A Comparative Study of Topicality and Writing Styles in Iranian and British Education Systems: The Cases of Deduction, Induction, and Quasi-induction

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study was an attempt to check if the Persian and English essays follow a linear pattern. Further, it investigated the essays in terms of the paragraph organization of deduction, induction, and quasi-induction. For the purpose of the study, 200 essays (100 for each language) were selected through convenient sampling and then given to four specialist raters to determine the topic sentence in each essay and enumerate it as deductive, inductive, or quasi-inductive. This research is descriptive and a two-way chi-square was run for the whole data and a set of one-way chi-squares for the comparison of the individual subcategories in the study. The results showed a difference in the number of the topic sentence(s) in each essay in the two languages. Some of the Persian essays contained more than one topic sentence, hence evidence of multitopicality, while English paragraphs were unanimously organized monotopically. The results also revealed that Persian writing is different from that of English regarding the inductive and quasi-inductive writing styles. However, the two languages are similar in the use of the deductive writing style. Furthermore, Persian writers prefer to develop their essays quasi-inductively, whereas English writers prefer to use the inductive style and rarely develop their essays quasi-inductively. These writing preferences imply the existence of cross-cultural differences between the two languages and of different education systems.

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1. Introduction

Writing in a second/foreign language is a more structured and organized skill that involves more than the use of appropriate vocabulary and accurate grammar (Hamadouche, 2013). In essence, it is a laborious skill which requires the use of many variables and skills at the same time both at the sentence level, such as the mastery of sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, etc., and beyond the sentence level such as the ability in integrating information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts (Nunan, 1989). It also entails some knowledge about the rhetorical styles bound up with the target culture and its audience's expectations.

Kaplan, the founder of Contrastive Rhetoric, believes that writers with different linguistic backgrounds and cultural traditions are apt to organize their paragraphs differently because they tend to organize their thoughts and arguments differently. Kaplan (1966, p.14) asserts that "each language and each culture has a paragraph order unique to itself, and that part of the learning of the particular language is the mastering of its logical system". In this regard, he discusses:

> The English language and its related thought patterns have evolved out of the Anglo-European cultural patterns. The expected sequence of thought in English is essentially a Platonic-Aristotelian sequence, descended from the philosophers of ancient Greece and shaped subsequently by Roman, Medieval, European, and later western thinkers. It is not a better or worse system than any other, but it is different (p. 20).

Kaplan's pioneering studies (1966, 1987, 1988) analyzed the textual organization of paragraphs in ESL writing essays. He, as a result, identified five types of paragraph development for five language groups, as indicated in his frequently produced diagram (Figure 1) showing that L1 rhetorical structures were evident in L2 writings of his sample students. In Kaplan's diagrams of rhetorical patterns, based on Nishi (2006), native speakers of English tend to write a paragraph or an essay in a linear logical form from the beginning to the end. Similarly, Khartite and Zerhouni (2016) express that one of Kaplan's underlying characteristics of English writing is the notion of linearity that is reflected in a straight line. In linear development, all the parts of writing are directly organized around the main idea of the paragraph or essay (Eslami, Shaker & Rakhshandehroo, 2018). In this diagram, Asians tend to write in a circular, recursive logical progression, whereas

speakers of Semitic, Romance, and Russian languages follow a multi-iterative, back-and-forth pattern of writing (Kaplan, 1966). This pattern of linearity, which is the most commonly used style in English writing, is not observed in other languages. Kaplan's created diagrams were inspired by popular theories of Contrastive Analysis in linguistics at the time (Connor, 2004; Casanave, 2004).
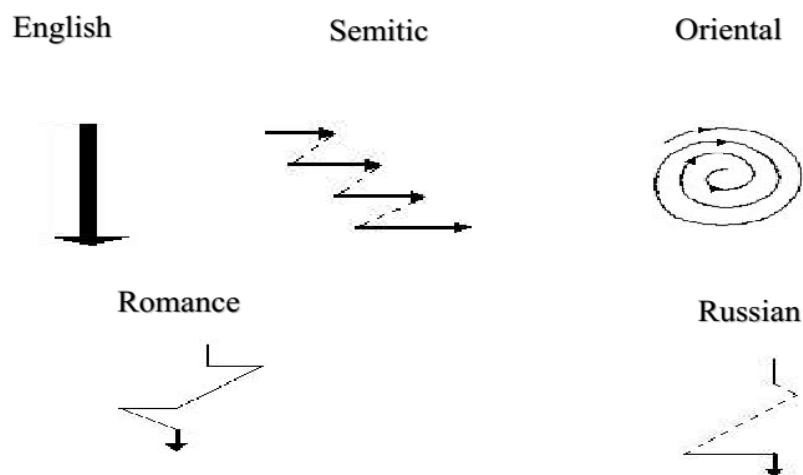

Figure 1: Kaplan's Cross-Cultural Thought Patterns (1966)

With regard to all the above points, the present study aimed at comparing the issue of topicality and writing styles in both Persian and English writing systems as manifested in academic essays. This study investigated if Persian and English essays are developed monotopically or multitopically. It then checks the Persian and English essay writers' preferences in their use of deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles in Iran and England. For these purposes, the following research questions were addressed:

1- Are Persian and English educational systems significantly different in terms of deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles?

2- Is there any significant difference between Persian and English in terms of deductive writing style?

3- Is there any significant difference between Persian and English in terms of inductive writing style?

4- Is there any significant difference between Persian and English in terms of quasi-inductive writing style?

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Contrastive Rhetoric Hypothesis

It should be pointed out that many current rhetoricians define rhetoric in an expanded manner. To illustrate, Kennedy (1998) and Sullivan and Porter (1997) see rhetoric as an act of communication, not in its classical definition of style, argument, and persuasion, but as utterances made for a purpose. Kennedy (1998) defines rhetoric as "a form of mental and emotional energy" (p. 3). Emotional reaction (e.g., fear, lust, hunger, and curiosity) produces utterances. According to Kennedy, "rhetoric is a natural phenomenon: the potential for it exists in all life forms that can give signals, it is practiced in limited forms by non-human animals" (p. 4). Sullivan and Porter (1997) believe that the main focus of rhetoric is on a situation, and it is concerned with how a rhetorical situation guides production.

Contrastive rhetoric is an area of research that mainly deals with discourse differences between different languages and cultures as reflected in the writing of second/foreign language students (Almuhailib, 2019; Hamadouche, 2013; Javidi-Safa, 2018; Jiangle, 2019; Kaplan, 1987, 1988). This field of study was emerged through theoretical and empirical studies done by the American applied linguist, Robert B. Kaplan. Accordingly, different cultures and languages impose different perspectives of the world and different rhetorical patterns, respectively. From Kubota and Lehner's (2004) viewpoint, the two central beliefs of contrastive rhetoric are that each language or culture has its own unique rhetorical conventions, and that the students' L1 rhetorical conventions interfere with their ESL writing. Hence, the ultimate goal of contrastive rhetoric is to understand the strategies and presuppositions the foreign language learners apply in the composing process. This understanding can unveil similarities and differences between L1 and L2 rhetorical conventions.

There have been a set of key premises which have more likely contributed to the development of the idea of contrastive rhetoric into a full-fledged area of research in L2 writing and composition. For example, according to Khartite and Zerhouni (2016), the theory of linguistic relativity, also known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, is based on the idea that different languages affect thought processes in different ways. Similarly, Gumperz and Levinson (1996) report that three components of language, thought and culture are deeply interwoven as the way people see the world is

contingent on the type of language they have been exposed to and subsequently acquired. This notion eventually affects how people would express it in the written medium either in their first or second language. As a matter of fact, the way people think and the way we conceive of the outside world is to a great extent influenced by their cultural and thought patterns and the first language they have acquired. Hence, the assumption is that one's thought processes are to a large degree affected by one's native language which, as a result, leads to a hindrance of fluent second language acquisition (Connor, 1996). This notion has been described as the cornerstone of the contrastive rhetoric theory. On the other hand, Kaplan (1988) postulates that learners bring with them their own thoughts and cultures into the English learning context. This obviously evokes the idea of negative transfer. In the same vein, Connor (2008) argues that any rhetorical difference between EFL/SL students' written products and those of native learners to a great degree results from the rhetorical style of the learners' L1 language. Another significant notion which is in close relation with the idea of contrastive rhetoric is the schema theory. The relevance of the schema theory to contrastive rhetoric has been best explained by Carrell's (1984) 'formal schemata', meaning that readers and writers need familiarity with the background knowledge of rhetorical structures that may provide an appropriate framework within which to read or write. This implies that L2 learners, especially in the early steps of English learning, find it difficult to write mainly because they lack relevant rhetorical schemata.

Meanwhile, based on Hamadouche (2013), contrastive rhetoric is pedagogical in orientation in that it has a significant effect on writing instruction in ESL/EFL classes, though Wang (2007) states that in Kaplan's words, contrastive rhetoric goes beyond pedagogy and operates in larger cultural contexts. Some years later, the original assumption of Contrastive Rhetoric shifted from the simple impact of L1 thought patterns to the one which claims that L2 displayed preferential tendencies of L1 language and culture.

2.2. Culture and Contrastive Rhetoric

As mentioned earlier, ESL students' cultural background influences their organizational patterns and styles of writing (Edlund, 2003). Scholars have had a look at the concept of culture in a variety of perspectives as there is little consensus about the very meaning of culture. For instance, Scarino and Liddicoat (2009) believe that culture is a body of knowledge that people accumulate about a particular society. For Connor and Traversa (2014), it is the set of values, beliefs, behaviors,

and communication patterns that shape the lifestyle of people. However, based on previous research (e.g., Lee, 2009; Kramsh, 2013), the definition of culture related to EFL/ESL teaching considers two broad categories of this concept: Big 'C' culture and little 'c' culture. Big 'C' culture includes facts and statistics relevant to the arts, history, geography, business, education, and customs of a target speech society, and makes the content of courses of literature, history in most FL/SL language curricula, whereas small 'c' culture represents the deeper sense of culture that is not easily observable (Lee, 2009). As a matter of fact, it encompasses a wide range of non-tangible, inter-connected features including attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, norms and values, social relationships, politeness conventions, patterns of interaction and discourse organization, and the use of body language (Chlopek, 2008). The proper understanding of this type of culture assists the development of a communicative competence and the acquisition of conversational skills in communicative EFL teaching (Kramsh, 2013). Atkinson (2004) made an attempt to modify the concept of culture in current Contrastive Rhetoric studies by criticizing the definition of culture in Contrastive Rhetoric that is mostly monolithic, underdeveloped, fixed, and confusing. In his opinion, such a description is unable to explain differences in written texts. Atkinson proposes a view of culture as fluid, dynamic, and unpredictable, which involves various subcultures to encompass small cultures (e.g., professional-academic culture, classroom culture, student culture, etc.). However, there is a type of ambiguity in how these small cultures aid to shape the written product in various genres.

2.3. Emergence of Intercultural Rhetoric

After deeply delving into research in Contrastive Rhetoric, Connor (2004) proposed a new umbrella term of "intercultural rhetoric" to put emphasis on cultural influences in second/foreign language writing. To her, this term better reflected the dynamic nature of written discourse and culture, as well as the various processes, such as intellectual, social, cultural history, etc., that lead to the written products. She casted further light on the point that writing in a given culture is closely influenced by the social and cultural structures of that specific culture. According to Bennui (2008), even though non-native learners utilize the accurate grammar and the relevant lexical items, their target language writing sounds weird as many of their sentences are more understandable in the students' native language than in English. In an attempt to clarify this point, Merrouche (2006) states that non-native students are unaware of the audience's perceptions and expectations, organizational modes, and the sociocultural context of their target language writing.

Similarly, Khartite and Zerhouni (2016) express that intercultural rhetoric tries to bring into light cross-cultural differences at the discoursal and inter-sentential levels between students' L1 and English language. It can be said, therefore, as Helal (2013) claims, Contrastive Rhetoric or Intercultural Rhetoric is relevant to the themes of communicative and intercultural competence (Kramsch, 2005) and cross-cultural dialogues (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002; Ware & Kramsch, 2005) as it endeavors not only to describe the cultural meanings emanating from the texts produced by writers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but it also purports to explain the reasons which may inhibit the acquisition of such competence and the facilitation of those exchanges. Therefore, writing in the light of Contrastive Rhetoric, according to Khartite and Zerhouni (2016), is regarded as a contextualized undertaking with special considerations of authorship, audience, genre, and purpose of the writing in general.

2.4. Linearity as a dominant English rhetorical pattern

Linearity in English is one of the fundamental concepts underlying Kaplan's theory contrastive rhetoric. He describes English as predominantly linear in contrast to the digressive or non-straightforward structures which characterize Romance, Semitic, and Oriental language groups (Kaplan, 1966). In his words, as late as 2001, in any paragraph in English, there is nothing in this paragraph that does not belong here but everything contributes significantly to the central idea. This takes place in a straight line from the opening sentence to the last sentence. He also adds, of course, each language has its certain writing preferences and conventions. That is why non-native English learners may use rhetorical conventions and textual features that make sense in their native language but they are alien to the English writing tradition (Hamadouche, 2013).

In discussions on standard English writing, Eslami, Shaker, and Rakhshandehroo (2018) highlight that two main features of the linearity pattern are unity and avoidance of repetition based on which one single main theme is maintained in an essay and also one main idea expressed in each paragraph. Moreover, contrary to non-linear languages which are specified by repetition, linear language seldom uses repetition unless the tone of the writing is going to be strengthened for the sake of enhancing persuasiveness. In the same line, Monroy (2008) states that a rhetorical pattern can be linear if there is only one thesis in an essay in the way that it binds all parts to a single main idea (Thematic unit), if there is a bound relationship between all thematic sentences in each paragraph with the main thesis (Thematic progression), if there is a monothematic structure in a

way that all sentences develop the controlling idea (Paragraph unity), if the dominant voice is the writer's one (Personal tone), if there are linkages between paragraphs in a co-referential, co-classification or co-extensive way (Inter-paragraph cohesion), if the tendency is toward using more concrete words rather than abstract words (Concreteness), and if more simple and coordinate sentences are mainly used rather than complex or subordinate sentences (Sentence simplicity). Therefore, it can be said that a writing style follows the pattern of linearity if it has the above mentioned characteristics. Therefore, contrastive rhetoric or intercultural rhetoric, as used interchangeably, is a research area in cross-cultural studies and second/foreign language learning which aims to diminish nonnative learners' problems in compositions by identifying these problems and comparing them to the rhetorical strategies of their first language (Hamadouche, 2013).

A review of relevant literature makes it clear that many researchers have cast light on the issue of linearity and rhetorical preferences in English and other languages' writing. Kaplan's (1987) more recent studies on the cross-cultural rhetoric showed that "there are…important differences between languages in the way which discourse topic is identified in a text and in the way in which discourse topic is developed in terms of exemplification, definition, and so on" (p. 10). Confirming Kaplan's findings, Ostler (1988) drew the conclusion that different languages had different preferences for certain kinds of discourse patterns. For example, he argued that English expository prose had essentially linear rhetorical patterns which consisted of a clearly defined topic-introduction-body, which chained from one to the next, and a conclusion which told the reader what has been discussed.

In another study, Regent (1985) looked into the rhetorical macro-pattern characteristics of medical articles in French and English. He found that even in such scientific writing, which might be expected to be relatively independent of national traditions, there were differences of a magnitude which might lead to comprehension problems. Regent concluded that French writers intended to communicate the scientific facts organizing the whole of discourse around the data to be presented. As a result, the line of the argument was of secondary importance, if it existed at all. In English, Regent notes, on the other hand, it is "precisely the line of the argument which is of prime importance" (p. 119). Yet, in another study, Vahapassi (1988) argued that Finish writers intended to "cram their texts as full as possible with various points, which they hardly elaborate at all. Their own standpoint was often not expressed until at the end of the texts" (p. 216). She also points out

that German scholarly writers tend to emphasize knowledge and theory at the expense of the reader, whereas English writers are more concerned with making their texts readable. She (1987) studied forty compositions written by the students from the four countries of England, Finland, Germany, and America. 10 compositions were analyzed for each language. The compositions were randomly selected from a pool of numerous compositions.

Connor's studies (1996, 2004) are also considerable and outstanding in this regard. The analysis of compositions, as Connor notes, revealed that the highly rated compositions follow an argumentative text structure including four major sections: situation, problem, solution and evaluation. However, Connor's studies (2008, 2011) led to introduce a multilayered model of intercultural rhetoric whose goal is to explain the complexity of cultural, social, and educational factors affecting a writing situation (Ivanova-Sullivan, 2016). Based on this model, composing texts calls for knowledge of the world, genre knowledge, cross-cultural knowledge, etc. (Bourouba, 2012). Accordingly, writing in FL/SL is more complicated than the L1 writing task (Haddad, 2018).

After reviewing the relevant literature, the present study intended to compare Persian essays with English essays written by Iranian and English pre-college students in terms of the concept of topicality. Topicality includes the two subcategories of monotopicality and multitopicality. An essay is monotopical if it deals with one main idea. And if such an assay develops more than one main idea, it is multitopical. This study then examines the Persian and English essay writers' preferences in terms of deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles.

3. Research Method

This research adopted a descriptive-correlational method and an ex post facto design (Hatch & Farhady, 1983, pp. 26-27) to measure and, at the same time, compare the frequency of occurrence of the nominal variables of deductive, inductive, and, quasi-inductive writing styles in Iranian and British education systems through the convenient sampling. In descriptive studies, the sample size is at least 30 (Delavar, 2019, p. 131; Gass & Maden, 2016). To follow the general principle of the more the sample size is, the more reliable and valid the results are and to be on a safe side, 200 essays (100 for each language) were selected as the sample of the study. Finally, a two-way 2×3 chi-square was employed to analyze the data.

The official locations for the IELTS administration in Iran and England were contacted to let us have access to a pool of the essays they had in their archives. We arrived at a sample of 200 essays, which served as the corpora in this study. They were written by Iranian and British students who took the IELTS Test to be admitted to universities during the years 2017-2019. The essays were randomly distributed between four special raters so that each rater studied 50 essays. They were university professors, holding Ph.D. degrees in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and teaching at different universities in Iran. They told that they had been teaching the Essay Writing Course at the B.A. level where they taught for more than seven terms. Therefore, they were familiar with the organization of an essay and were further acquainted with the concept of linearity in writing. They were requested to read each essay carefully and locate the place of its topic sentence(s) to check if the essay is deductive, inductive, or quasi-inductive. They also determined the number of topic sentences in each essay. Bolivar's (1996) model of analysis was used to follow a uniform procedure in detecting the exact place of the topic sentence(s) in each essay. The internal structure of the model can be described in terms of three fundamental turns, namely, lead, follow, and valuate. These three turns make a single triad. Bolivar (1996) assumes that the function of a triad "is to negotiate the transmission of information and evaluation in written text" (p. 28). A triad may combine with other triads to make a higher-ranking unit called movement. Yet, a movement may combine with other movements to make the largest unit at the highest rank named artifact. Thus, a hierarchical model was developed with the artifact and sentence on the opposite extremes of the ranking scale. The triad itself is assigned a certain function. The initiating triad in the structure of a paragraph is called the situation. The triad that follows the first triad is the development and the last one is left for the recommendation. The triads, making a movement, form the major part of the artifact. It should also be noted that a triad may not always consist of three turns. The turn lead is obligatory while the turns follow and valuate are not. They may be omitted by writers because they are optional elements in the internal structure of a paragraph.

Operationally speaking, if the topic sentence appeared in the first triad of an essay, that essay was said to have been developed deductively. On the contrary, if the raters made it clear that the topic sentence was located in the last triad of an essay, that essay was called inductive. Finally, if the rhetorical structure of an essay had been developed in a way that the topic sentence appeared somewhere other than the first or the last triad, that essay was detected as quasi-inductive.

4. Results

A preliminary analysis of the corpora made by the raters revealed that the 100 essays in the English data had 100 topic sentences, meaning that each English essay was developed to support one and only one topic sentence. This was not the case for the Persian data. The 100 Persian essays had 126 topic sentences, meaning that some essays in the Persian data enjoyed more than a topic sentence. In other words, some essays in the Persian data had been developed multitopically while the whole English data had been developed monotopically. The results of the preliminary analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The preliminary analysis of the Persian and English data

	Persian	English	Total
Number of Essays	100	100	200
Number of Topic Sentences	126	100	226
Deduction	75	53	128
Induction	12	35	47
Quasi-Induction	39	12	51

At the next stage of the statistical analysis of the data, a two-way chi-square for the whole data and a set of one-way chi-squares for the individual subcategories in the study were used to see if Persian and English essays are similar or different in terms of deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles. The result of the two-way chi-square (Table 2) shows that the critical value of x^2 with 2 df is 5.99 at the .05 level. The observed value of x^2 (26.69) exceeds this critical amount, indicating that there is a significant difference between Persian and English essays in their use if the deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles.

Table 2: The Two-way chi-square analysis for the whole Persian and English data

Column	Row	O	E	O-E	$(O-E)^2$	$(O-E)^2/E$
1	1	53	56.64	-3.64	13.25	.23
1	2	75	71.36	3.64	13.25	.19
2	1	35	20.80	14.20	201.64	9.70
2	2	12	26.20	-14.20	201.64	7.70
3	1	12	22.57	-10.57	111.72	4.95
3	2	39	28.43	10.57	111.72	3.92
						$X^2= 26.69$

Subsequent to the above analysis, individual frequencies for each of the subcategories were compared to determine the relative contribution of each subcategory of deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles to the overall x2 observed. The computation of x^2 for the deductive style (Table 3) shows that this category does not contribute significantly to the overall x^2. The critical value of x^2 with 1 df is 3.84 at the .05 level which is larger than the observed value of x^2 (.39). Such a finding supports the claim that the difference between Persian and English writing styles is not due to the deductive category, indicating further that both Persian and English languages utilize the deductive writing style almost similarly.

Table 3: The one-way chi-square analysis for the deductive writing style

	O	E	O-E	(O-E)2	(O-E)2/E
Persian	75	71.36	3.36	11.29	.16
English	53	56.64	-3.64	13.25	.23
					X2= .39

A second one-way chi-square was conducted on the data coming from the inductive writing style. As Table 4 shows, the critical value of x^2 (3.84) for the inductive category is much smaller than the observed value of x^2 (14.40) at the .05 level, supporting the claim that the inductive writing style contributes significantly to the overall x^2. Such a significant contribution has led to a difference between Persian and English writing systems in their use of the inductive writing style.

Table 4: The one-way chi-square analysis for the inductive writing style

	O	E	O-E	(O-E)2	(O-E)2/E
Persian	12	26.20	-14.20	201.64	7.70
English	35	20.80	14.20	201.64	9.70
					X2= 14.40

The last one-way chi-square analysis (Table 5) shows the contribution of the quasi-inductive writing style to the overall value of x^2. For this category, like the previous one, the critical value of x^2 (3.84) with 1 df is smaller than the observed value of x^2 (8.87), indicating that the quasi-inductive writing style contributes to making Persian and English rhetorically different.

Table 5: The one-way chi-square analysis for the quasi-inductive writing style

	O	E	O-E	(O-E)2	(O-E)2/E
Persian	39	28.43	10.57	111.72	3.92
English	12	22.57	-10.57	111.72	4.95
					X^2= 8.87

5- Discussion

The results of this study showed that Persian and English are different in their use of monotopicality and multitopicality. These findings lend support to the existence of cross-cultural differences between Persian and English rating systems. So this study supports the claims made by previous researches (Clyne, 1984; Dantas-Whitney & Grabe, 1989; Kaplan, 1966; Tirkkonen-Condit & Lieflander-Koistinen, 1989; Moradian, 2005; Regent, 1985; Vahapassi, 1988) that writing is a cultural phenomenon. This is indicative of the fact that Iranian and British educational systems employ different rhetorical preferences.

The key question raised is, thus, why is English monotopical and Persian both monotopical and multitopical? The English education system, as Kaplan (1966) and his followers (e.g., Ostler, 1988; Regent, 1985; Vahapassi, 1988) emphasize, follows the Anglo-European thought pattern which is direct, linear and to the topic away from any unnecessary digression. In addition, the English educational materials designed to teach writing unanimously preach the monotopical writing style which claims that one and only one main idea should be developed in an essay. They contain writing activities which help the students in England enhance writing appropriately. Some of these writing activities include pre-writing activities such as planning an outline which is a blueprint of the idea which is to be developed in an essay. Then, the English student makes a topic sentence or a thesis statement which bears the main idea of the essay. The topic sentence is supported by some sentences which are called supporting ideas. There is a close relationship between the main idea and the supporting ideas in the text so that they together make a cohesive and coherent essay having unity and clarity. All these characteristics neatly woven together in an English essay are in line with the development of a paragraph organization which is monotopical. This issue is also extended to ESL/EFL contexts. ESL/EFL students are trained to follow the same

route. They are exposed to writing skills which lead to the development of a monotopical paragraph.

In contrast with the English writing system, the Persian writing system is, as was shown, both monotopical and multitopical. This shows that the problem of Persian writing is somehow different. Persian writing follows no clear and identifiable thought patterns. The raters identified Persian essay with 1, 2, and even 3 main ideas. This non-systematicity of Persian prose makes us pay more attention to it. Some part of the non-systematicity of Persian writing may originate from the dominant influence of the oral form on the written discourse. As noted earlier, spoken and written discourse are different in grammar and organization. In Persian, the border line between the spoken and written discourse is not clear-cut. It seems that the oral style is more widespread and dominant in Persian. Meskoob (1995) notes, in this regard, that Persian discourse analysts have ever been more dexterous and masterful at the oral style than the written because they utilize it more in their profession (p. 178). So in Persian, although the form of the essay is written, its internal rhetorical structure is oral. On the other hand, one of the main characteristics of the oral style in Persian is topic shift. The speaker or the orator, from time to time, shifts from one topic to another trying his best to make the issue as attractive and persuasive as possible. As a result, multitopical essays which are, to a large extent, the legacy of the oral style are common in Persian.

It should also be borne in mind that Persian prose of nearly all text types is heavily influenced by literature, especially poetry. As an example, in a Persian lyrical poem (Ghazal), different themes or topics are raised. This is typical in Ghazals composed by Hafiz. He, as an example, embellishes his poetry with various points such as love, truth, reason, abstention, hypocrisy, etc. We can find many of these themes in a single Ghazal. This idea has created a hot debate among many Persian literary scholars. For example, Khoramshahi (2001) notes in this regard that "the style of Hafiz is not linear. This means that it does not follow a single line of meaning which is away from digression. It is not like a train which only keeps track of the rails" (p. 58). Later in the same book, he notes that Persian prose is under the heavy influence of Persian poetry and because of this, Persian prose has not yet found its own way of expression (p.172). Dashti (2001), another Persian scholar, arrives at the same conclusion about Saadi's Goletan. In his view, the book "does not have a central and basic thought" (p. 231). The issue is discussed in greater detail by other Iranian scholars like Zarrinkoob (1996, 2003), Ashoori (1996) and Meskoob (1994). From the readings of Zarrinkoob (1996, 2004), two main points can be derived for the sake

of our argument here. The first point is that Persian poetry is originally influenced by Arabic mentality. The early Persian poets composed their poems in the Arabic language because of the spread of Islam. One of the main characteristic features of the Arabic style in the composition of verse was, according to Zarrinkoob, the variations and diversions Arabic poets utilized in their verbal communication due to their nomadic style of living. The Persian poets tried their best to compose pieces of poetry dealing with diverse points and various themes following the Arabic traditions. As an example, Hafiz, the great Iranian poet in 800 A. D., took many of the themes of his poetry from Arabic poets and the Quran (The holy book of Muslims). Ashoori (1996), also, looks at the Arabic influence but from a negative perspective. He believes that the Arabic linguistic system has plagued the Persian language like a viral disease. According to Ashoori (1996), the Persian morphology and syntax as the main components of the language are greatly influenced by Arabic. He notes that many Persian verbal expressions and nouns are derived from Arabic bases or they have Arabic words in them. In line with the same argument, Meskoob (1995) notes that Persian scholarly writers "are more familiar with the Arabic writing system than that of Persian and for this reason, their writing is Arabic-like" (p. 176).

The second point is that Persian prose is heavily under the influence of poetry. In other words, Persian prose writers follow the conventions of the poetic style. As noted earlier, the Persian poetic style, which has been under the influence of Arabic, enjoys variations and diversions. So, Persian prose writers would like their texts to deal with as many ideas as possible. This story goes on until the present time. As the results of this research showed, some Persian essays contained more than one main idea. Therefore, multitopicality is characteristic of modern Persian prose.

The idea of Persian multitopicality is also related to literacy. In the Iranian education system, literacy is limited to phonology, morphology, and sentence structure. Writing and reading at the rhetorical level are quite neglected even though reading is more attended to. Learners are taught to read and get meaning out of a reading passage, but they are not told how it has been organized and what processes it has gone through. A cursory glance at the Persian textbooks reveals the bitter fact that they lack activities and exercises which will ultimately lead to the development of reading and writing skills at the rhetorical level. As a matter of fact, another reason which can justify the concept of multitopicality in Persian writing, according to Khatib and Moradian (2011), is the lack of instruction programs to teach essay writing in the education system in our country. Paragraph development models and the organization of written discourse, in

contrast to oral discourse, are not taught to students from the elementary up to the tertiary level. Therefore, it is natural that Persian writers do not have an established model to follow. The same view is applied to EFL books in Iran. Writing is the skill which receives the minimum attention. We should bear in mind that the view is taken in the ESL/EFL contexts all over the world. Of the two productive skills, primary attention is paid to speaking. Writing has often been considered of the secondary importance in language learning (Reichelt, 2001). The point is that the Persian literacy context needs more attention compared to those of other world languages. In the Iranian context, sentence grammar is highly valued at the expense of the text organization. So, this area demands serious consideration on the part of Persian theoreticians, researchers, and syllabus designers.

The results of this study are also related to interlanguage studies. Numerous researches (Corder, 1981; Farch & Kasper, 1983; James, 1981) have shown that L1 writing strategies are transferred to L2 writing. As noted earlier, the writing of individuals reflects the rhetorical patterns in their native culture. When individuals write in a language other than their native language, they tend to use their native patterns in the target language. Kaplan (1966) notes that the coordination and parallel construction is of Arabic writing characteristic. He brings evidence of the existence of these two patterns in Arabic students' ESL writing. Ostler (1987) also shows that while Arabic speaking students seem to have mastered most of the English grammatical forms and idioms, they still produce foreign-sounding essays. The results of the present study showed that Persian and English cultures orient their discourse differently. Therefore, the existence of these differences should be emphasized in the education system of Iran as well as the English language teaching context to minimize their interfering effects on Persian ESL/EFL students.

The analysis of the data also showed that it is the contribution of the inductive and quasi-inductive writing styles which makes Persian and English rhetorically different. English writers prefer induction while Persian writers prefer the quasi-induction. So, part of the problem of Persian writing lies in the quasi-inductive writing style. Careful investigation of the quasi-inductive essays showed that what made these essays quasi-inductive was a delay in the introduction of purpose. This delay is triggered by the existence of poems and anecdotes by great Iranian poets and Koranic verses at the beginning triad of each Persian essay. Such essays made 10 percent of the Persian data. In such essays, Persian writers devoted the first triad of the essay to something which makes the line of the argument indirect and strenuous. This is in line with what Kaplan noted when he asserted that writing in Oriental languages such as Persian was indirect and circular.

As it was mentioned, the typical paragraph development model in English follows the introduction + body + conclusion order. This was also confirmed by the data in this study. The investigation of the Persian essays also showed that most of the essays in the Persian data are lacking in the conclusion section. This phenomenon makes the introduction and body sections bulkier than normal. Since there is mostly no concluding paragraph in Persian essays, the main idea appears in the introduction and body sections. This enhances the possibility of quasi-inductive paragraphs in Persian. A point worthy of note here is that if Persian writers are trained to follow the principles of deductive and inductive writing styles and the introduction-body-conclusion paragraph organization, the number of quasi-inductive essays will decrease to a great extent. Finally, if Persian writers learn that there should be a concluding paragraph in any paragraph or essay, that concluding paragraph may have a chance to carry the topic sentence or the main idea of the text and by so doing an inductive paragraph is ensued.

6. Conclusion

Results of this study showed that Persian and English are rhetorically different. As Kaplan (1966) and Ostler (1987) showed, L1 writing strategies were transferred to L2 writing situations. Kaplan (1966) further noted that coordination and parallel construction were characteristics of Arabic writing. He showed the existence of these two patterns in Arabic students' ESL writings. Ostler (1987) also showed that while Arabic-speaking students seemed to have mastered the English grammatical forms and idioms, they still produced foreign-sounding essays. The results of the present study showed that Persian and English cultures varied in their use of the deductive, inductive, and quasi-inductive writing styles and the number of main ideas in each essay. Now, these differences should be emphasized in the Iranian education system in general and English education in particular to minimize their interfering effects on Persian ESL/EFL writers.

Bachman (1995) and Bachman and Palmer (2000) devised a model of language structure including many competencies and constructs. They mentioned a construct, among many other constructs, called rhetorical competence, which is a subcategory of textual competence. So a writing pedagogy that embraces the textual orientation of contrastive rhetoric "would work to actively foster the construction in students of rhetorical schemata" (Leki, 1991, p. 135). So, it is of prime importance to understand the mental representation of a text and "how it is formed in long-term memory has implications for text production or comprehension as well" (Conner, 1987, p. 49). Teaching the top-level rhetorical structures of texts to Persian ESL/EFL students and teaching them

how to signal text organization and the way an essay is developed through deduction and induction should all function to make writing more rhetorically effective.

Acquaintance with Contrastive Rhetoric can also be beneficial to both teachers and learners in an EFL context. Awareness of the rhetorical schemata and organizational modes of various languages will surely result in better ESL writing instructional practices for teachers. Similarly, it assists ESL students to make informed rhetorical choices and avoid L1 rhetorical patterns when composing in the target language (Hamadouche, 2013). In the same vein, Davies (2004) argues that familiarity with cross-cultural variations in the use of textual features and organizational patterns makes an easier transition to the rhetorical patterns of the target language, as well as, as Smith (2005), and Xing, Wang and Spencer (2008) state, EFL/ESL learners can overcome cultural barriers and switch between their first and target languages depending on the audience and the context of their writing. Moreover, language instructors need to be aware of the cultural differences existing between writing in English education and writing in the students' first language. One possible benefit from this awareness may be that they are more likely to teach the expectations of the English audience to L2 writers, and thereby help them increase their perceived quality of their text. As a result, they would adjust their writing instruction to respond to L2 differences in writing development (De Jong & Harper, 2005). This can help teachers make suitable decisions about the method of instruction, feedback, and evaluation procedures that best meet the students' needs. Based on Khartite and Zerhouni (2016), textbook developers and composition teachers can foster the rhetorical schemata both receptively (in a reading class) and productively (in a composition class). By the same token, learners' awareness of cultural and L1 influence would be raised (Haddad, 2018). It aids teachers of writing, as a matter of fact, not to overlook the special cultural context of their instruction and save sight of the cultural dimension in their lesson design and plans. Apparently, the growing belief among researchers in FL/SL is that there is a positive relationship between the writing processes of the English language and students' native language, and that literacy skills could be transferable across languages (Darus & Ching, 2009; Zhang, 2008).

Finally, this study was limited and delimited in the following ways. First, it focused on essays as examples of expository writing. Other writing types such as persuasive writing can be investigated to come to a clearer picture of the existence of educational and cross-cultural differences between Persian and English. Second, the researchers studied the essays written by the Iranian and British students who took the IELTS test to enter universities. Research can be carried

out on the essays written by other people like those who intend to immigrate to western countries. Thirdly, comparisons of Persian with other languages such as French, Germanic, Arabic, etc. can be made to detect similarities and differences between the Persian educational system and other educational systems overseas.

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