested in the way Japanese expository writing is organized.

Historical and Cultural Influences on Japanese Rhetoric and Communication Values

One strong focus of intercultural communication studies has been the identification and comparison of cultural values (i.e. Barnlund, 1975, 1989; Condon, 1984; Okabe, 1984; Stewart, 1971). Values are important to understand because they form the basis of virtually all decisions a person makes (Sitarm and Haalpanen, 1979). These studies generally posit that values exist not as absolutes but as relative concepts on a positive-negative continuum. In other words, values are defined in relation to other concepts seen as diametrically opposed. Klühohn's definition of value is still widely accepted today:

[A value is] a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action. (Klühohn, 1959; cited in Sitarm and Haalpanen, 1979, p. 150).

Furthermore, values are hierarchically organized, not randomly distributed, so that changes in one part of the value organization affects the other parts. Research on values supports two main propositions according to Sitarm and Haalpanen (1979): "Values are communicated, both explicitly and implicitly, through symbolic behavior," and "The way in which people communicate is influenced by the values they hold" (p. 153-154). Both propositions are reflected in the way people organize written discourse according to accepted rhetorical structures. The second is especially relevant to rhetoric because it holds that values influence what is said and how it is communicated.

Communication is a basic social process that is strongly influenced by the value systems and philosophical foundations of a society. Values shape communication, both spoken and written. They provide both the foundation upon which preferred rhetorical strategies are built and the barriers which constrain the way messages will be couched and arguments presented. Values do not emerge *sui generis*, but develop from the historical, material, and ecological forces which shape cultures and societies.

The effect of the Confucian tradition in East Asia

Studies of cross-cultural communication often describe the communication patterns and behaviors of a given group or nation and then simply compare them to those found in North America without delving into deeper questions of the historical and philosophical traditions that underlie and shape communication in the culture in question (Yum, 1991). In East Asia, communication patterns have been strongly influenced by the philosophy of Confucianism (Becker, 1986; Yum, 1991) and to a lesser degree by Taoism and Zen Buddhism (Becker, 1986). This is not to say that communication values and the ways they are expressed are identical throughout East Asia, for they certainly are not. There are important variations and even contradictions in countries often lumped together as “Eastern” or “Asian” (Blake, 1979; Yum, 1991). Still, due to the influence of these schools of thought, there is a marked lack of argumentation in the region and a prejudice against discussion and debate.

Confucianism considers proper human relations to be the basis of society, and such relations derive from right conduct. Right conduct, in turn, derives from a handful of main principles. The paramount principle is *jen*, roughly translated as humanism, which involves warm relations between people. *Jen* is closely associated with the notion of reciprocity in human relations, or *shu*, which can be seen as the embodiment of *jen*. The second principle, translated as faithfulness, loyalty, or justice, is *i*, but like *jen*, it is difficult to find a truly equivalent translation in English. It involves the notion of transcending self-interest and immediate profit in human relations, which allows us “to elevate ourselves to the original goodness of human nature that bridges ourselves to other people” (Yum, 1991, p. 68-9), resulting in a betterment of the common good. The third principle is *li*, respect for social forms, which can be seen as the transformation of the first two principles into action, “the fundamental regulatory etiquette of human behavior” (Yum, 1991, p. 69). It is said to originate from deference to others, personal reserve, and consideration for others. It is not merely following form alone, which is an empty activity lacking humanness. Only when form is observed with sincerity, which allows one to overcome the self, can a person achieve humanness (Yum, 1991, p. 68-69).

In addition to a host of social and interpersonal effects, Confucianism has strongly influenced communication patterns in East Asia, and differences are especially apparent when these patterns are compared to those of North America. East Asian communication strongly favors patterns and behaviors that develop and maintain proper human relationships, while North American patterns stress autonomy

and self-fulfillment. Therefore, one finds an emphasis on patterns that promote the maintenance of human relations in East Asia. As human relations are dynamic and require care, especially regarding face, the focus is on process. On the other hand, the dominant North American pattern stresses outcomes and is therefore more concerned with winners and losers, gains and losses, self-fulfillment, and other tangible outcomes (Yum, 1991, p. 71).

Another impact of Confucianism is an emphasis on indirect communication. While all cultures exhibit both indirect and direct modes of communication, East Asian cultures prefer the former to the latter. Much of this emphasis on indirect communication has been attributed to face-saving. Indirect communication and vagueness are ways to avoid openly contradicting, challenging, or disagreeing with someone, and also help one avoid exposing another's potentially embarrassing lack of knowledge, thus preserving face and the relationship (Yum, 1991). Finally, East Asian communication is characterized by an emphasis on listening and interpretation of messages, or receiver-centeredness, as opposed to the North American emphasis on the sender of the message. Such an emphasis places a great burden on the message receiver's ability to read between the lines than does the North American one, which places the lions share of the burden on the sender of the message to frame it as clearly and accurately as possible (Yum, 1991). Possibly the most important impact of Confucianism on Japanese communication patterns, as far as written language goes, is this tendency favor receiver-centered communication. It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the burden falls completely upon the message receiver. Writers, too, must strive to protect the face of readers as well, by not telling them things they are assumed to already know and not forcing opinions on them too strongly.

In the Orient, history, linguistic features, and philosophy and religion have combined to discourage argumentation and debate. It is commonly argued that Japan's emphasis on harmonious relations, which militates against argumentation and debate, developed because the demands of sedentary, labor-intensive rice growing agriculture required a high degree of cooperation. During various periods in Japanese history, peasants were forbidden to leave their villages and fields and were thus rooted to one place from birth to death. Age and social rank became the methods of dividing superiors and inferiors and, therefore, were a powerful influence on decision making and in determining who could speak to whom, what they could speak about, and how they could address each other. This was true for roughly 250 years of the Tokugawa period prior to the opening of Japan in the 1860's. In short, harmonious relations were essential then to the individual and the group, which contributed to the development of a hierarchical society with attendant language and speech practices reflecting the hierarchical and often authoritarian nature of society. In such a society, authority and obligation derived not from reason but from the superior status conferred by age or the social standing conferred by wealth and power, and the notion of argumentation and debate among equals was not a viable one (Becker, 1986).

The Confucian legacy in Japanese communication patterns and rhetorical strategies

While intercultural communication studies of the Japanese abound, relatively few deal with rhetoric *per se*. A notable exception is Okabe's (1983) discussion of Japanese values in communication and rhetoric, which he offers in an attempt to highlight the importance of a rhetorical perspective in intercultural communication that includes non-Western rhetorics. While he does not discuss Japanese communication values in terms of their historical development, the discussion shows how Japanese preferred communication patterns bear the strong mark of the Confucian legacy. His discussion offers a description of the way in which Confucian-influenced communication values have found expression in Japan. He uses the concepts of "substance," "form," "strategy," "style," and "tone" in rhetoric as the framework for his discussion. Okabe notes that the differences between U.S. and Japanese rhetorics that are discussed should be seen as differences in degree and not as dichotomies. Any of the values mentioned are possible in either culture, but preferences for them differ. He generally focuses on spoken interaction but many points apply to written discourse as well, and those are presented below.

Preferred Thought Patterns

Okabe contends that American English and Japanese rhetoric involve fundamentally different preferred thought patterns. Those with the greatest potential impact on written rhetorical strategies (presented here as the typical American value first followed by the common Japanese value) are analytical versus synthetic thinking, absolutism versus relativism, realism versus idealism, and line versus point/dot/space (Okabe, 1983, p. 25-29).

Analytical thinking involves part-to-whole analysis and emphasizes classification and categorization, as well as absolute dichotomies. The synthetic thinking favored in Japan involves not so much breaking things down into parts as much as seeking to see things as a whole. The second value set is absolutism versus relativism. Absolutism refers to thinking patterns that are considered universal and absolute, equally true for all people, and is a common pattern favored by Americans (and those societies that see people as independent and equal). Relativism, favored by the Japanese and in other collectivist cultures, involves taking relationships and situations into account to the degree that they may overshadow universal principles. The third distinction, realism versus idealism, highlights the American preference for objective facts, objectivity, specificity, and precision. In contrast, the idealism favored by the Japanese stresses subjective ideas and introspection at the expense of details and facts. Finally, there is the line versus point/dot/space distinction. Okabe claims that in a heterogeneous, egalitarian society like that in the U.S., little is taken for granted in communication, so communication must follow clearly demarcated linear routes that do not leave much room for deviation. On the other hand, Japanese language and cultural preferences make for a pattern in which the speakers ideas are

organized in a “stepping stone” mode that requires the reader/listener to supply unsupplied information. He claims that in Japan's homogeneous society, loose communication modes which allow for various interpretations are preferred.

Form

“Form” refers to the way discourse is ordered and organized. Okabe notes that American rhetoric favors confrontation and persuasion which, in turn, involve stressing points of difference with an opponent and effectively polarizes arguments. Japanese rhetoric stresses harmony, and therefore tends to be tentative and complementary toward others and “incomplete” by American standards. As a result, discourse is carefully developed and ordered before a speaker/writer arrives at a point. Closely connected is the dichotomy of linear versus circular argumentation (which also coincides with the linear versus dot/point/ space distinction noted above). Americans favor a linear argumentation style featuring step-by-step organization and presentation. In this style, logic and ideas are “tossed around” aggressively, reinforcing the independence of the parties involved in the discussion. Conversely, Japanese rhetorical style displays a preference for a dotted, point-like structure which can dispense with rigidity and even logic as ideas are presented (Okabe, 1988, p.29-30).

A final distinction regarding form is between process, an American focus, and the Japanese focus on product. American rhetoric values the step-by-step reasoning process through which ideas are presented and arguments developed. A product emphasis, of which Japanese is an example, leads to a focus on the object of the discussion. As a result, process is minimized or absent altogether. Not surprisingly, a product focus is seen as being poorly formed because of “leaps in logic” when judged by English standards (Okabe, 1988, p. 30).

Strategy

Strategy refers to the instruments of rhetoric used for eliciting the intended response from listeners (Okabe, 1988, p. 31). Okabe invokes the traditional modes of proof in Western rhetoric, namely *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*, for cross-cultural comparison. Regarding *logos*, he notes that American rhetoric favors logic and reason and thus precise expression. This leads to a demand for facts, figures, quotes from authoritative sources (although this leaves open the important question of exactly what constitutes “authority” in different cultures) and the like as kinds of logical proof or support. These reflect the value Americans have for specificity, objectivity, and precision. Japanese rhetoric, on the other hand, with its preference for subjectivity, ambiguity, and for paraphrasing instead of direct quotation, produces a logic and style focused much more on emotion and therefore, complicated emotional nuance.

Style

The fourth concept is style, “the way in which language works to embody the communicative intention of its users” (Okabe, 1988, p. 34). In part, style reflects the way messages are worded as a result of the influence of values affecting substance, form, and strategy. Because of the American focus on the value of precision, explicit and categorical words are favored. Absolute expressions (“absolutely”, “without a doubt,” “undeniably,” etc.) are common, as are overstatement or understatement, as the speaker/writer works to reduce arguments to “either-or” dichotomies while building a case for a point. In contrast, the Japanese prefer the use of ambiguous words and wording and of “weak” qualifiers like “perhaps,” “somewhat,” and the like. This style of expression is in line with the cultural values of interdependence and harmony.

Japanese is also notable for its highly developed formal language forms that reflect differences in social hierarchy, something far less developed in English and even less so in American rhetorical patterns. Incorrect use of forms can cause offense. To avoid this, Japanese prefer honorific phrases, platitudes, and clichés and set phrases. American English rhetoric actively discourages much of this, especially clichés and set phrases.

Tone

Tone refers to the attitude the speaker (and presumably, the writer) has towards the audience. According to Okabe, Americans see themselves as agents of change, working to persuade their audience in a (potentially) confrontational situation. While it is recognized that adapting to the audience is important, this adaptation is merely a technique, a means to an end. In the end, it is the speaker/writer who remains central to the process and who is judged on the ability to express a message logically and persuasively. Conversely, Japanese rhetoric places much more importance on the receiver/perceiver of the message, and on adapting one's message to the audience instead of trying to adapt the audience to the message.

Summary

Differences in American and Japanese approaches to communication and the public presentation of ideas are in large part due to differences in values. Okabe's study of American and Japanese communication values reiterates the importance of Blake's call for an understanding of non-Western rhetorics and the cultural logic that underlies them. Regarding Japanese, one would expect that differences in value orientations would be reflected in written expository text as well as in speech. Finding out if this is indeed true means moving out of the realm of intercultural communication and back into that of contrastive analysis in applied linguistics, where the focus on text has yielded important insights into Japanese preferred rhetorical patterns.

Preferred Rhetorical Patterns in Japanese Expository Prose

Communication values and language meet and are expressed in all discourse, including written discourse. Every culture, and the language that is part of it, offers its members various ways of constructing and framing messages, and from these options various rhetorical strategies are developed. Still, despite the range of options available, certain strategies and patterns are used more often than others, indicating cultural preferences for them. In Japanese expository prose, this is apparent not only in essays, articles and other such texts, but at the paragraph level itself.

Japanese Paragraph Writing

Okabe (1988) points out that that the fundamental building block of English composition, the paragraph, also displays important differences in rhetorical style when compared with the Japanese paragraph. A “good” paragraph by American English rhetorical standards contains a series of sentences which forcefully develop one topic according to patterns that make it appear coherent and unified to American eyes. In addition, the paragraph should supplement the theme with a desirable amount of detail to present a balance between the general (or abstract) and the specific. Therefore, writers normally present the strongest or most important points first, or at least early on, in the major parts of a written discourse.

Japanese preferred rhetorical organization encourages “recency and climactic principles” (Okabe, 1988, p. 30) that lead to presenting important and interesting points at the end of a discourse series. The way points are developed within a paragraph or in more extensive texts also often differs from the preferred American style. Two common ways of organizing Japanese composition, both for paragraphs and more extensive compositions, are the *hosomi* and *zundo* forms. These literally translate as “slender” and “stumpy,” respectively. In the *hosomi* form, discourse is organized using details only, while in the *zundo* form, discourse is structured using only general statements. Both forms violate the expectations of American rhetorical patterning for a balance between the general and the specific at both the inter- and intra-paragraph levels.

Deductive, Inductive, and Quasi-inductive Patterns

According to Western thought, writers have two general ways of reasoning available to them which determine the way their discourse is ordered: deductive and inductive. Although both are possible in English and Japanese, there is a strong preference for deductive reasoning in expository writing in English while in Japanese an inductive style in expository writing is preferred. It is true that Japanese writers, and those in many other East Asian countries as well, often wait until the end or near the end of what they write to present the thesis statement, a pattern called “delayed introduction of

purpose” by Hinds (1990, p. 98). However, the term “inductive” has implications for English readers that do not actually apply to Japanese writing. The native English speaker assumes an inductively written essay will follow a pattern in which a set of reasons or logically connected arguments are presented which lead to a point or conclusion to which they are directly related. A close examination of examples of Japanese and other East Asian expository prose show that this argumentation pattern does not hold. What comes at the end does not constitute a conclusion in the sense it has in English, nor do the arguments preceding it necessarily constitute directly related, logical support. For these reasons, Hinds characterizes this type of writing as *quasi-inductive*, written with the purpose of getting readers to think in their own way and to draw their own conclusions about the observations the writer has made (Hinds, 1990, p. 99).

Reader responsibility versus writer responsibility

As shown above, spoken Japanese places a greater share of the burden for successful communication on the receiver/perceiver. Hinds (1987) has proposed a typology that classifies languages according to the degree with which they are reader/listener responsible or writer/speaker responsible. He contends that English, for example, places the primary share of responsibility on the writer/speaker to communicate effectively, making it a writer-responsible language. The writer is expected to provide clear statements organized in a way that leads the reader smoothly through the discourse. If communication fails, blame will be laid most heavily on perceived inadequacies of the writer. On the other hand, in a reader-responsible language like Japanese, the reader is expected to do much of the work, filling in transitions to make the text coherent (Connor, 1996; Grabe and Kaplan, 1996; Hinds, 1987). The fact that Hinds categorizes Japanese as a reader-responsible language is consistent with the Japanese communication values discussed above and the Confucian influence on them.

Preferred rhetorical patterns

Ki-shou-ten-ketsu

Although an oversimplification, English expository prose is commonly described as being linear, beginning with an introduction containing a clear thesis statement which is further developed in the body of the text, followed by a conclusion which repeats the main points of the discussion as well as the thesis statement. A common preferred pattern in Japan, however, is a four-part development scheme known as *ki-shou-ten-ketsu*. The name is derived from *que-cheng-jun-he*, the Chinese equivalent for a composition pattern which the Japanese adopted (Hinds, 1987; Hinds, 1990; Connor, 1996). It is tempting to translate the parts in terms that parallel those used in English composition, with the *ki* section described as the introduction, the *shou* and *ten* sections as the development of ideas in the body

of the text, and the *ketsu* section as the conclusion. However, doing so would be a serious error. First, as discussed above, thesis statements in Japanese often come at the end of the text, although the pattern of the essay itself is not truly inductive. English speakers often assume that whatever seems to be the first major thesis statement will be the theme around which the following discussion is woven, and are often surprised to find something very different waiting for them in a “conclusion” that does not appear related at all to the assumed thesis topic. While the *shou* section often (but not always) develops the thesis presented in the *ki* part, the *ten* section contains a discussion of a subtheme only indirectly connected to the prior development of the essay (Connor, 1996; Grabe and Kaplan, 1996; Hinds, 1987). This is a major violation of the expectations native English readers have for expository writing, and this section is one reason why Japanese writing is often characterized as “poorly formed” and “illogical”. Finally, the *ketsu* section may appear to present yet another new opinion or topic, one that does not have to be directly related to the previous discussion (Mulvey, 1997). It is important to note that, although the pattern has four parts, it doesn't necessarily mean a pattern corresponding to four paragraphs in English. Multiple *ten* sections can appear before the *ketsu*, or conclusion.

The combination of the rhetorical preferences described above leads to the structuring of suatory discourse in ways that violate the expectations of native English readers. Therefore, essays are labeled illogical and disjointed. This is a mistake. These essays, to the contrary, are well formed and logically developed by *Japanese* rhetorical standards. They are written with a Japanese audience in mind. The writer hopes to engage and persuade the reader through the discourse and frames it in a way that will presumably accomplish those goals, and what is written should therefore be appreciated on its own terms (Hinds, 1990).

One simple but effective way of studying the discourse development and metadiscourse of a text is by using texts presented in a context where one can reasonably assume the author is considered a skilled writer by the prevailing standards of the discourse community. Editorials written by newspaper columnists are an example. Following Hinds (1990), I have chosen to use an English translation of a Japanese newspaper editorial columnist's short essay (Appendix A) to provide an example of the *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* pattern in use, summarizing each section as a means of following its pattern of rhetorical development. The original editorial appeared in the Henshu Techo column of the Japanese newspaper, *The Yomiuri Shimbun*. The translation was done by the newspaper company, which subsequently published it in its English language newspaper, *The Daily Yomiuri*. The translation is in grammatically correct English but maintains the organization pattern of the original. It refers to a couple arrested for suspected insurance fraud which allegedly involved the arsenic poisoning of an acquaintance. Their arrest stirred nation-wide interest because of their possible connection to a fatal incident in which poisoned curry was distributed at a local festival, which in turn spurred copycat poisonings.

The sections are numbered for reference. It should be noted that what often appear as paragraphs in the original are actually single sentences, but there are also multiple sentence units (5 and 8) as well.

The numbers represent the individual units as presented in the article. The structure of ideas in the article was developed as follows:

1. A statement that the modern insurance industry can trace its roots to the Middle Ages.
2. A statement that mutual help and trust are important in that industry.
3. An assumption that insurance saleswomen must be outraged by a recent arrest of a former insurance saleswoman suspected of fraud.
4. A statement that the arrested woman and her husband appeared to be living easily without working.
5. Repeating of the topic of mutual help and trust and stating how the alleged crime threatens it, followed by a rhetorical question about the possibility of the woman translating her knowledge of the insurance business into profit at the expense of human life.
6. A statement that investigators are considering a possible connection to a curry poisoning incident.
7. A statement that the poisoning threatened a community built on mutual help and trust (repeating a previous topic).
8. Statements that the police must carry out a careful investigation but also respect human rights.
9. A statement that the task is difficult, but the police must do their best to prevent similar crimes.
10. A restatement of the importance of mutual help and trust and the need to rebuild the safety system around it.

By English standards, this short essay is poorly organized, leaping from the perceived theme of the insurance industry to seemingly peripheral topics. Just when it seems that the thesis of the essay is clear, a move is made away from it. Most native-English speakers expect an essay to follow a deductive organizational style and, if this expectation is not met, will then assume an inductive style is being used (Hinds, 1990). Such a reader would first assume by deductive reasoning based on parts 1 and 2 that the essay will be about some aspect of the insurance industry. This expectation becomes untenable with the introduction of part 3, where the arrest of suspected murderers is announced, with that general topic carried through most of the rest of the essay with various asides (3-9). However, approaching the text as an inductively reasoned exposition also fails because the chain of reasoning expected in an English essay of that type is awkwardly developed or completely absent. The pattern of development, with presentation of the major purpose delayed until the end of the essay, is called *quasi-inductive* by Hinds (1990). The main purpose of this essay is to express the author's belief that system of safety that people depend on is based on mutual help and trust, but that the system had been seriously damaged by the curry poisoning incident and needed to be set right again.

The essay also conforms to the *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* pattern. Parts 1 and 2 correspond to the *ki*, 3-5 to the *sho*, 6-7 and 8-9 to the *ten*, and 10 to the *ketsu* section. What appear to be sudden shifts in focus

by English standards are actually discussions of subthemes as encouraged by the use of this pattern. The reader is expected to apprehend the writer's intent and to create bridging inferences and transitions as needed (Hinds, 1987).

The point must be made again that it would be wrong to conclude that this is "poor" writing. It is perfectly acceptable by the standards of the culture in which it is produced (Hinds, 1990) and is best perceived in terms of the cultural communication values that underlie it and the preferred rhetorical patterns that those values encourage. Its quality and its qualities only come into question when the rhetorical standards of a different culture and language are applied. In other words, problems emerge when communication by text becomes intercultural.

Discussion

In the preceding sections I have tried to demonstrate the importance to intercultural communication of the study of contrastive rhetoric, especially as it is practiced in applied linguistics. Equally important, I have argued for using written expository texts as a means of studying the preferred rhetorical patterns of the discourse community in which and for which they are written, using a Japanese text as an example. Because face-to-face spoken interaction is the traditional focus of intercultural communication, text is not generally seen as appropriate for study. However, written texts, like spoken texts, represent a cultural agreement on what constitutes proper presentation, organization, and content. In short, they provide an alternative but essential source for the study of culturally influenced and mediated communication. Regarding their potential value to the field of intercultural communication, they (1) provide examples of culturally preferred rhetorical patterns and strategies, and (2) embody important sociocultural values which are reflected in those rhetorical patterns and strategies.

At times this discussion has moved back and forth between the two different traditions of contrastive rhetorical study to highlight the strengths of each. One particular strength of contrastive rhetoric in intercultural communication is its focus on communication processes, in which values interact. Values are fundamental cultural products, and an understanding of them allows for a better understanding of any rhetorical pattern or preference influenced by them. This fact has not received much attention in contrastive rhetoric in applied linguistics, probably due in part to its strong (although not exclusive) focus on product (Kaplan, 1988; Connor, 1996).

Finally, the sample of Japanese expository text demonstrates the various discrete points working in concert to create a text that seems awkwardly written and illogical by English standards because it lacks the coherence demanded by English. However, it is well-formed and perfectly apprehendable by the standards of the discourse community for which it was written, a fact recognized in contrastive rhetoric in applied linguistics.

One important part of Blake's proposal was for finding new tools with which to study rhetoric in other cultures. By proposing the quasi-inductive pattern, Hinds has called into question the universality

of the deductive-inductive pattern of development. The implications are important and more study is warranted.

Finally, it is important to reiterate that there are far more sophisticated methods for analyzing available than the one used in this paper, and the range of texts studied have not been restricted to expository text. Genres of text such as resumes, business letters and other forms of business writing, research and grant proposals, academic papers, and political discourse have been studied (Connor, 1996). Many of these texts do not simply convey information; they affect lives. It is important that they be studied and understood when they are used to communicate between cultures.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to deal with two themes. The first is to reiterate Blake's call for a culturally sensitive study of rhetoric in different cultures, especially with regard to cultural values which affect communication and rhetoric. The second is to issue a new call for a focus on non-literary written text as a means through which rhetoric can be studied. This involves an exploration into contrastive rhetoric as it is practiced in applied linguistics to demonstrate how findings in that field are relevant to contrastive rhetoric as it is pursued in intercultural communication.

Writing communicates. When written text is produced by a member of one culture but is read and interpreted by a member of another culture, that communication is intercultural. As such, written texts and the rhetorical patterns they exhibit are a form of intercultural communication and should be studied as a legitimate part of the field of intercultural communication. If the field of intercultural communication ultimately seeks to put together the puzzle that is communication between cultures, it needs to be holding all the pieces.

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Appendix A

Untitled Essay

(From Henshu Techo, translated by the staff of the Daily Yomiuri Shimbun)

1. One of the pioneers of the life insurance industry is said to have been a European guild in the Middle Ages that set aside funds specifically for the death of its members.
2. The insurance system that has developed since then is still based on mutual help and trust.
3. Door-to-door insurance saleswomen across the country must have been outraged and perplexed upon seeing the television interview given by the former insurance saleswoman who was arrested Sunday on suspicion of attempted murder and defrauding insurance firms.
4. The woman and her husband, who was arrested on less serious charges of fraud and suspected fraud, did not show the slightest trace of having lived by the sweat of their brow.
5. Their alleged acts pose a threat to the spirit of mutual help and trust. I wonder if the woman converted her abundant knowledge of insurance into money by making light of human life.
6. Needless to say, the investigation into the couple is being conducted with the curry poisoning incident in mind.
7. Two months have passed since that tragedy at a summer festival, which posed a terrifying challenge to a community also built on mutual help and trust.
8. The police leading the investigation must exercise prudence and cannot jump to conclusions on the basis of circumstantial evidence. Respect for human rights all too often clashes with the need to bring such investigations to a swift conclusion.
9. It is a thorny task, but the authorities should accept this fact and do their best to unravel the case as soon as possible to break the chain of copycat crimes.
10. Furthermore, the safety system for a society that is built on mutual help and trust must be promptly reexamined and rebuilt.