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Rhetorical Organization of Ilocano and Tagalog Pre-Service Teachers in their Argumentative Essays

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Abstract

Cross-cultural study of rhetorical traditions as they exist or have existed in different societies around the world has been the focus of contrastive rhetoric. Studies in contrastive rhetoric in the past years confirm that culture is reflected in rhetorical patterns. Using the argumentative essays of 55 students from a state university in Central Luzon and following Liu's (2005) framework on the location of thesis statement, the present quantitative-qualitative study compares the discourse organizations in the placement of thesis statement in the argumentative essays of the three groups of tertiary students (Ilocano, Tagalog and mixed Ilocano and Tagalog), and determines if thesis statements' placement is dependent on one's language grouping. Analysis of the corpus revealed that participants from the three groups differ on their choices on where to write the thesis statements. There were more Tagalog participants who preferred the deductive pattern, while there were more Ilocano participants who preferred to write thesis statements in the middle. Meanwhile, there were more participants from the mixed-group who chose the inductive pattern. The interplay between culture and language use was discussed with focus on the distinct culture of Tagalog and Ilocano that are reflected in the discourse organization of their argumentative essays.

Keywords: *culture, language, thesis statement, argumentative essays*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background and Related Studies

Writing is embedded in culture and since there are differences from one culture to another, differences as to the accepted or preferred rhetorical norms and conventions from one culture to another exist. Difference between the rhetoric of Asian and Western world was discovered in 1966 by Robert Kaplan while examining the organization of the essays of his foreign students.

Cross-cultural study of rhetorical traditions as they exist or have existed in different societies around the world has been the focus of contrastive rhetoric. Research in contrastive rhetoric in the past years confirm that culture is reflected in rhetorical patterns. For instance, Hinds (1983) examined rhetorical style in Japanese writing which does not exist in English using data from a newspaper column. He found that the style of Japanese expository writing can be described as consisting of the pattern *ki-shoo-ten-ketsu*. Likewise, Cai (1987 as cited in Connor, 2004) claimed that the indirectness of Chinese rhetoric is probably due to the influence of the eight-legged essay, the framework used for Chinese writing, which was derived from classical works on Confucian teachings. Eggington (1987) found that Korean texts are indirect and nonlinear, and the latter demonstrated by the four-part pattern (*ki-sung-chon-kyul*), which corresponds to that of the Japanese. Based on an inventory of cohesive devices used in the written texts, Mohamed and Omer (2000) concluded that Arabic writing is context-based, generalized, repetition oriented and additive, which they argued, may be attributed to the fact that Arabic culture is collectivist, high-context, high-contrast and reader responsible. Likewise, Montaño-Harmon (1991) found that elaborated style of Spanish writing is dominant in Spanish students' English essays.

Due to inherent difficulties underlying generating and organizing ideas and putting these ideas in a harmonious way, writing is considered the most difficult of the four skills (Richards & Renandya, 2002). With such, it has become one major concern of current tertiary education. Hence, educational institutions are paying extraordinary attention to the writing skills of all students (Kachru, 1995; Torres & Alieto, 2019a). Zhu (2011 as cited in Biria & Yakhabi, 2013) refers to the prevalence of argumentative writing in the academic curriculum. An argumentative essay requires writer to make a particular claim about an issue and support that claim with evidence. Claims can take a variety of forms, such as an opinion, a proposal, an evaluation, a speculation on a cause and effect relationship, or an interpretation of events. In accordance with the English written discourse conventions, the argumentative writing belongs to the genre of academic discourse, demanding clear, relevant arguments and a clear structure. Argumentative as well as expository writing consists of formulating a thesis statement (Georgievska, 2016).

The placement of the thesis statement has been typically separated into two types, deductive and inductive, putting the thesis statement at the beginning and at the end. Inductive writing is characterized as having the thesis statement in the final position whereas deductive writing has the thesis statement in the initial position (Hinds, 1987). In a native English argumentative writing, the paragraph begins with a clear thesis statement, followed by paragraphs containing relevant and adequately-supported arguments that support the statement. As emphasized by Bain (2010 as cited in Husin & Griffin, 2012), a deductive pattern, where the placement of thesis statement usually comes at the beginning of the paragraphs, is preferred by native English speakers "to indicate the scope of the text". Meanwhile, Asian speakers usually

uses an order of presentation in which the main idea is postponed until sufficient background has been put forward similar to Hind's 'delayed introduction of purpose' (Scollon & Scollon, 1991). Oi and Kamimura (1996 as cited in Kamimura & Oi, 1998) pointed out two major differences in the organization patterns in argumentative essays between American and Japanese writers, in which the former prefer the General-Specific pattern while the latter subscribe either to Specific-General pattern or the "Omission Pattern". Another difference they found is that the American writers organize ideas in linear way, while Japanese writers organize in a circular way.

Although numerous contrastive rhetoric studies comparing college-level native English speakers to speakers of other languages have been done (e.g. Choi, 1988; Kobayashi, 1984; Silva & Matsuda, 2001; Wang & Wen, 2002; Liu, 2005; Biria & Yakhabi, 2013), investigation in the difference of argumentative essay organization among country's language   or regional groups, like in the Philippines, is lacking. As Quakenbush (2010 as cited in Dayag & Dita, 2012) laments, there has been a significant drop in the number of studies on theoretical linguistics involving Philippine languages since 2000, compared with the outputs in the previous decades. Though studies in contrastive rhetoric have already compared Philippine English and American English in terms of use of assertive (Dayag, 1997), structure of argumentation (Dayag, 2005) and interplay between culture and cohesive device (Genuino, 2002), there is a little or no attention given to comparing the rhetorical patterns in English essays among Filipino students coming from different language/regional groups in the Philippines like Tagalog and Ilocano.

Regionalism is the idea or practice of dividing a country into smaller units for political, economic, social, and cultural purposes. Regionalism is an ideology and political movement that seeks to advance the causes of regions. As a process, it plays role within the nation as well as outside the nation i.e. at international level. Regionalism at national level refers to a process in which sub-state actors become increasingly powerful, in which power devolves from central level to regional governments. These are the regions within country, distinguished in culture, language and other socio-cultural factors. Lande (1974 as cited in Torres & Alieto, 2019b) mentioned that language group and loyalties are most marked in the most rural, most isolated and least modern localities. According to Danao (1996 as cited in Torres & Alieto, 2019b), individual's bolstered loyalty to his sub-nation as compared to his country is attributed to geographical location and the desire of the Spanish to divide and conquer. She explained that a Filipino is more concerned with his milieu rather than the state since personal identity is molded by local language, values, attitudes, and traditions that he has acquired. From this sub-nation, a Filipino acquires distinct traits, norms, values and languages.

To date, Philippines is inhabited by 90 million individuals who speak around over 170 languages all over the country; almost all of them belong to the Austronesian language family. Of all of these languages, only two are considered official in the country, at least 10 are considered major and at least eight are considered co-official. Tagalog and Ilocano are considered two of the major languages in the country. The group that speaks Ilocano originally lived in the north of Luzon, but, nowadays, Ilocano people can also be found in Central Luzon. Meanwhile the Tagalog form a high majority in Metro Manila and Calabarzon, and a considerable plurality in Central Luzon (mainly in Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, and Zambales) and Mimaropa (mainly in Marinduque, coastal areas of Mindoro and parts of Palawan). Ilocano and Tagalog have cultural traits that make them distinct from each other. While the Ilocano are known adventurous, industrious, patient and frugal, the Tagalog are generally considered unadventurous   and neither thrifty nor extravagant.

Guinto (2012) in his exploratory research, which was conceived primarily to unveil the cognitive structuring of Filipino Youth's narrative essays published in the Young Blood column of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, found that Filipino youth write in a common rhetorical structure that is nearly related to standard western practices, attributable to existing influences of Anglo-American literary canons in the academe. However, the identified corpus of personal narrative essays proved that the notion of western supremacy in Philippine English writing is gradually losing ground. He concluded that a distinct identity in writing is defying western rhetorical orthodoxy in the country and it is pioneered by no less than the Filipino youth.

Majority of the students in a state university in Central Luzon are Tagalog, Ilocano and mixed Tagalog and Ilocano. The present study tried to move the contrastive rhetoric research lens to the rhetorical strategies employed by Tagalog, Ilocano and mixed Tagalog-Ilocano pre-service teachers, which for Alieto (2018 as cited in Torres, 2019) will soon form part of the basic implementer of policies, from an institution in Central Luzon. Their argumentative essays were analyzed based on the location of thesis statement following Liu's (2005) framework in the placement of thesis statement. The aims of the study are to: compare the rhetorical strategies specifically in the placement of thesis statement in the argumentative essays of the Tagalog, Ilocano and mixed Tagalog-Ilocano groups and identify the factors that influence their rhetorical decision with regard the placement of thesis statement in their argumentative essays.

1.2 Research Questions
1. What rhetorical organization do participants from Tagalog, Ilocano and mixed Tagalog-Ilocano groups employ in their argumentative essays?
2. Does placement of thesis statement depend on participants' language or regional groups?

1.4 Theoretical Framework
Liu's (2005) type of analysis on the location of thesis statement was used in this study. Although some researchers such as Tirkkonen-Condit and Lieflander-Koistinen (1989) treated the middle location as a part of the inductive pattern, the results of Liu's study revealed the notion that placing the thesis of statement in the middle of the essay constituted a different pattern than the typical deductive or inductive pattern.

Deductive rhetorical pattern is defined as having a thesis statement that is clearly stated in the introduction. In this pattern, the thesis statement usually preceded the supporting reasons. In contrast, the inductive pattern is defined as having a thesis statement either in the end or implied. In the case of thesis statement in the middle or in the end, the supporting reasons often preceded the writer's thesis statement. As for the implied thesis statement, the supporting reasons revolve around the discussed issue implicating the writer's stance without a statement clearly stating his position. Hence, an essay with thesis statement in the beginning reflects a deductive development of ideas, and an essay with thesis statement in the end or implied reflects an inductive development of ideas. Meanwhile a thesis statement in the middle reflects neither deductive nor inductive development of ideas.

2. METHODOLOGY
2.1 Participants

The criteria in classifying the participants as either Tagalog or Ilocano include: (1) must have completed primary and secondary education in any of the provinces known to be the province of Tagalog or Ilocano; (2) must have used Tagalog or Ilocano as dominant language at home; and (3) must have one of the parents who is genuine Tagalog or Ilocano. The researchers sent a letter to the college dean and to the president of the institution seeking permission to administer the survey form to facilitate participants' groupings. The survey form was filled-out by 120 college students, who completed Writing in the Discipline course.

The survey required the students to report their place of birth, current province of residence, length of stay in the province, province where they completed primary and secondary education, languages spoken at home, and parents' province of origin. After the students filled-out the survey form, the researchers then identified students who met the criteria and considered them participants. Initially, there were 72 participants who met the criteria and they were grouped as Tagalog (n= 47) and Ilocano (n= 25). However, there were 17 students who reported information that cannot be classified either as genuine Tagalog or Ilocano because the information they gave seemed to fit to either of the two language/regional groups. Hence, the researchers decided to form additional grouping to accommodate the 17 participants, and labeled them the mixed Tagalog-Ilocano group. All the 89 participants were asked to write their argumentative essays based on the given prompt. After data coding, only the essays of the 55 participants were considered as the final corpus. Other essays were not included in the corpus since they contained thesis statements that did not explicitly state participants' agreement or disagreement to the topic, and did not address the prompt. Hence, the final participants of the study composed of 24 Tagalog, 20 Ilocano, and 11 mixed Tagalog-Ilocano tertiary ESL learners.

2.2 Argumentative Essays

The writing task was administered to answer the first and second research questions. In selecting the prompt, the researchers followed Liu's (2005) criteria to confirm that the corpus was in line with the first research question. These criteria include: (1) the prompt should enable all the participants to express their opinions; (2) only one topic has to be used; and (3) topic should enable participants to justify a claim.

To build the corpus, participants were asked to argue their position on the burial of Former President Ferdinand E. Marcos in the *Libingan ng Mga Bayani* stating whether they are *for* or *against* it. Participants were not allowed to state their position as both "for or against;" they had to select one from which and support their choice with specific reasons and examples. The researcher chose the topic since it was one of the hottest issues in all media platforms during the conduct of the study. Everyone, especially the students, had their opinions or arguments to present as regards the topic. With such, the researcher believed that the given topic enabled the participants to write argumentative essays that served as data for the study.

2.3 Data Collection and Procedure

The researcher sought the assistance of subject instructors in distributing and collecting the questionnaires and in administering the writing task. Following Silva's (1986 as cited in Silva & Matsuda, 2001) suggestion that a researcher should limit the writing time to 30-60 minutes in ESL writing research, participants were given 40 minutes to compose their argumentative essays during their classes.

2.4 Data Coding and Analysis

To distinguish the deductive, inductive and middle rhetorical patterns in the argumentative essays of Tagalog, Ilocano and mixed Tagalog-Ilocano, the three coders (the researchers and their colleague who is a PhD in Applied Linguistics holder) used Liu's (2005) analysis on the location of a thesis statement. Deductive pattern was defined as having the thesis statement clearly stated in the introduction. In this pattern, the thesis statement usually preceded the supporting reasons. In contrast, the inductive pattern was defined as having the thesis statement in the end or implied. The last classification is the argumentative rhetorical pattern that is neither deductive nor inductive is the thesis statement located in the middle. Participants' argumentative essays were reproduced. Copies of which were distributed to the coders. Prior to the coding of essays, the coders met to set their guidelines as regards the identification of the thesis statements and their locations in the essays. They cleared all the possible concerns that might come up during their actual coding. After having established the criteria, the coders first worked individually in their respective homes and after they identified the location of thesis statement, they met for the comparison of their coding work.

Since thesis statements presented as first sentence were easily recognizable in participants' argumentative essays, inter-coder reliability of Thesis-at-the-Beginning or deductive pattern was relatively high (r=1). As a result of pre-coding meeting with focus on explicitly defining of the criteria, inter-coder rating for inductive pattern (Thesis-at-the-End and Thesis Implied) and Thesis-at-the Middle, inter-coder reliability also got the same equivalent with deductive pattern. Since the aim of the study was to analyze the position of the thesis statement in participants' argumentative essays, errors in word, phrase, punctuation, usage were set aside.

Frequency counting and percentage distribution of the coded essays were used. To determine if the placement of thesis statement was dependent on language groups, a Chi-square analysis was performed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Placement of Thesis Statement

As presented in Table 1, participants from the three groups placed the thesis statements of their argumentative essays in the beginning, middle, end and implied. Of the 55 participants, nearly half (24 or 43.64%) followed deductive pattern (thesis statement-in-the-beginning), more than one-fourth (17 or 30.91%) employed inductive pattern (thesis statement-in-the-end and thesis implied), and a little over one-fourth (14 or 25.46%) wrote in neither deductive nor inductive pattern (thesis statement-in-the-middle).

Table 1. Summary of the Placement of Thesis Statement of the Three Groups

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Placement of Thesis Statement		Tagalog (n=24)		Ilocano (n=20)		Mixed Tagalog Ilocano (n=11)		Total Participants from the Three Groups (n=55)	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Deductive	thesis-at-the beginning	16	66.67	4	20	4	36.37	24	43.64
Inductive	thesis-at-the-end	4	16.77	4	20	2	18.18	10	18.18
	thesis implied	1	4.17	3	15	3	27.27	7	12.73
Neither deductive nor inductive	thesis-in-the-middle	3	12.50	9	45	2	18.18	14	25.45
Total		24	100	20	100	11	100	55	100

Based on the analysis on the rhetorical strategies employed by of each group, it can be deduced from the same table that of the 24 Tagalog participants, majority (66.67%) put their thesis statements in the beginning, nearly one-fourth (20.83%) had their thesis statements in the end and implied (inductive), and the remaining (12.5%) put the thesis statements in the middle. Meanwhile, the 20 Ilocano participants had their thesis statements in the middle (45%), end (20%) and implied (15%), and at the beginning (20%). The 11 mixed Tagalog-Ilocano participants wrote their thesis statements in the end (18.18%) and implied (27.27%), beginning (36.36%) and in the middle (18.18%).

Based on the foregoing findings, it can be said that majority of the Tagalog participants preferred the deductive pattern compared to Ilocano participants who preferred to write their thesis statements in the middle. The mixed Tagalog-Ilocano participants preferred inductive over deductive and thesis statement in the middle.

3.1.1. Tagalog Participants
Based on the corpus, majority of the Tagalog participants preferred the deductive way of writing their argumentative essays. This kind of writing that Tagalog participants used is similar to the native English speakers' way of developing their written texts. In the deductive approach, writers' opinion about the topic is explicitly presented in the first paragraph and followed by supporting detail. In this approach, the argumentative discourse starts by introducing the main point before putting forward the reasons or arguments in support of the stance. Deductive rhetorical organization is illustrated in Essay Sample A. The dominance of this pattern among

the Tagalog participants can be the product of the instructions they received from their writing teachers during their primary up to their tertiary years. Generally, students are taught to write a clear thesis statement followed by good supporting points in the introduction of their essays. As Purves (1987 as cited in Noor, 2001) asserted, it is in schools that students learn to write according to certain conventions, many of which have little to do with the structure of the language and more to   do with the literary and cultural heritage of the society.

Essay Sample A: The Deductive Pattern

Essay Sample A: The Deductive Pattern

Introduction

There is too much argument as regard the burial of Former President Ferdinand E. Marcos in the Libingan ng Mga Bayani and my stand is <u>I am in favor of his burial at the Libingan ng mga Bayan because he done has so much for the country during his term.</u>

Body

Marcos had done a lot of things for his country and countrymen. He needed to be that kind of ruler he became for the country to prosper and eventually for the Filipinos to have comfortable living. It was during his term when there were many infrastructures built in the country. The Lung center of the Philippines, LRT, MRT, CCP were some of the projects he ventured in. During his term, there were a lot of things accomplished.

It doesn't matter if he is cruel at his time. For me, it doesn't need for a president to be that good in the eye of the people, rather to be good in his job. It doesn't matter how cruel he is, as long as he is excellent in his duty. Like other says "the damage has been done" so we must move on and accept the fact that he deserve to have a burial in the Libingan ng Bayan because of the things he did for the country and the countrymen in the past and up to the present generation.

Conclusion

Let us be grateful because we have the most cruel but cunning leaders of this country. Let's not just bluffed and cry all over the things that's negative. As a Filipino citizen we need to an adequate citizen. He is dead but his legacy will remain. Yes, he is cruel but we need to understand that he needed to for our sake, for the sake of the country.

The result also shows traces of the influence of American system of education in the Philippines' educational system. According to Connor (2004), American school essays are often called the five-paragraph essay, in which writers first tell the readers what they are going to write about, then develop it in three paragraphs with a main point in each, and finally tell the readers what they have written.

Tagalog's preference to the deductive pattern could be somewhat related to their preference of staying in their locality rather than moving to other places, thus making the most out of their life in the same place. Their preference to the deductive pattern can also be attributed to the loyalty they have and to their developed tendency to live with their parents or in-laws even after marriage. It means that since they were initially exposed to the deductive pattern, the tendency of departing it is low. Relating it further to the two known characteristics of Tagalog presented earlier, it can be assumed that they are most likely to avoid conventions in their writings since they would rather prefer to employ writing approach where they are used to. They prefer discourse organization in which they are already comfortable. Hence, the tendency of incorporating a different rhetorical style is less likely to happen to this group.

3.1.2 Ilocano Participants

Thesis statements following the middle and inductive patterns are highly preferred by the majority of Ilocano participants. A critical look at the essays revealed that some of them placed their thesis statement either in the second or third paragraph of their essays. In this pattern, participants would have first preparatory or preliminary sentences to familiarize the readers as regards the topic in the essay. Essay Sample B illustrates the thesis statement in the middle pattern used by the Ilocano participants. As shown in the sample essay, the writer first gave a background of the topic as well as the two opposing views about the topic before actually presenting the thesis statement.

Essay Sample B: Thesis in the Middle

Introduction
    After the announcement that former President Marcos will be buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani, many people including youths protested. Honestly, I am not that aware of the reasons why some are against it because it is written in the Philippine Constitution that all presidents should be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayan but it depends upon the family if they would like to. As a youth, I wasn't born during those times that's why I can't find the reason why some of my fellow youths are protesting. Some say their family was affected by the violence during Marcos administration.

Body
    Each of us has our own opinion and interest. <u>My take in the issue is that I am pro-Marcos and I am not against the burial of President Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayan.</u> In the past few year, I have been hearing news about this issue. As a citizen of the Philippines, I'm not against this. Through readings, I learned about Marcos - his administration, his projects, etc. Marcos is a lawyer. Marcos came from a wealthy family. How could it be possible that they have ill-gotten wealth? Some of the protestants are not that knowledgeable about what Marcos has brought to our country. During his administration, Philippines is rich. Marcos is not corrupt. As I've stated above, Marcos came from a rich family.
    With regard to the violence, I cannot deny that many people died during his reign. For me, those people did not follow the rules and regulations that became the reason of their death. Maybe, this is the reason of some of the protestants.
    Marcoses already suffered from the vengeance of the people who are against with Marcos. Their wealth had been taken away from them. Marcos, regardless of the violence, was one of the best presidents we because on what he did to our economy.

Conclusion
    The decision of SC is irrevocable. Marcos is already buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayan. Why can't we just let Marcos lie in peace? Why can't we let his family live in peace?

Another preferred pattern of the Ilocano participants was the inductive pattern (thesis statement at the end and thesis statement implied). In thesis statement implied, writers' main ideas will not be disclosed until the final paragraph or the concluding remarks. In this pattern, the writer would first present the facts and all information supporting their opinion before actually giving his stand

about the topic explicitly. Illustration of thesis statement in the end is presented in Essay Sample C.

Essay Sample C: Thesis Statement in the End

Introduction

Two decades of leadership, Marcos build the new Philippines. He used the fund for infrastructures and for the economic growth of our country. The agricultural industry during his administration was so productive. We are self-sufficient in rice and gives incentives to the union of farmers.

Body

According to History, Marcos is also an army who fights during the World War II. And according to the constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, any person who is part of the arm forces of the Philippines should be buried in the Libingan of the Bayani if he wished to.

We all know that Philippines is part of the first world country during his leadership. We are number two in the most richest country in the world. Ferdinand Marcos is a hero because he is the one who lift our country and he makes us great.

Conclusion

Those who are against to Marcos burial to Libingan ng Mga Bayani, let's forgive the sin that is done in the past but let us not forget the history. <u>Marcos is our former president, a former military and a real hero of this country and because of that, he has the right to be buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayan.</u>

Ilocano participants also used the thesis statement implied pattern. Sample of participant's essay following this technique is presented in Essay Sample D. In that technique, writer did not clearly indicate the position or stand on the topic in any of the paragraphs in the essay. The used of this pattern could be guided by the idea that the writer already has such framework in his mind that readers would already decode his stance upon reading the supporting arguments in the essay. The use of this is supported by Hinds' (1987) view that this kind of pattern has its purpose of getting readers think for themselves, to consider the observation made, and to draw their own conclusions. This is similar to the responsibility delegated by Japanese writers to their readers. In reader-oriented writing, the readers are put on the center-stage, giving them more responsibility to decode the writers' message.

Essay Sample D: Thesis Implied

Introduction

Filipinos recognize and appreciate the heroic act of every people in the society. They may consider him or her as a hero if it contributes (positive to the majority. Hero defines as one who is willing to give his/her life, who is willing to serve other people, willing to die, and to sacrifice himself/herself for the good or sake of others. Recognizing the heroism of individual depends on how this person affects everyone. How people described him/her based on his/her heroic act.

Body

On the last few weeks, the burial of Former President Ferdinand E. Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayan became a debatable issue. And until now, both sides are continuing arguing if Former Pres. Marcos should be considered as a hero and deserve to be buried in the Libingan ng Mga Bayani.

If we were going to glimpse and trace the history, F. Marcos became the president of the Philippines from 1952-1971. He was known for his overpowered way of ruling. He also recognized for his contributions when it comes to the innovation, and progress of the economic status of the Philippines. We acknowledge his contribution when it comes to the infrastructures, buildings, establishments and modernizations of our country.

The questions are: Are these enough to consider his as a hero? Did he suffer his life for the sake of others? Did he serve well? Did he save life or lives? Did he meet the qualification to consider as a hero?

Conclusion

If we will put in a context, the contributions of Former President Ferdinand Marcos including building, well-structured infrastructures, airline or airport and these are part of the platform of a president. It means, these acts should be done because he is a president. These are what presidents should do and presidents used the national budget of our country to build these infrastructures. In short, it is not enough to consider as a heroic act. Think of it, do you think President Marcos is able to do this without the national budget? How about those people who died during his term just to conceal his unrightfully and precarious act-killing media aide reporter and other people. Do the building and infrastructure help the relatives of the people who died to move on. Think of it.

Based on the analysis of the Ilocano participants' argumentative essays, the interplay of culture and writing practice was also revealed. Unlike the Tagalog participants who had high preference to thesis statement-in-the-beginning pattern, the Ilocano participants' decision on where to put the thesis statement was not only confined in one location for they wrote following these patterns: thesis statement in-the-middle, thesis statement in-the-end, and thesis statement implied. Their decision to put their thesis statements in those locations is reflective of their adventurous nature. Ilocano people are known wanderer and adventurous, traits which were also

revealed in their writing since they opted to go away from the conventional way of discourse organization.

3.1.3 Mixed Tagalog-Ilocano Participants

Of the 11 participants from this group, more than one-third of the participants employed inductive (5 or 45.45%) and deductive (4 or 36.36%) patterns. While the remaining (3 or 27.27%) had their thesis statement in the middle. The findings disclose the fact that since the group was already combination of the two groups, the nearly equal distribution on the use of two rhetorical patterns was inevitable. But it cannot be denied that more participants from mixed group used the inductive pattern.

3.2 Thesis statement location vis-a-vis language/regional groups

The second research problem explored if language/regional grouping influence the participants choice with regard the location of thesis statement. Result of chi-square analysis (.032) shows that participants' choice on where to put the thesis statement is dependent to their language/regional grouping. Hence, the null-hypothesis (H_O) that location of thesis statement is independent to language groups was rejected since the asymp.sig is less than 0.05.

The foregoing result confirms that language/regional groupings have influence to one's choice of rhetorical pattern. It conforms to the findings of previous intercultural communication and contrastive rhetorical studies that have provided for the existence of different argument patterns across cultures (Okabe, 2002 as cited in Biria & Yakhabi, 2013). Findings also strengthen the idea that writing is an embedded activity in culture not only across nations but also in cultures within a nation.

3.2.1 Groups Differences on the Factors Influencing Rhetorical Organization

This part presents how the factors influencing rhetorical organization differ when participants were grouped based on language/regional groups as well as in their choice of the placement of thesis statement.

Language/Regional Groups

Table 2 shows how respondents from three language/regional groups are engaged in a continuum of factors in English in genres of writing, placement of thesis statement, reading of printed materials, and addressing target audiences which are considered to have influence on their choices as regards the placement of thesis statement. Results show that there is significant difference among the three groups in terms of the following: frequency of writing journal in class and outside the class (Item 1.3); writing of thesis statement in any place (Item 2.4); frequency of reading textbooks (Item 3.2) and encyclopedia (Item 3.3); thinking of themselves (Item 4.1) and teachers (Item 4.2) as their readers when they write in English; and the influence of English articles in textbooks (Item 5.1).

Table 2. Differences among Language/Regional Groups on the Factors Influencing Discourse Organization

Language/Regional Group	Tagalog		Ilocano		Mixed	
	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD
1. How often do you write these items in class and outside the class						
1.1 essays/assignment	4.63^a	VO	4.45^a	VO	4.55^a	VO
1.2 e-mails	2.71^a	NS	2.50^a	NS	2.73^a	NS
1.3 journals	3.96^a	SO	3.20^b	NS	3.73^{ab}	SO
1.4 term papers	4.33^a	VO	4.15^a	SO	4.36^a	VO
2. Where do you place your main idea/ thesis statement most often?						
2.1 at the beginning	4.12^a	SO	4.00^a	SO	4.00^a	SO
2.2 in the middle	3.92^a	SO	3.75^a	SO	3.36^a	SO
2.3 at the end	3.58^a	SO	3.55^a	SO	3.18^a	SO
2.4 any placement	3.04^a	NS	2.70^{ab}	NS	1.91^a	NS
2.5 implied	2.36^a	NS	2.37^a	NS	2.73^a	NS
3. How often do you read the following English print materials outside the classroom?						
3.1 newspaper (broadsheet)	3.38^a	NS	3.40^a	SO	3.00^a	NS
3.2 textbooks	4.08^a	SO	4.00^a	SO	3.27^b	SO
3.3 encyclopedia	3.04^a	NS	3.15^a	NS	2.27^b	NVO
3.4 dictionary	3.92^a	SO	4.10^a	SO	4.09^a	SO
3.5 magazine	3.75^a	SO	3.30^a	NS	3.55^a	SO
3.6 journals	3.67^a	SO	3.30^a	NS	2.91^a	SO
3.7 English novels	4.08^a	SO	4.05^a	SO	3.64^a	SO
4. How often do you think the following persons are your readers when you write in English?						
4.1 yourself	4.71^a	VO	4.65^a	VO	4.09^b	SO
4.2 teacher	4.54^a	VO	4.10^a	SO	3.18^b	NS
4.3 parents	3.17^a	NS	2.70^a	NS	2.82^a	NS
4.4 friends	3.88^a	SO	3.60^a	SO	3.27^a	NS
5. Do you think the following factors influence your English writing?						
5.1 English articles in textbooks	4.50^a	VO	4.15^{ab}	VO	3.82^a	NS
5.2 English writing outside of class (newspaper, magazines and books)	4.63^a	VO	4.45^a	VO	4.45^a	VO

Row means with the same letter are not significantly different at 10% level
Legend: 4.50 - 5.00   Very Often (**VO)**
           3.40-4.19   Somewhat Often (**SO**)
           2.60-3.39   Not Sure (**NS)**
           1.80-2.59   Not Very Often **(NVO)**
           1.00-1.79   Never **(N)**

Tagalog group obtained slightly higher mean scores than the two groups in terms of: frequency of writing essays/assignment and journals in class and outside class; placement of thesis statement in the beginning, middle and end; reading of textbooks, encyclopedia, magazine, journals, and English novels outside the classroom; considering themselves, teacher, parents and friends as audience; and in considering printed materials such as English textbooks and writing outside the class to be factors in their English writing. Meanwhile, Ilocano group got slightly higher mean scores on the frequency of reading newspaper and dictionary. The mixed group scored higher in the frequency of writing essays/assignment in class and outside class and in having thesis statement that is implied.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The study explored the difference in the placement of thesis statement in the argumentative essays of Tagalog, Ilocano and mixed Tagalog-Ilocano tertiary ESL students from a premiere state-university in Central Luzon. Analysis of the corpus revealed that participants from the three groups differ on their choices on where to write the thesis statements. There were more Tagalog participants who preferred the deductive pattern, while there were more Ilocano participants who preferred to write thesis statements in the middle. Meanwhile, more from the mixed-group chose the inductive pattern.

The previous result conformed to what Atkinson (2004) asserted that contrastive rhetoric combines at least three large areas composed of writing (especially in EAP/ESP contexts), learning and using second/additional languages, and culture. The fact that participants from the three groups, especially the Ilocano and mixed Tagalog-Ilocano, present different approaches to writing argumentative essays, leads to the realization that there are Filipino tertiary ESL learners , specifically from the language/regional groups studied, who may not present knowledge and ideas according to the typical academic or deductive pattern. Knowing the extensive influence of the American educational system to that of the Philippines', it is surprising to some extent that Tagalog-Ilocano ESL participants employed techniques different from the American style. This supports what Guinto (2012) found as regards the notion that western supremacy in Philippine English writing is gradually losing. Hence, sending a message that students' writing truly relates to all of the cultural resources student bring to the table and how they use them to frame a given situation. Languages, therefore, are inevitably embedded with particular cultures, and different cultural traditions often have different preferences as to how texts should be organized. As what Halliday (1987 as cited in Kachru 1997) said, languages are the primary means of cultural transmission whereby social groups are integrated and the individual finds a personal and subsequently, a social identity.

Learners from different language/regional groups are unique in what they bring to the campus community. The distinct culture of Tagalog and Ilocano can be reflected in the discourse organization in their argumentative essays. The Tagalog are known to be unadventurous while the Ilocano are known adventurous. Relating it to their discourse organization, majority of the Tagalog participants wrote their thesis statement in the beginning, while majority of the Ilocano participants had their thesis statement in the middle, end and implied.

Since results of this study yield in surprising difference of the three groups, it is with high hope that the present study will usher in more research undertaking that will look at the rhetorical patterns in the micro level (i.e. language, cultural and regional groups within a nation) since a number of empirical evidence pointing rhetorical conventions of different cultures across nations have already been conducted. In follow up studies to be undertaken, it suggested that there

should be more participants who will be involved. Participants in the follow up research should not only be taken from institutions situated in one province, like what was done in this study. To validate the results, future participants should be asked to write at least three argumentative essays, with interval of three to four days each essay, to see whether participants would have produced argumentative essays which thesis statements are constantly located in one place. Such would support the initial findings and probably would lead to a conclusion that there really is a difference on the discourse organization between Tagalog and Ilocano ESL students.

In closing it is noteworthy to mention what Guinto (2012) surmised that a peculiar identity in writing is defying western rhetorical orthodoxy in the country and it is spearheaded by no less than the Filipino youth.

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