ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NARRATIVE RHETORIC BETWEEN CHINESE AND AMERICAN ENGLISH MAJORS

by Yebing Zhao

This thesis aims to investigate and interpret similarities and differences between Chinese and English narrative rhetoric and then to shed light on cultivating EFL students into multilingual writers. Based on twenty Chinese and twenty American English majors' retellings of a short film story, it is found that Chinese writers are telling-oriented, fond of explicit theme preaching while American writers are showing-oriented, focusing on depicting actions and concrete details. Chinese writers interact with readers in a creative, excited and assertive interlocutor tone whilst American writers engage readers primarily by playing the narrator and character role. Chinese writers rely on figurative languages to embellish their writings whereas American writers exploit oralized expressions to invigorate their stories. The thesis goes on to interpret these cultural-specific narrative tendencies by examining discursive textual and contextual factors and finally suggest multilingual writers should be taught to integrate both cultures' rhetorical strengths into creative narrative writing.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

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INTRODUCTION

Research Background

All English majors at Sun Yat-sen University are requested to create a fictional story in their third year. Students often get excited about this assignment first and then find themselves in deep trouble. I was no exception. We feel weak in presenting vivid and ornate descriptions whereas we can do easily in Chinese with literary set phrases. We are discontented about our story written in English for it sounds too plain, uneducated and dry. Finally, when some beautiful expressions earn us confidence from peer reviews, they yet turn out to be not appreciated by our foreign English teachers and judged as clichés, trite and banal. The same is true of our English stories, which get comments such as "verbose," "vapid," "lacking in specific information," or "short of intriguing plots." We are rather puzzled about how to narrate a story in accordance to English readers' taste and are always vacillating over either to repress or to retain our Chinese storytelling "accent" in English stories.

From my point of view, this situation is caused by the lack of comparison of Chinese and English narratives in the field of Second Language Teaching and Research. In China, it is always the argumentative rhetoric that receives the most attention for it is the writing genre most tested in English proficiency tests such as IELTS, TOEFL or TEM-8. As a result, test-oriented English education has trained Chinese EFL students well to cope with differences between Chinese and English argumentative rhetoric and to compose decent English argumentative essays appreciated by English readers. However, in contrast, due to the lack of instruction, Chinese EFL students know little about the differences between Chinese and English criteria of "good stories" and thus feel less confident in creating appropriate English narratives to their English readers. What is worse, even though some, like junior English majors at Sun Yat-sen University, are luckily provided with a narrative writing course, their foreign English teachers tend to apply the Euro-American standard of "good stories" to assessing their stories, thus further weakening their narrating confidence. In my opinion, most of these foreign teachers' "non-appreciation" (we see above) results from their unfamiliarity about the "gaps" between Chinese and English narrative styles, aesthetic tastes, and literary traditions, and most essentially, from a deficiency of scholarship engaging with the comparison between Chinese and English narratives. Given that narrative comparative studies have been widely carried out across other languages such as Japanese, Greek, German, Spanish, Turkish, etc. (Indrasuta; Tannen; McCabe & Bliss; Berman & Slobin; Koven; see more in Chapter Two), I am afraid such deficiency involving Chinese and English narrative studies will hamper the two cultures' communication in the long run. Therefore, my study represents a timely response to this lack.

Research Objectives

Asking 20 Chinese and 20 American English majors to retell the "same" story shown in an online short film, my study attempts first to investigate how American speakers of English and Chinese learners of English narrate the "same" story by adopting different narrative structures, styles, and interactional rhetorics. Then my second goal is to incorporate Comparative Rhetoric theories into

interpreting both similarities and differences between American and Chinese narratives and how they might influence Chinese EFL writers' narrative writings in a complex and discursive way. Finally, with the belief that Chinese EFL students, especially those English majors who have reached a relatively high English proficiency, have the potential to produce good English stories not only grammatically sound but also rhetorically appropriate, I expect to draw from latest Contrastive/Intercultural Rhetoric studies pedagogical suggestions for cultivating EFL high-level students into successful multilingual writers—who can either flexibly adjust their narration to the target audiences' expectation or strategically absorb two cultures' narrative strengths into their narrative creation. Simultaneously, I hope English readers, especially those EFL or ESL teachers can be more open to welcoming, understanding, or even appreciating non-Western rhetorical styles and become better cross-cultural communicators in today's rapidly globalizing world.

Research Questions

To realize my broad research objectives, this thesis is designed to answer the following specific research questions:

(1) What are the similarities and differences between Chinese and American participants' narratives in regard to the following aspects?
   ①. Narrative micro-structure or organization pattern
   ②. Narrative style (plot, theme, setting, figurative language, and descriptions)
   ③. Narrative interactional effect (how writers identify themselves, convey evaluations, interact with readers, and attract readers' involvement)
(2) Why are they different and what are the dynamic and discursive contextual factors influencing EFL participants' choice of narrative techniques?
(3) How to better foster and create a more productive cross-cultural environment for multilingual storywriters on the basis of my research?

Research Significance

This study opens eyes to the demand of educating Chinese EFL students' comprehensive writing skills over the partially focused argumentative essays and foregrounds the importance and potential benefits of conducting narrative instruction and research. Not only does this research enrich knowledge on the differences between Chinese and English narratives, but also it sheds light on pedagogies to cultivating creative multilingual storywriters and eventually promotes an inclusive attitude towards World rhetorics beyond the dominant Western tradition. Lastly, this project takes a step forward in integrating application-oriented Contrastive Rhetoric with interpretation-focused Comparative Rhetoric.

Thesis Structure

While the present introductory section explains my original motivation and intention to do this research, the subsequent Chapter One locates my study in certain academic fields. After reviewing the developing history and forecasting the future direction of Comparative Rhetoric and Contrastive Rhetoric, I merge these two theoretical perspectives—Comparative Rhetoric offers me powerful hermeneutic theory in interpreting dynamic and complicated factors that sway participants' selections of narrative rhetorics whereas Contrastive Rhetoric enlightens me

of practical approaches to teaching multilingual storywriters. Chapter Two, with a review of previous experience on narrative comparison, not only confirms my belief in the value of narrative comparison but also informs me of concrete methods of eliciting narratives and specific perspectives for analysis and comparison. The findings about English and Chinese narrative features from some previous empirical studies herein also provide me with referencing or criticizing sources. Drawing upon and weighing this early experience displayed in Chapter Two, Chapter Three articulates a specific data collection and analysis methodology for my particular study. In Chapter Four, results of data analysis—the similarities and differences between Chinese and American participants' narratives—are presented first and then discussions on factors leading to these differences and similarities will follow. Finding out that Chinese EFL participants' narratives are more like a hybrid of traditional and modern, Western and Chinese, localized and globalized style, I also put forward pedagogical implications for fostering multilingual storywriters and readers in Chapter Five. In the end, Chapter Six concludes this thesis project's process and findings, and points out its limitations and future work.

CHAPTER ONE: INTEGRATED THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

This chapter reviews the evolving history of Contrastive Rhetoric and Comparative Rhetoric, from which I find my research located in the intersection of these two fields. To expand the analytical scope and interpretive depth of Contrastive Rhetoric and to marry Comparative Rhetoric with second language writing studies, I propose to integrate these two theoretical perspectives.

A Retrospect and Outlook of Contrastive Rhetoric

In the mid-twentieth century, writing was neglected in the early period of second language studies due to the dominance of audio-lingual pedagogical approach (Matsuda 16). However, with a mounting number of international students entering American universities and their increasingly prominent difficulties in composing qualified term papers to meet college composition requirements, the audio-lingual method was self-evidently insufficient for ESL programs in higher education. In consequence, special writing courses for ESL students started to crop up in colleges and attracted myriad inquiries. Regrettably, in the infancy of ESL writing studies, the Contrastive Analysis was mainly confined to checking the sentential forms in language learners' L1 and L2 writings (Saville-Troike and Johnson 232; Connor 301).

Detecting this limitation, Kaplan initiated discourse-level or rhetorical investigations into different paragraph organizations in five language systems. He discovered that people from different cultures are featured by distinct thought patterns and their essays are conventionalized by peculiar rhetorical patterns. By linking culture with rhetoric, Kaplan aroused unprecedented interest in studying textual-level rhetoric across cultures and played a foundational role in the discipline of Contrastive Rhetoric. However, the Kaplan-tradition of Contrastive Rhetoric has progressed under considerable criticism. In the following, I will perceive every criticism as a positive stimulus for the successive modification and constant evolution of Contrastive Rhetoric.

In the first place, the early Contrastive Rhetoric was said to be following what Canagarajah called the Inference Model (589); equating rhetorical differences as errors from L1 negative transfer, it concentrated so much on predicting "errors" by inferring backwards from rhetorical features of the EFL/ESL students' native language that it completely forgot to detect "errors" that might occur in the process of second language learning (Saville-Troike and Johnson 232). Soon after this criticism, the plea for process-oriented analysis spurred Contrastive Rhetoric to go beyond texts, to transcend sheer analysis of the decontextualized product, and to cooperate with discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis. From then on, language learners have been expected to be context-sensitive, vigilant in figuring out which discourse communities they are situated in and how they could accommodate to the target language's rhetorical conventions through complex processes of decision-making.

The Inference Model was also criticized for conducting an unreliable, intuitive and unscientific guesswork (Li 18), given that the authentic rhetorical features of the EFL/ ESL students' L1 were impossible to be inferred merely from the students' L2 texts. Thus, soon afterward, it developed into the Correlationist Model, by which researchers "study the texts in L1 descriptively before

they draw on this information to explain the writer's peculiarities in L2" (Canagarajah 589-590).

The third criticism centered on the overgeneralization of a specific culture's rhetorical characteristics. In its formative stage, Contrastive Rhetoric was in an improper habit of labeling two compared rhetorical traditions with dichotomous or polarized style descriptions. For instance, Kaplan simplistically described Asian rhetoric as "indirect" while English as "direct," regardless of the fact that there might be directness in other Asian genres or in works by mature writers rather than just students. Therefore, it cautioned us always to identify the author and classify the genre before comparing and concluding rhetorical patterns of different cultures. This awareness of genre particularities later popularized contrastive studies on various writing genres such as business letters, grant applications, project proposals, website designs, and also reminded us to differentiate modes of discourse (argumentative, narrative, or expository) before comparison.

The impact of the last criticism, about early Contrastive Rhetoric taking the "received view of culture," was far-reaching (Connor 232-234; Li 14). In this view, "cultures" were cursorily demarcated by geography or nation and comprehended as separate, identifiable, homogenous, and unchangeable. Such perception naturally brought about a static theory of L2 writing instruction (Matsuda 46). In the case of English education, teachers would impose on ESL/EFL students prescribed, unchangeable as well as unchallengeable English norms and standards, asking students to parrot models fraught with hidebound paragraph-patterns. Worse still, English teachers, emulating Kaplan who was rebuked to be ethnocentric (Connor 223), would like to privilege the writing style of native English speakers, translate differences and unfamiliar rhetorical features into errors, require students to adapt their writings to the taste and context of the native English readers indiscriminately, and ultimately engender ESL/EFL students' worry on their individual inadequacies in writing (Leki 138).

However, recently, this static view of culture has been substituted by a "dynamic view," which sees cultures as existing in continuous flux or exchanges with other cultures. In the words of Connor (312), contemporary cultural entities have all become "inter-cultures" as "all cultures and social practices are deeply infused and penetrated by other cultural practices" in the globalizing world. Therefore, she suggested "Contrastive Rhetoric" be re-named "Intercultural Rhetoric." The new terminology aims to indicate that the field no longer focuses on the uniqueness of separate cultural entities but pays attention to the interaction and mutual influence between cultures (Connor 313). However, we should still keep in mind Li's caveat that, "the interconnected world does not necessarily create a homogeneous world culture… Each culture will select, invent, revise, and create its identity in response to a new reality by incorporating its unique tradition instead of erasing it" (16). To paraphrase, the exchanges between cultures will never wear down the specialty and creativity of any specific culture.

Just as the static L2 writing instruction model came on the heels of the "received view of culture," a mobile model soon emerged as an outgrowth of the "dynamic view of culture." This new model, proposed by Matsuda, no longer privileges the rigorous standards of the target language or the context and taste of the target readers. In the dynamic intercultural context, L2 writers are no more solely responsible for becoming acculturated into their target language discourse communities (Matsuda 55). Rather, the tentative cross-cultural communicative platform is built upon L2 writers and target readers' mutual understanding, interaction, and negotiation.

Matsuda's dynamic model resonates with Canagarajah's "Negotiation Model" (158), which contends that L2 writers' unique rhetorical features are not "errors" but a multilingual "resource" for the construction of "a unique and striking voice in their writing." Therefore, hereafter, we had better call L2 writers as "multilingual or translingual writers" instead. In accordance to Canagarajah, multilingual writers have the initiative to shuttle between languages through proactively negotiating rhetorical conflicts between their L1 and target language(s). In specific, there are five strategies multilingual writers usually apply with different levels of effectiveness in the negotiation or decision-making process (Canagarajah 160): Accommodation, Avoidance, Opposition, Transposition, and Appropriation[1]. The last two strategies are valued to be more effective: Transposition necessitates high skills in transforming both the writers' first language and target language before creating a "third" style different from either of its origins, whereas Appropriation encourages adroit writers to take over the dominant conventions of their target language for their own use. The premise of using the last strategy is to be familiar enough with the learned rhetorical norms and thus become dexterous in carving out a space within the L2 text for inserting their mother tongue "accent" strategically or rhetorically.

The appeal for these last two strategies mirrors a demand of cultivating not only competent writers who are context-sensitive and good at accommodating to target language community, but also critical and creative multilingual writers who can tactically wrestle with target language conventions and are able to transform or exploit them to their advantage (Canagarajah 603). In today's intercultural communication, to borrow Canagarajah's word, "texts are not simply context-bound or context-sensitive. They are context-transforming" (603). Differently stated, critical multilingual writers are transformative. They become part of the formation and evolution of the changing and changeable contexts and conventions. This point is approved by Matsuda who also acknowledges multilingual writers' potential in "contributing to the transformation of the conventions of those communities" (55).

The subjective initiatives and freedom for multilingual writers to "shuttle" between languages not only entail the concession of target language conventions but also defiance of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which extricates writers from L1 "fetters." In counter to Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, multilingual writers are no longer "passive and conditioned by their home language and culture," creating texts merely by "reproducing the pattern provided by his or her linguistic, cultural, or educational background" (Matsuda 49); in contrast, they are situated as well as shuttling in between their L1 and target language, neither bounded by L1 influences nor target language standards, and thus are free in deciding how to achieve their communicative objectives in intercultural circumstances (Canagarajah 591).

From the above overview, we have seen Contrastive Rhetoric evolving out of the Inference Model, to the Correlationist Model, and then to the Negotiation Model. Its analytical focus has shifted from the textural linguistic forms to the composition context, from product to process, and from dichotomous cultures to interactive cultures. Its contribution to pedagogy has changed

[1] Accommodation means writers work hard to approach target rhetoric with no ambition to challenge the dominant conventions while Avoidance refers to a total obviation of one's own home rhetoric yet with an uncritically deference to conventions of the learned language. Oppositional strategy is to capriciously insert an alien expression without effectively negotiating with the dominant convention and clearing a space for the unfamiliarity.

from a static model to a dynamic model, and it has liberated its origin from Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativism, taking an ethnographical view instead and considering writers as agentive and creative rather than passive and convention-bounded. This new direction of Contrastive Rhetoric will for sure benefit my inquiry on how to foster multilingual writers.

A Retrospect and Outlook of Comparative Rhetoric

Early practice of Comparative Rhetoric, prominently conducted by Robert Oliver, dates back to 1950s, but strictly speaking, it was Contrastive Rhetoric that propelled an exigent call for Comparative Rhetoric. In the review of the history of Contrastive Rhetoric, I have mentioned the Correlationist Model, by which rhetorical traits in L1 texts were referenced to interpret L2 writers' peculiarities in their L2 essays. Regretfully, its mere focus on students' L1 texts and contemporary L1 publications failed to do justice to the profound and enduring L1 rhetorical traditions. Further, these contemporary texts could neither illustrate fully the variety, maturity, and sophistication of the local rhetorical traditions nor elucidate the indigenous socio-cultural and historical contexts that have gradually shaped and swayed the L1 rhetorical preferences. To fill such a void, Comparative Rhetoric was called for probing into individual culture's rhetorical performances in history and its complicated and discursive context.

The young Comparative Rhetoric also suffered a few knotty problems in its early practices. First of all, since most cultures, taking Chinese as an example, do not have a separate, time-honored, and systemically theorized inquiry on "rhetoric," the actual comparison has long been trapped in an ethnocentric stance. On one hand, comparative rhetoricians were inclined to follow the Western style of inquiry, so eager to explicitly define or categorize Chinese rhetorical practices in clarity (Lu & Frank 447). When finding out the uneasiness to formulate a definitive Chinese framework, they would squarely or mechanically apply the handy Western framework in theorizing the highly contextualized Chinese rhetoric. On the other hand, due to Western belief in the existence of a universal or transcendental Truth (Hayot 93-94; Hall & Ames 144-153), they spared no effort to prove that Western rhetorical system could be the transcendental interpretative framework. Thus in interpreting others' rhetoric, they were used to employing what Lu called the "scriptural hermeneutics," canonizing Greek rhetoric, and making sense of the foreign culture based on their own knowledge, perspective, and contemporary stand (Lu 22). All these ethnocentric practices ended up with misinterpretations and resulted in a search for "equivalent" rather than "alternative" to Western rhetoric. Once the expected "equivalent" rhetorical concepts were not found, the other rhetorical tradition would be measured or judged as of a "deficiency" or "lack" of certain rhetorical concepts (Mao 401). Moreover, the failure of finding out equivalent rhetorical concepts may also engender exaggeration of differences and mystification of other culture's special rhetorical practices.

The second crux of the comparative difficulty lies in the work of characterizing both Western and non-Western rhetoric. With regard to summarizing features of non-Western rhetoric, it was not uncommon to see scholars draw big conclusions from a small pool of source materials (Liu 332) or base their remarks on unreliable secondary sources and wrong translations (Mao; Garrett; Lu & Frank; Liu). As for the contrast of features of Western and non-Western rhetoric, binary characterizations with "language of opposition" (Mao 417) or overgeneralized descriptions were prevalent (Liu 323). Even worse, these binary, dichotomous or essential differences were

persistently reinforced once again because researchers hardly dared to use new, firsthand analysis outcomes to challenge existed theoretical authorities. Therefore, Liu proposed, it was high time that we undertake a "rigorous critical scrutiny" (Liu 332) on preceding findings.

Third, though Comparative Rhetoric, unlike Contrastive Rhetoric, has been context-sensitive since its very beginning, its early stage was also trapped in the "static view of culture." It took "discourse community[2]" as its basic rhetorical analytical unit, in which the culture was perceived as static, homogenous and convention-bound. The "diversity, conflict and anti-conventionalism" within this community were usually neglected (Saville-Troike & Johnson 235). A telling example is that, oftentimes, the multi-dimensional Chinese culture was equaled to the mere eminent and stationary Confucian tradition. It disregarded the fact that Chinese culture was quite diverse rather than monolithic (Kirkpatrick & Xu; Lu 7). It was shaped together by "hundred schools of thought" instead of a single "Confucianism." Moreover, Confucianism has been through a spate of twists and turns till today. So has Chinese culture. Thus, there is no reason to see a certain discourse community permanent, monolithic, and controlled by dead conventions.

Thankfully, these tricky problems did not daunt comparative rhetoricians away from endeavoring to promote this young inquiry. Recent decades have witnessed great improvement of Comparative Rhetoric. In response to the Eurocentric dilemma, a number of scholars (Liu; Lu; Garrett; Mao) have appealed to the exploration of others' rhetoric "on their own terms" and "in their own context" since the late 1980s and 1990s. In Mao's account, Comparative Rhetoric has taken a methodological turn to cultural anthropology. It attempts to interpret others' rhetoric from the "natives' point of view" meanwhile averting an imposition of Western value system (Mao 221). Similarly, according to Saville-Troike and Johnson, Comparative Rhetoric has incorporated the "ethnography of communication perspective" (240): "not only to situate interpretation of communicative events within the context of their host speech communities, but to require an internal (or native) point of view as a criterion for validity of interpretation." All these new trends reflect a determination on anti-Eurocentrism or anti-Orientalism. In search of actual approaches to realize such goal, Mao advocates genuine reflective engagements with both traditions, holding that the real significance of comparison is not only to identify "what" the ambiguous differences or similarities are, but more importantly to explain the underlying "why" by plumbing the internal, the "emic," or local rhetorical contexts while moving beyond the constraints of Western rhetorical framework (416). On a similar train of thought, Hall and Ames put forward a pragmatic "Interpretive Pluralism" approach (154), which denies the transcendental applicability of Western rhetorical framework and exerts the "art of contextualization" (Hall & Ames 154) to account for discursive ingenious contextual factors that have formed the tradition. In the same vein, Lu (25) proposes "multicultural hermeneutics." Against honoring Greek rhetorical system as the only tool for hermeneutical enterprise, it rather welcomes pluralistic interpretations and celebrates multi-versioned human experience and cultural knowledge (Lu 43).

Confronting the problem of binary characterization and overgeneralization, comparative

[2] The "discourse community" referred to a common communicative context between the rhetor/writer and the audience/reader, which was shaped by specific social, cultural, economic and political factors, and was constituted by a set of rhetorical conventions shared by the participants (Saville-Troike & Johnson 234).

historian Lloyd's "anti-generalization" and "anti-piecemeal" approach (3) catch our eyes. Both approaches object to teleological assumptions but aim to characterize a culturally specific rhetorical tradition through complicated interpretations on its heterogeneous practices in distinct contexts. Lloyd successfully uses these approaches to dismiss the binary stereotype of ancient Greeks being "adversarial" and ancient Chinese being "authority-bound." He begins with presenting evidence that proves "adversarial" and "authority-bound" characters co-exist in both cultures, and then he further accounts for the disparate conditions and purposes of ancient Chinese and Greek people being "adversarial" and "authority-bound" respectively. In the end, he notes, despite the existence of both characters in both cultures, their appearance is still different in view of context, perception, frequency, and degree. In my opinion, these approaches could be incorporated into our comparative rhetorical studies as they warn us from either making sweepingly generalized and stereotyped judgments or equalizing connotations of distinct tradition's rhetorical practices.

The static and monolithic view of culture has also been transformed into a dynamic and comprehensive version. Saville-Troike and Johnson suggest changing "discourse community" into "speech community," which conceives the speech context and rhetorical traditions contingent, dynamic and changeable (235). Mao proposes the mobile "emic/etic approach[3]" (417), reminding us to heed how local, "emic" traditions and global, "etic" elements are enriching and reshaping each other in the present multicultural environment. Altogether, no tradition is totally "pure." All the so-called "traditions" are currently enjoying an "increasingly blurred boundaries between the indigenous and the exogenous, the past and the present, and the local and the global" (Mao 215). According to Mao, in these blurred boundaries emerge a third space, the "loci of enunciation" and the demand of new interpretations. In response to this, he proposes "the art of recontextualization," which is meant to repeat Hall and Ames's "art of contextualization," constantly updating interpretations on the "emic" rhetorical "tradition" by "searching for its new and broader significance within and outside its own tradition" (Mao 220). All in all, this dynamic view is guiding Comparative Rhetoric to interpret the hybridity-like multicultural rhetoric beyond the "traditional" local rhetorical practices. It is from this lens that I anticipate a possible synthesis of Comparative Rhetoric and Contrastive Rhetoric.

Integrated Perspectives: Insights from Contrastive Rhetoric and Comparative Rhetoric

According to Li, Contrastive Rhetoric by nature follows the lineage of Applied Linguistics with a concentration on Second Language Acquisition (19). It belongs to Social Sciences on the grounds that its method is typically quantitative (Li 19) and its ultimate goal—to address immediate concerns in the ESL/EFL writing class—is practical rather than theoretical (Li 19; Silva & Leki 8). By contrast, Comparative Rhetoric is associated with Humanities for it is "historical, interpretive, and not directly pedagogical" (Li 19). Therefore, owing to this disciplinary inconsistence, supposes Li, these "two neighbors" "remain strangers to each other and have rarely referred to one another's work" (Li 19). I agree with Li with reservation. On one hand, admittedly, the focus of these two inquires used to be different. Early Contrastive Rhetoric purported to find out differences that might intrude on language learners' acquisition of the target

[3] The "etic" refers to globally common rhetorical concepts that are not unique to any culture while the "emic" means localized rhetorical concepts of culturally specific meanings and functions.

language and then raise corresponding pedagogical suggestions. The further it developed, the more it realized that L1 rhetorical features were only one among many contributing factors. Hence, interpreting L1 rhetorical practices constituted only a small part of its work and oftentimes the interpretation was superficial and narrow-sighted because its primary concern was on pedagogy. In comparison, Comparative Rhetoric devoted considerable energy to interpreting time-honored rhetorical traditions across cultures. Technically, it should have served as a good reference resource for Contrastive Rhetoric. The reason it did not might be that the old Comparative Rhetoric studied most ancient rhetorical traditions, which turned out to be not useful enough for the explanation of contemporary students' essays. For another, its key interest in sheer theoretical interpretations might have encumbered it from thinking of potential applications of its findings, such as aligning with second language studies. It is through this lens that I agree with Li that Contrastive Rhetoric and Comparative Rhetoric have remained "strangers" because of their different focus.

However, on the other hand, I do not believe these two inquires will "remain strangers" forever. From the aforementioned developing route of Contrastive Rhetoric and Comparative Rhetoric, which shows an overlap in their new directions, I have sensed the possibility and benefit of integrating these two inquiries. In view of their new trend, both Contrastive Rhetoric and Comparative Rhetoric are shifting focus to contemporary multicultural rhetoric, even though, still, Contrastive Rhetoric cares more about *application*—how to nurture multilingual writers who can synthesize strengths of their L1 and target language into creative writing strategies—while Comparative Rhetoric pays attention to *interpreting* hybrid multicultural rhetoric in the "third space." Apparently, with the same focus, it is unwise to separate theory and application any more. The right moment is urging us to combine these two disciplines. Since the new Comparative Rhetoric has freed itself from studying merely ancient rhetorical traditions into interpreting how past and present, emic and etic rhetoric are influencing each other, it could finally serve as a beneficial resource for Contrastive Rhetoric in a deeper and wider-scoped analysis of contemporary students' writings.

In my particular study, I regard Chinese EFL participants' writings as a hybrid of the past and present Chinese composition features and an infusion of local Chinese and World English rhetorics. When comparing Chinese participants' writings with Americans', I will not impose Western standards onto assessing Chinese EFL students' writings; instead, I will delve into indigenous albeit discursive and dynamic factors that result in differences between Chinese EFL students' and American native writers' work. Also, I will interpret current intercultural influences on Chinese writers. After this more in-depth and comprehensive Comparative-Rhetoric-style analysis, the application-oriented Contrastive Rhetoric perspective will take over to seek corresponding suggestions for cultivating multilingual writers. In so doing, I compensate the narrower hermeneutic scope of Contrastive Rhetoric and finally combine Comparative Rhetoric (theory) with second language writing studies (practice).

CHAPTER TWO: PRIOR SCHOLARSHIP ON NARRATIVE

This chapter exhibits relevant literature on narrative research. I try to draw from its concrete analytical and comparative approaches and will place a critical eye on their findings about narrative features of English and Chinese.

Narrative as a Valuable Comparative Genre

The field of Contrastive Rhetoric has been paying relatively little attention to narrative texts, compared to argumentative or persuasive discourses (Kang 260). However, along the progress of Contrastive Rhetoric, more modes of discourse, including narrative for sure, will be gradually embraced in its research agenda. Following this trend, I believe my study to compare Chinese and American students' narratives herein will contribute to mapping out a more complete picture of L2 writing processes and challenges, and also facilitate Chinese and American students to write effective and creative narratives in today's globalizing environment.

In fact, Western academic circles have long recognized the value of comparing narratives. For one thing, narrative is the first genre students learn in their native language at home (such as listening to bedtime stories); hence the earlier the exposure is, the deeper students' perception and taste of culturally-bound narratives will have been ingrained, and thus the more instructive the comparison of narrative will be (Indrasuta 207). For another, narrative is a "socially evolved genre" (Söter 181). Compared to expository genre, which is "learned" through schooling and is increasingly homogenized around the world, narratives, as the outcome of "natural" language socialization, are believed to be able to expose more differences across languages and cultures (Kang 260). Moreover, as Pavlenko notes, students' narratives are not purely individual productions or simply linguistic data; rather, they can "allow us to uncover multiple sociocultural, sociohistorical and rhetorical influences that shape narrative construction" (Pavlenko 214). This point convinces me that narratives collected in my study have the potential to induce richer interpretations on social, cultural, and historical factors that have resulted in distinct rhetorical conventions in China and America.

Eliciting Narratives

Personal Narrative and Fictional Narrative

Fictional and personal narratives are two types of narratives that are commonly elicited for comparative studies (Pavlenko 311). Fictional narratives, just as its name implies, tell stories about fictional events. They are often elicited with non-verbal prompts, such as pictures or videos. Taking into account different age groups' varying cognitive levels, cartoons and picture books are more often utilized for collecting children narratives, whereas short films and videos, either silent or with a musical soundtrack, are specially targeted to adult narrators. The most popular picture book is Mayer's *Frog, Where are you?* (see Berman & Slobin 647-654) whilst the most frequently adopted short film is Chafe's *Pear Story*. Considering that these established prompts have been overwhelmingly used, Pavlenko encourages researchers to adopt different stimuli or even create their own prompt for eliciting particular linguistic structures, lexical items,

and expressions, such as emotion vocabularies and expressions (313). In my research, I will employ an innovative online short film named *Signs* as my elicitor (see details in next chapter).

Compared to fictional narrative, personal narrative elicitation is less rigidly structured. It could either be elicited through interviews or questionnaires or just done by the narrator spontaneously. There are two types of personal narrative: personal experience narratives and linguistic autobiographies or memoirs[4]. However, since personal narratives "exhibit a significant amount of variation across participants and contexts and are less amenable to analysis of intra- and inter-group similarities and differences" (Pavlenko 312), I will not use them as my data.

Narrative Form: Oral and Written

Either fictional or personal narrative has two forms: oral and written. Choosing which narrative form for research will greatly influence research findings as oral and written narratives have different features. According to Tennan (13), the written form is more likely to include both oral and literate narrative styles, and thus might reflect more rhetorical features. Moreover, since written narratives are constructed via a "slow, deliberate and editable process" (Chafe, qtd. in Kang 261), they may reflect L2 learners' best performance as well as writers' strategically planned rhetoric better than spontaneous oral discourse.

Elicitation Procedure

Other than deciding on the type and form of narratives, a well-planned cross-cultural narrative research study cannot eschew considerations in recruiting suitable participants and instructing them to narrate in what language(s), to what audience, and at what time and situation. I will highlight here the issue about "languages." Taking comparison with English as an example, some researchers collect ESL/EFL students' English writings (EL2) and infer back their L1 rhetoric traits for final comparison with native English narratives (EL1) (see Söter, Rintell, Lee). Some analyze differences in ESL/EFL students' or multilinguals' L1 and L2 narratives (look at Fang, Koven). Others directly compare narratives in ESL/EFL students' first language and EL1 (consult Chang & McCabe, Matsuyama, Tannen, Fang & Jiang, Berman & Slobin). A new trend is to conduct a synthesized three-dimensional comparison, collecting both ESL/EFL students' L1 and L2 narratives for comparing with EL1 (refer to Indrasuta, Kang, Xu). With limited time and energy, I will concentrate mostly on analyzing Chinese ESL students' EL2 narratives and American writers' EL1 narratives, but will also collect a few Chinese participants' CL1 narratives for reference and inference purposes.

Analysis of Narratives

Clause Demarcation

Chafe assumes that while we are thinking about a "story," it always conjures up too much

[4] The latter type is becoming increasingly popular in the TESOL field recently due to Pavlenko's promotion of the benefit of taking language learners' autobiographies or memoirs as data to probe into "learners' motivations, investments, struggles, losses, and gains as well as language ideologies that guide their learning trajectories" (Pavlenko 214).

information so that we have to use "consciousness" to select and activate certain available information in the service of our storytelling purpose. But as our consciousness has limits in capacity and duration, and moves in jerks like snapshots, it always entails "focuses of consciousness." According to Chafe, the linguistic expressions of these "focuses of consciousness" are "idea units" or "information units" (15), which from my understanding are similar to Söter's "propositional units," and Berman and Slobin's "minimum clause units."

Söter and Berman and Slobin have provided us with examples about how to divide texts into meaningful "propositional units" or "minimum clause units" for empirical analysis. But we should be mindful that though bearing large similarity, their methods of demarcating units differ slightly in real practice: while Söter suggests, "a verb is the nucleus of a propositional unit" (191) and hence counts "start to tell" as two units according to the number of verbs, Berman and Slobin, on the contrary, count it as one unit as they consider it in a semantic sense. Provided that linguistic forms (the "verbs") will not necessarily reflect the intentional "focused information" in real context, I will adopt (not rigidly) Berman and Slobin's semantic approach. Herein, I feel necessary to quote their original definition of "minimum clause unit"— it is "any unit that contains a unified predicate"—and by "unified," it is meant any predicate that can express a single "situation" (activity, event, or state; similar to Chafe's "focus of consciousness"), including finite and nonfinite verbs as well as predicate adjectives (Berman and Slobin 657). Detailed coding examples can be reached in Berman and Slobin (660-664).

Traditional Text Analysis

Most traditional text analyses focus on narrative structures. The earliest two approaches: Propp's Story Grammar Analysis and Hymes and Gee's Stanza Analysis are both blamed for privileging Western rhetorical structure and lacking applicability to analyze non-Western narratives (Matsuyama; Söter; Pavlenko). Labov's High Point Analysis (Labov & Waletzky; Labov) remains the most used method for it exhibits a widely accepted macro-structure of narratives. In accord with Labov, every complete narrative is comprised of at least five of the following elements: Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Action, Evaluation, Result/Resolution, and Coda. The distribution of these six elements in stories is indicated in Figure 1. As it is shown, Abstract (a summary of the story point) might sometimes be omitted or concealed, but Orientation is indispensable for providing background information at the outset. Following is Complicating Action, which keeps the narration rolling to a climax until happenings are eventually resolved at the "Resolution" point. Lastly, a Coda closes off the sequence of narrative events and returns to where the narrator entered the narrative. Throughout the whole story, Evaluation plays a pivotal role in intruding narrator's position, interpretations, judgments, and emotional traits. It should not be omitted since Evaluation is regarded as performing one of the only two functions of narratives (Labov & Waletzky 13).

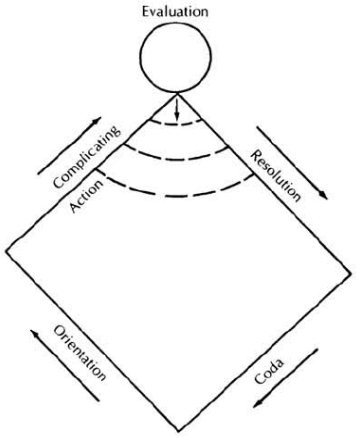


Figure 1: Distribution of Narrative Elements in Labov's Structure

Other existing approaches dealing with narrative texts are McCabe and Bliss's "Narrative Assessment Profile" and Berman and Slobin's Form-Function Analysis. The former aims to provide guidelines for assessing narratives across ages and cultures. It assesses narrators' performance on topic maintenance, event sequencing, informativeness, referencing, conjunctive cohesion, and fluency. What it impresses me most is the alert of distinguishing narrative deficits from cultural variation in the "diagnosing" process. The latter approach is to examine linguistic forms and then to surmise the corresponding functions these linguistic forms manage to fulfill in different languages. What I take away from this theory is that form, function, and rhetoric cannot be separated. On one hand, linguistic forms will subconsciously guide the channel of our attention, change the ways we reach a function, and influence our rhetorical patterns. On the other hand, demand of certain functions and rhetorical effects will help expand the diversity of forms. Therefore, though my research focus is on rhetorical or discourse differences, linguistic forms that result in language-specific rhetorical conventions should not be entirely neglected.

What I primarily adopt is Söter's Storygraph Analysis. "Storygraph" means a visual presentation of the gross structure of stories. It paints a "picture" showing the narrative "flow" or sequence of story events, as well as the classification of information into four "macro-" categories (Söter 193): "Story about Story," "Setting," "Scene," and "Plot" (see details in Chapter Three).

Unlike other textual analysis methods cramming all kinds of discursive comparison perspectives, Indrasuta (209-211) clearly differentiates three angles for analyzing narrative texts:
(1) Linguistic Analysis: since narrative texts demand various devices to link up events, cohesion is always an appealing focus in this aspect of analysis. Indrasuta recommends applying Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion System[5] to analyze cohesive ties in narratives.
(2) Discourse Analysis: the first task here is to explore how different the amount of information and emphasis is distributed to five narrative elements. The second task then centers on judging forms and functions of clauses. Indrasuta (217) classifies narrative clauses into 10 forms and 16 functions (see Appendix 1) for coding the text.

[5] Halliday and Hasan's system comprises five relatively comprehensive categories of cohesive ties: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Pavlenko and Kang also analyze their data with this theory.

(3) Stylistic Analysis: this investigates the style of presenting narrative "Plot," "Conflicts," "Setting," "Theme," "Character," "Scene," and "Figurative Language" (refer to Chapter Three).

Multifaceted Analysis

To extend the scope of traditional analyses beyond "texts," Pavlenko proposes two other analytical perspectives in addition to the textual one. The three interdependent aspects are:
(1) Content/Thematic Analysis: it is to examine what information is said or selected in narratives and what is omitted and why (Pavlenko 174).
(2) Context Analysis: this attends to the macro-context (historical, political, educational, and cultural) and micro-context (immediate situation, audience, power relation, narrative function, and language choice) of the narrative production (Pavlenko 175).
(3) Form/Textual Analysis: this is the most ordinary method. Almost all of the traditional analysis methods I have mentioned fall into this category.

Current Interactional Analysis

Criticizing that traditional analysts place primary attention to narrative structure, event/plot arrangement, and themes, recent analysts argue that "stories not only describe character, plots, and themes, but also perform and contribute to socially meaningful actions/interaction" (Koven 170); in consequence, narratives have started to be studied as "simultaneously referential, interactional, and culturally performed" (Pavlenko 321; Koven 168). This trend of exploring interactional goals of story-tellers, in essence, derives from Labov's discussion on Evaluation, early Conversation Analytic theories, Goffman's Footing, and Bakhtin's Voicing (Koven 168). But regretfully, Labov categorizes segments of a narrative neatly into being either evaluative or referential as if they only serve a monolithic function. After all, the complex and discursive relationships between denotation and interaction have not been considered. Unlike Labov, early Conversation Analytic theories do not separate referential and evaluative functions, but so heavily do they focus on the socially-driven interactional function that the referential dimension and the potential existence of sheer aesthetic or artful performances in the story are completely negated (Koven 168). Similarly, Goffman argues that narratives are first and foremost interactional events. He assumes that storytellers can identify themselves with multiple role perspectives or "footing," but he does not provide a systematic analysis model for actual discourse. Bakhtin's notion of voicing copes with how and for what purpose storytellers shift from narrating frame to character frame through constructing vivid character dialogues. However, as the distinction between the role of narrator and character is foregrounded, the other roles that storytellers can assimilate with, like the role of interlocutor, are downplayed or even ignored.

Inspired by the above four frameworks, Koven supposes there are three linguistically locatable role perspectives that speakers can orchestrate in their narratives: role of author or narrator (unevaluated, objective, and neutral), role of interlocutor or commenter (evaluative, and invite audience to share their stance), and role of character (re-animate the scene and event in the story). To note, storytellers can "weave these three roles together, juxtapose or even collapse them" (Koven 177). Further, any role perspective is possible to fulfill more than one function. For example, the authorial role perspective plays both interactional/evaluative and referential function. This model dispels the early binary between evaluative and referential functions and

thus can better reveal the multilayered meanings that narrators intend to address their audiences from different role positions.

Along this increasing interest in storytellers' socially interactional intention, analysis of evaluative devices is getting more and more popular. Martin and White almost exhaust all possible linguistic forms (see Appendix 2) that embed authors' subjectivity and affect; however, they do not refer to textual or discourse manners of inserting evaluations. Bamberg and Damrad-Frye's five overarching categories for assessing children's development of evaluation ability are by nature too simplistic and general. Nonetheless, Rintell and Chang and McCabe have made big breakthrough. Rintell (89) notices that authors' emotions do not merely appear in traditionally defined and linguistically locatable "evaluative" sections; rather, some discourse features "outside the evaluation" can also convey the authors' emotions. For instance, the description of details, the recount of certain events, dialogues between characters, epithets or special nominal references of the characters, and depersonalizations[6] can all provoke audiences to "read between lines," picture the scene and sympathize with the authors' emotions. Chang and McCabe (38-39) list 22 categories (see Appendix 3) of evaluation devices that permeate all narrative components. Worth to highlight, this framework has taken into account both linguistic forms and discourse patterns of evaluations. I will draw upon all the abovementioned frameworks and tailor a more suitable one for my study.

Empirical Comparative Studies on Narratives in English and Other Non-Chinese Languages

This section reviews empirical studies that have incorporated the foregoing analytical methods into comparing narratives in English and other languages beyond Chinese. My principal attention will be focused on their findings about the narrative features of English as they can complement as well as stimulate my reflection on my own findings.

Tannen dedicates three articles to comparing Greek and American narratives. Her work collected in Chafe's *Pear Story* volume shows that Americans are inclined to discuss the film as a film and use cinematic jargon to comment upon and criticize film techniques (Tannen 54). However, in orally reporting events, Americans tend to objectively describe actions in detail while Greeks would interpret events by offering explanations and judgments of the actions (Tannen 55). Tannen's 1982 essay stretches to both oral and written narratives in Greek and English. This time, she studies "frames" where Greek and English speakers/writers like to posit themselves. In Tannen's explanation, this notion of "frame" is similar to Goffman's "footing": the actual and metaphorical stance of the speaker toward the hearer (26). Using this frame theory, she finds that the subject-of-experiment frame is exclusive to oral productions but written narratives possess more creative frames. Additionally, the film-critic frame is more often seen in Americans' oral narratives. In this film-critic frame, Americans take pride in their capability of criticizing the film's cinematic techniques and quoting well-known public works whereas Greeks tend to show their critical acumen by interpreting the film's larger meaning and making reference to personal

[6] "Depersonalization" means switching the pronoun from "I" to "you" while expressing how "I" feel. In Rintell's words, "the speaker avoids talking directly about his own feelings. Instead, he switches to talking about a hypothetical, general 'you' you might experience something like what he describes" (92).

experiences. In story-telling frame, Greeks are prone to using "interpretive naming" to address characters while Americans just use general references. In her 1986 piece, Tannen zooms in onto constructed dialogues and strategies of enhancing "involvement" or "vividness" effect in Greek and English conversational and literary narratives. She claims at last that Greeks are better than Americans at creating "involvement" effect, as they possess more "involvement" techniques[7].

Putting their "Narrative Assessment Profile" into real assessment of oral personal narratives from European North American, African American, Spanish-speaking American, and Asian American bilingual children and adults, McCabe and Bliss reveal some peculiar narrative features of each group of people: European North Americans like to enter only a single experience into one story (Topic Maintenance), begin their story with a formal abstract, describe specific actions, assign a clear goal to their characters, insert more evaluations (Informativeness), use fewer lexical conjunctions (Cohesion), apply explicit referencing (Referencing), and leave a longer pause at the outset for up-front planning (Fluency). African Americans' stories are like performance narration told for sharing with peers. They usually integrate multiple theme-associated experiences into one story with each experience sharing a unified tempo or tone. Great efforts are put on telling a good story so that their stories are always lengthier, full of embellishment of the facts and also metaphors, jokes, slang words, or exaggerations. Stories told by Spanish-speaking Americans possess the characteristics of casual home storytelling: de-emphasizing event sequence, placing importance to relations between participants instead of action details, making great effort to maintain the conversation flow, sometimes missing pronouns, and using fewer formal openings or closings. Asian Americans, in particular Japanese Americans, value conciseness and implication, commonly omit pronouns, mostly combine similar experiences into one story, and devote more space for orientation rather than evaluation.

Indrasuta carries out his "three-perspective analysis" in analyzing Thai and American students' personal story writings. During stylistic analysis, she discovers that American students prefer integral setting, implicit theme, and real world scenes while Thai students favor backdrop setting, explicit theme, and projected world scenes. In terms of figurative language, analogy appears to be Thai students' favorite way of describing things (219). In the process of discourse analysis, she detects that Thai narratives are full of descriptions of mental states and generalizations (statements of empirical laws and philosophies of human nature), but American texts are rich in action descriptions and personal comments. Nevertheless, both groups provide necessary background descriptions of setting, characters, and things. With follow-up interviews about students', teachers' and experts' "perception of the function of narratives," Indrasuta (216) remarks that both cultures agree that narrative is to inform and to entertain, but Thai community, seeing narratives as a vehicle for exposition and instruction, is more keen to convey a meaningful purpose or explicit moral theme and conclude their compositions with a moral coda. However in contrast, American students create stories mainly for the sake of interesting their readers (220). At the end, Indrasuta infers factors that might cause these disparities and summarizes that besides distinct language system, different cultural factors are also in play.

[7] E.g.: "direct quotations" playing the characters' role or voice, exhibiting not only exchanged dialogues between characters but also thoughts of the speaker and characters; "deletion of dialogue introducers;" "emphatic expressions" (such as repetition, exaggeration, exclamation); "sound effects or words;" "second person singular;" etc.

Implementing his Storygraph, Söter engages in analyzing bedtime stories written by Vietnamese, Arabic-speaking Lebanese and English-speaking Australians. Grounded on his data, he reveals that, first, Vietnamese, highly influenced by Chinese language and culture (Söter 200), focus on presenting a full context of their story; hence they allocate lengthier introductory description to the time and location. Second, Vietnamese care more about the characters' emotion and mental state rather than plots and goal-oriented actions. Third, Arabic students have a predilection to digress from the plot by using elaborative descriptions, but English-speaking Australians usually begin their plot immediately with little departure to the attributes of characters or settings and the reflections or interpretations on actions. In so doing, they desire to give readers a strong sense of the forward movement of the plot (Söter 195).

Empirical Comparative Studies on Narratives in English and Chinese

While narratives in English and other languages have been extensively and comprehensively compared, the comparison on English and Chinese narratives is relatively scarce and short of multifaceted perspectives and systematic analysis. Fortunately, Lee, Fang, Fang and Jiang, Hu, Xu, and Chang and McCabe have taken landmark first steps and provided us with beneficial insights into Chinese narrative rhetoric. Following are overviews of their works.

Hong Kong scholar Lee creates a new picture-based narrative stimulus *Park Story* to collect narratives from 40 Chinese non-native English writers (EL2) and 40 native English writers (EL1). She asserts that Chinese and English narratives adopt a similar global structure but differ strikingly in presenting Informative, Narrative, and Evaluative elements. Speaking of Informative element, she finds EL1 offer more specific setting (time), character identifications (character relationships) and references (names), as well as more detailed or even imaginative background information of the story than EL2. She later explains, by referencing Hinds's writer- and reader-responsibility theory, that this contrast is due to EL1's being writer-responsible and EL2's being reader-responsible. With regard to Narrative element, it is discovered that EL1 focus more on actions of the characters and tend to employ activity verbs in different tenses to link the story line and thus to make their stories more dramatic. In contrast, EL2 always use plain, overt temporal connectors for showing the temporal sequence of the events. In terms of Evaluative element, she demonstrates that EL2 prefer to present explicit moral statements and then to restrict them to the coda, while EL1 are apt to insert implicit evaluations. Meanwhile, as EL1 express evaluation from the point of view of the narrator, EL2 resort to an additional character, and oftentimes it is a senior or reputable character. Besides, "direct statement," a special means of evaluation, is more frequently used in EL1 for creating a sense of involvement. Lee attributes all these evaluative differences to disparate perceptions of the function and purpose of narratives (in agreement with Indrasuta): unlike English native speakers favoring interesting and entertaining stories, Chinese people value ethical and educational stories. Therefore, Chinese students would explicitly emphasize the moral statements and even introduce a senior character to enhance the authority of that morality yet care less about boosting "involvement" to make their story more dramatic.

Fang and Fang and Jiang re-examine Lee's research by comparing CL1 (stories written in Chinese by Chinese students) and EL2, CL1 and EL1 respectively in lieu of Lee's original comparison on EL2 and EL1. The reason for their doing so is that they suppose EFL students' L2

barriers might force them to instinctively avoid complicated descriptions and thus prompt failure in reflecting their true rhetorical preferences. Interestingly, some of their results remain the same while some others are contradictory to Lee's. Findings involving Chinese students' low use of direct statement and less detailed information on character identification are consistent while conflicting findings are: first, no different from EL1, CL1 also contains markedly detailed background information, including time and space setting, even with numerous lyric descriptions. Second, Chinese students are also good at creating dramatic stories by applying vivid motion descriptions. The reason why EL2 in Lee's research lacks action verbs comes down to EFL students' limited L2 lexical resources. Third, it is implausible to generalize that English stories particularly pursue entertainment effects and merely Chinese stories privilege moral preach. In fact, in these new studies, there is no evidence of Chinese explicitly stressing on moral statements in CL1. Rather, it is reflected that both Chinese and English concern about the two functions of narratives—entertaining and instructional. An issue worth raising here is that while Lee asks her subjects to write stories for a child aged ten, Fang and Fang and Jiang do not mention this requirement in their elicitation prompt. And this might have led to their different findings of Chinese students' explicit statements of morality. I will continue probing into this issue in my current research.

The famous Chinese rhetorician, ShuZhong Hu, generally compares Chinese and English narrative rhetoric with selective examples but specific research procedure and data. He bases his discussion largely on experience and observation, arguing that Chinese and English narratives share similar macro-structure (Hu 149); however, there was a time-honored tradition of using lyric expressions in the informative part of Chinese narratives (169). This tradition has also been intensively studied by Dong (1-19), who even suggests that ancient Chinese literati may see narrative as a service to lyric. Besides, Hu agrees with Hartwell (see Hu 183) that Chinese and English differ considerately in the way of describing things: action verbs plus "free modifiers" that consist of nouns, adverbials, verbs, and non-finite verbal forms are of higher density in English descriptions, whereas appraisal adjectives, four-character idioms as well as rhetorical figures (e.g., similes, metaphors, exaggerations, etc.) are prevalent in Chinese descriptions.

Xu, using Martin and White's Appraisal System (refer to Appendix 2), contrasts evaluative linguistic devices in Chinese and English narratives. Through a three-dimensional comparison on CL1, EL2 and EL1 oral narratives elicited from Chafe's *Pear Story,* he characterizes Chinese evaluation in narratives as overusing Force and Affect, and lacking Focus (especially lack the "Soften" tone), Proclaim and Appreciation (see examples in Appendix 2). These characteristics, in turn, mirror Chinese EFL students' inclination to express stiff and assertive evaluations and straightforward emotions rather than euphemistic and polite ones (Xu 75). Interestingly, this runs counter to Chinese traditional value of being reserved and humble (Xu 77).

Based on their 22 types of evaluation codes, Chang and McCabe (44) exposit that Taiwanese children's personal narratives are dominated by "words per se," "results of high point," "gratuitous terms," and "descriptions of internal emotional states" rather than "attention getters," "facts," and phonological devices such as "onomatopoeia," "stressor," "elongators," and "exclamations." They further expound that the most striking difference—"words per se" versus "phonological devices"—stem from Chinese mandarin being a "tone language" but English an "intonation language" (Chang & McCabe 47). In brief, because Chinese phonology distinguishes

one word from another, it cannot serve as pure prosodic evaluation (Chang & McCabe 47). Another finding is that Taiwanese children include fewer evaluation comments (13-25%) than American children do (50%). The authors then surmise the reason might be that Chinese society value "interdependent self" but American children are socialized to have an "independent self." Whilst American mothers encourage their children to freely express their own opinions and feelings towards what happened in real life or in books, Taiwanese mothers would silence their children and emphasize social interactions and proper behaviors (Chang & McCabe 50).

The above scholarship has shone great light on differences between Chinese and English narrative features. But these researchers, mostly comparing from broad perspectives, adopting less systematic analysis methods and building their findings on simple observations, also spark my interest to re-examine their findings (some are even conflicting) and deepen their inquiries. In my research, I will draw upon and synthesize previous Western research approaches into one comprehensive methodology so as to carry out a more thorough comparison between Chinese and English narratives.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

After balancing advantages and disadvantages of previous research experiences, the present chapter integrates yet adjusts existing analysis methods in a bid to tailor a particular research methodology to my study. I will herein elucidate in detail how my research data are collected and analyzed.

Data Collection

Participants

Twenty Chinese female undergraduate English majors from Sun Yat-sen University and twenty native female undergraduate Americans majoring in English at Miami University were randomly invited to participate in my study. Such recruitment attempts to reduce research deviation by controlling participants at similar age, in the same gender, on similar intellectual level, and with similar narration cognitive competence, given that all these factors will affect final narrative productions. It is also worth mentioning that, among the twenty Chinese participants, those on the third and fourth year have taken the required EFL narrative writing course. From such lens, the effectiveness of traditional EFL narrative writing instructions can be tested.

Elicitation Prompt

We have already known that narratives have two types and two forms: personal versus fictional, and oral versus written. I choose fictional narrative for the reason that it can utilize picture books or short films to elicit stories with shared basis or relatively "same" plots, and thus is more comparable and amenable than personal narrative whose content varies from one participant to another. As for narrative forms, I select the written one in that written narrative is possible to combine both written and spoken rhetorical features (Tannen 13) and can better reflect narrators' narrative competence and rhetorical preferences as it is more well thought-through and strategically planned than spontaneous oral discourse.

Another issue about eliciting written fictional narratives remains in options between picture books and short films. I opt for the latter one. My rationale is that short films are more appropriate for eliciting complex and mature stories for adult readers, unlike picture books most times telling simple and childish stories. Though short films are always blamed for causing memory burdens and requiring high recalling abilities, I believe this shortcoming can be avoided if research participants are allowed to take notes and watch the film more than once.

Now, the last crux is: which short film to use? Encouraged by Pavlenko (313), who advocates for using new stimuli instead of traditional ones, I adopt an innovative online short film named *Signs*[8] as my elicitor. Similar to Chafe's *Pear Stories, Signs* is rather short and has no dialogue between characters but only sound effects. It tells about an intriguing life-changing love story of an ordinary office worker who used to lead a mundane and disheartening life. Its plot is dramatic

[8] Link: http://www.197c.com/dianying-284412-1-1.html

but absolutely lucid for participants to grasp every turning-point event. Additionally, indicating the rises and falls of its plot in the main character's fluctuating inner states, this particular short film can provoke remarkably rich emotional expressions and descriptions, which is one of my primary analysis focus. What *Signs* differs from Chafe's *Pear Stories* is that its story is more attractive to adults. Unlike simplistic children stories, such profound, thought-provoking and engaging story can kindle participants' narrating desire, maximize their rhetorical potential and arouse their sympathy with the story theme.

Elicitation Procedure

I circulate my *Recruitment Advertisement Email* (see Appendix 4) to all English major undergraduates through department Listserv at the two universities. As soon as the recruitment is done, I send to every participant a *Consent Form* (see Appendix 5). After granting consent and confirming to participate, participants receive a *Writing Guideline* (see Appendix 6), stated in which detailed requirements and expectations.

I feel necessary to highlight some innovations of my elicitation procedure. First, as I have mentioned, I allow my participants to watch the short film twice and take notes so as to reduce their memory burden. Second, I precisely point out that the audience of their stories should be English literate adult readers. Third, I prolong time limit to two days so that writers are allowed to do more hesitation and revision on their rhetorical options and perform to their best narrative capacity. Fourth, participants are assigned to compose the story at home instead of gathering in classrooms. My purpose for doing so is to construct a more real and relaxing context for their story writing. Fifth, I stress in the writing guideline that participants are expected to create their own ways of storytelling and give full play to their favorite rhetorical strategies instead of imitating how the video presents the story. This is to prevent the strong influence of filmmakers' narrating devices on participants' production. Therefore, they are encouraged to choose different narration sequences, techniques, and angles. Heads-ups are also noted in the guideline, for instance: write as long and attractive as possible; do not forget detail descriptions; keep in mind the theme of the story and the purpose of the telling the story. Lastly, I advise participants to leave their unidentifiable background information, such as: current grade, perception of the purpose of storytelling, impressive experience of reading and writing stories, opinions about how to tell a good story to people from different cultures. In some cases, follow-up interviews are conducted as well in order to reveal more contextual factors that might affect participants' rhetorical choices.

Three months after collecting all needed Chinese participants' EL2 narratives and American participants' EL1 narratives, I also ask some volunteer Chinese participants to write the "same" story in Chinese (CL1). The time interval intends to prevent Chinese writers from directly translating their stories from English to Chinese. But as mentioned before, my priority is on comparing EL2 and EL1 texts. CL1 narratives are merely for reference and inference purposes.

Textural Data Analysis

When data are all collected, I turn to textual data analysis first, and then issues like demarcation of minimal analysis units (clauses), coding of the text in accordance to specific analysis and

comparative perspectives are supposed to be considered beforehand.

Minimal Analysis Unit

In last chapter, I have reviewed how scholars demarcate clauses for analysis in their own ways. I herein synthesize Chafe's notion of "focus of consciousness" with Berman and Slobin's semantic approach in segmenting "minimum clause unit." In the process of deciding where to part the clauses, I see each independent minimal unit as a snapshot that the narrator takes with her restricted "focus of consciousness." Put alternatively, each "snapshot" or minimal unit I divide up shares a holistic semantic meaning and thus cannot be simply demarcated according to rigid linguistic rules. Examples are shown in Table 1 wherein every minimal analysis unit is placed in a separate line.

Visual Analysis Format

Imitating Söter's Storygraph Analysis, I formulate a visual format for analyzing every participant's work (see Table 1). Properly speaking, this format combines Labov's and Söter's structural theory. I again "semantically" allot information in every story into the following parts:

(1) Abstract: an abstract summary of the story content.
(2) Story about Story: narrator standing "outside" the story and telling audiences about reasons for telling the story, details about storytelling contexts, or identity of the teller of the tale.
(3) Setting: similar to Labov's "Orientation," explicitly stating the place, time, background information, and the characters' first appearance or habitual actions.
(4) Scene: all non-key-event information that might deviate from and suspend the advancement of the plot or action, for instance: the interpretation of the characters' thoughts, feelings, or emotions, the intrusion of the writer's attitudes and evaluations towards characters and events, attributes of the characters and settings, and lyric descriptions that serve to create mood or atmosphere. I roughly classify elements here into "Description" and "Interpretation."
(5) Plot: temporally ordered actions and real happening events (actions or happenings that can be seen in the film) that keep pushing forward the story line; I further fractionize Labov's "Complicating Action" and "Resolution" into "Initiating Plot," "Developmental Plot," "Climax," and "Result" in order to parallel them to contemporary Chinese narrative four-part structure: "*kaiduan*/beginning," "*fazhan*/development," "*gaochao*/climax," and "*jieju*/conclusion" (Kirkpatrick 47).
(6) Coda: the writer ends and "jumps out of" the story, addressing "outside" audiences again.

As Table 1 shows, every minimal analysis unit (clause) is positioned in at least one of these six sections with their initial letter starting from the same place as their corresponding section's title does. By doing so, information either within or outside the same group can be visually and thus easily located and compared. Another issue that merits noting is that some minimal clauses are possible to be doubly coded as they might, for instance, at the same time serve both "Setting" and "Plot." Thus, the asterisk sign "*" in the table is to indicate which clause is doubly coded.

Table 1: Example Analysis of One Chinese Participant's Work (see American's in Appendix 7)

Story Title: Listen									
Abs.	**SaS.**	**Set.**	**Scene**		**Plot (key event information)**				**Coda**
			Des.	**Int.**	**Init.**	**Devlp.**	**Clmx.**	**Reslt.**	

Again Jason thought,
[First appearance of the character with habitual behaviors as the background information]
he was anything but a good listener,
more or less, in the world where he existed now.

A world, brimming over with noise at different level of decibel, **[Fantasy Environment Des]**
has been long covering his ears. **[Projected/Imagined Scene]**
Nothing fascinated from outside ever rang in his mind.
And what's worse,
nothing from his inner well of feeling could be heard,
letting alone the echo.
The first hatred of sound came
when the morning alarm set off.
Waking up **tired**, **[Action Description]**
putting up **tie**,
swallowing down the hard food on the table **lie**,
worming the way in the metro **like a sardine** **[Metaphor]**
and sometimes hear a baby **cry**, **[Rhythm]**
Jason had the same schedule of daily life, fixed at each time.
Solitary was the only feature attached to the schedule.
The girl on the escalator towards the opposite way never came back; **[Additional Info.]**
the reports printed out in a row never had the chance to amend;
the bottle cast into the dustbin by passerby never returned to dedicate boutiques;
the joke made on the meeting never unveiled its connotation to Jason;
the voicemail of parents covering long distance via cables never softened the lonely night.
[Parallelism]

Along with deafness **[Fantasy Environment/Projected or Imagined Scene Description]**
came blindness **[Implicit Connotation]**
and mute.
* But the **closed world** of Jason began to quiver one day, ["change;" **Exaggeration]**
* when he saw Stacey, **[Initial plot or key event begins]**
a secretary sitting in a small square room **[First appearance of another protagonist]**
in the opposite building,
a few stories lower.

No longer could he curb his feelings
and hide his eyes **["excited"]**
* when Stacey noticed him
and wrote down "nice to meet you" on a sheet of paper.
That night,
on the fridge in Jason's apartment appeared another sheet of paper,
reading "nice to meet you too."
Since then,
Jason has been silently chatting with Stacey at work time
* They played checkerboard game

* and ended with Stacey's grinning at Jason,
* who fell down from the chair.
* They made faces with papers
* when Jason printing the funny expression but reports mistakenly.
The refrigerator was gradually covered up with all kinds of papers,
although Jason has never heard Stacey's voice.

To Jason, **the world** sounded a bit more pleasant and even much more pleasant
* when that day Stacey "told" him that she was the first to notice him.
Drenched into gratification,
Jason decided to ask Stacey out the next day,
using the posture he had practiced **a thousand times** before the mirror. **[Exagg.]**

But that cute face was no longer in that small square room
Instead, a strange man was setting his new working place.
Again Jason plodded in the crowd.
Again the office seemed to be possessed by grayness. **[Parallelism]**
Again, all the twittering sounds in Jason's world faded away and became deathly quiet.

But one lifeless morning,
* with a beam of light coming from a few stories higher,
the world of Jason revitalized. **[Projected/Imagined Scene]**
Stacey was there,
holding a sheet of paper that read "I got promoted."
Jason was in such a surprise and ecstasy
that he immediately revealed the paper
he should have revealed long ago: "do you want to meet?"
Later,
still in the crowd,
they two finally broke **the glass** that separated them before **[Symbolic Metaphor]**
* But when Jason was about to say hello,
Stacey stopped him hissing shh
and took out another sheet of paper reading hi!

Now,
the world became audible for Jason. **[Implicit Connotation]**

Sub-Table 1-1: Information Distribution			
Total No. of Minimal Units	**73**		
Background Info. Prior to Initial Plot "He saw her"	27/73; 37%	**Character**	Fantasy environment descriptions to hint the current state of the character
		Setting (Time/Place)	No specific information
Pure Event Information	5/73; 7%	Very few physical actions	
Description	There are descriptions in the setting as well as during the narration; more descriptions on environment and fantasy sound		
Interpretation	Widespread interpretations on the plot		

Sub-Table 1-2: Stylistic Preference			
Plot	Chronological	✔	
	Achronological		
Setting	Backdrop setting	>	Overt temporal connectors for showing the temporal sequence

	Integral setting		
Theme	explicit		
	implicit	✔	Try to open your heart and "listen" (the title) to the world. Don't be deaf, blind, and mute in face of life.
Figurative Language	Parallelism, cliché metaphor, rhythm, exaggeration, fantasy		
Other Features	- Full of symbolism, or implicit and reserved connotations ("the glass") - Lots of fantasy environment or imagined setting depictions - Few descriptions of characters' appearance, actions, and facial expressions		

Sub-Table 1-3: Interactive Analysis

Frame	Storyteller frame		
Role Perspective	**Interlocutor Role**	>	The writer tells the story by using a lot of interpretations and comments instead of actions from the narrator's perspective
	Character Role		
	Narrator Role		
	Interlocutor + Character		
	Interlocutor + Narrator		
	Narrator + Character		
	All three		
Evaluation Devices	see underlines; lots of "Word Per se" explicitly expressing the character's emotions		
Involvement Devices	Depicting environment or scenes to create an atmosphere of a certain feeling and thus to incite audience's natural emotional reaction to that atmosphere		

Micro-Structural Analysis

Indrasuta (220), Hu (149) and Lee (348) all have affirmed a "macrostructure" of narratives across different cultures. That is part of why we are able to analyze every participant's work with the same structural format seen above. But we should be cognizant that the "micro-structure," the "patterns of arrangement," or to say, the emphasis and ratio of information attached to each structural element of the stories still varies from culture to culture. Thus, my first comparative focus will be centered on the proportion of minimal units distributed to narrative components such as Setting, Plot, Description, and Interpretation (shown in Sub-Table 1-1).

Stylistic Analysis

I draw from Indrasuta the method of stylistic analysis and the classification of clause forms into my analysis of participants' narrative and descriptive style. In view that the short film *Signs* has predetermined the type of "Conflicts (type of protagonists)," "Scene[9] (real world or projected/imaginative world)," and "Character (static or dynamic character)," I will focus on participants' rhetorical preference over "Plot" (chronological or achronological/episodic sequence of events), "Setting" ("backdrop setting" or "integral setting"), "Theme" (explicit or implicit), "Figurative Language" (simile, metaphor, parallelism, rhythm etc.), and any other typical features. The style displayed in the descriptions of settings (e.g., environment, objects, atmosphere) and the characters' mental states, actions, appearance, dialogues, and facial

[9] Indrasuta"s notion of "Scene" here is different from Söter's.

expressions will receive a close look as well (see Sub-Table 1-2).

Interactional Analysis

To go with the new trend, I will also analyze interactional tactics that narrators use to intrude on their own emotions, positions, or attitudes, invite their audiences' sympathy, and boost the "involvement" effect of their stories. In this respect, my first step is to apply Tannen's "frame" theory and Koven's "speaker role perspectives" to see how American and Chinese writers identify themselves in the story as well as in the relationship with their audiences (see Sub-Table 1-3).

My second interest is in the "evaluation" techniques. Integrating Chang and McCabe's, Labov's, Rintell's, and Martin and White's evaluation coding theories, I list and re-classify possible evaluation devices (on the level of form and discourse) in Table 2 for reference convenience. During the actual process of analysis and comparison, I will only code those that show a striking difference between Chinese and American participants' narratives after my general observation. This analysis of evaluation devices is fundamentally meant to examine how Chinese and American participants vivify their story and attract audiences' interactional participation with different "involvement" strategies. Since most evaluation devices are in service of creating an effect of "involvement" and vividly extending storytellers' message to the audience, those possessing this function in Table 2 will be highlighted with "^" while those potential to reach this effect will be marked by "#."

Table 2: Non-Exhaustive Coding of Evaluation Devices

#Prediction	"Now, comes the paramount moment" "Suddenly, his life begins to change"	
^Detailed Recount of Events (provoke audiences' own imagination, force them to picture the scene and get the feeling/meaning by themselves)	**^Actual Actions**	"He smashes the door, kicks off the trash bin, and leave."
	^Culturally Symbolic Actions	"He lights the incense, holds it in hands, and keeps kowtowing."
	^Results of the High Point/ Actions in Climax	"The drink rolled and rolled and then burst. Something came out. Then I kept wiping and wiping using a wiper."
^Physical Condition	"I got stomach." "He suddenly feels dizzy."	
#Tangential Info. /Generalization /Philosophizing	"She gave me ten dollars for going in there. Ten dollars is a lot of money when you're little."	
^Second Person Singular/Depersonalization	"He is so angry. And you know, when you are angry, you will…"	
^Figurative Language	**^Analogies (Similes, Metaphors, etc.)**	"I ate and all of my face was a mess, as a big Siamese cat."
	^Exaggeration & Fantasy	"I was frightened to death."
	^Parallelisms	"Perhaps she will think it is too fast; perhaps she doesn't like it; perhaps she will refuse me. I can't make up my mind."
	^Repetitions	"Then I kept crying kept crying." "There are apples, apples, and apples"

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="5"></td><td colspan="2">^Rhythms</td><td colspan="2">“same desk, same people surround me. Same scenery, same scents.”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">^Pacing & ellipses</td><td colspan="2">“It’s the same routine. Wake up. Shower. Eat. Train. Work.”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">^Onomatopoeia</td><td colspan="2">“beep beep beep…” “meow meow;” “bark bark;”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">^Exclamations/
Stressors</td><td colspan="2">“He was frightened!”
A marked emphasis in voice: “It is true!” “WHAT?!”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">^Elongators/
Capital Letter Stressors</td><td colspan="2">“We had to stay a <u>looooong</u> time.” “I really want to see HIM.”</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="11">Word Per se
(words in all kinds of part of speech that directly convey the meaning)</td><td rowspan="4">Graduation Terms</td><td rowspan="2">Force</td><td>#Quantification</td><td>a few, a trickle of, millions of
tiny, small, huge,
long-lasting, wide-spread</td></tr>
<tr><td>#Intensification</td><td>slightly corrupt→very corrupt;
contented→ecstatic
somewhat→relatively→fairly
→extremely
slightly disturb→greatly disturb; like→love→adore</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Focus</td><td>Sharpen</td><td>truly, really, very</td></tr>
<tr><td>Soften</td><td>sort of, kind of, a little bit, gradually, not really</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">#Nouns/Epithets/Reference</td><td colspan="2">“That <u>dwarf</u> finds it hard to reach the basket.”</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Attitude Terms</td><td colspan="2">Affect
(emotional reactions)</td><td>“Jason <u>felt happy/disappointed.</u>” [Adj.]
<u>“Sadly</u>, he had to go.” [Adverb]
“Her departure <u>upset</u> him.” [Verb]
“He <u>dislikes/hates/detested</u> her.” [Verb]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Judgment
(ethical judgment of behavior)</td><td>“Jason proved a <u>splendid</u> husband.”
“He behaves <u>bad.</u>”
“The old man says, ‘that guy was <u>greedy.</u>’”
[#Judgments from a third person]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Appreciation
(aesthetic evaluation of things)</td><td>“It was a <u>wonderful</u> night.”
“The moon is <u>bright</u>.”</td></tr>
<tr><td>#Idioms/Proverbs /Slangs/Quotations</td><td colspan="4">“Sister got hurt but you still <u>gloated over</u> (xing zai le huo) this.”</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">^Utterance of Inner States</td><td colspan="2">^Direct Statement
(Omit the Verb of Thinking/Saying)</td><td colspan="2">“What! How could he do this to me!”
“Should I ask her to meet right now?”
“How should he seize this chance?”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"># Direct Quotation
(Keep the Verb of Thinking/Saying)</td><td colspan="2">“<u>He muttered</u>, ‘no worries, no worries, calm down, it is just a piece of cake.’”
“It is now or never! <u>He reminded himself.</u>”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Indirect/Reported Utterance</td><td colspan="2">“He wonders how he could ask her out.”</td></tr>
<tr><td>Comparators Per se</td><td colspan="4">“He took off his coat <u>instead of</u> turning on the AC.” [compared with the “truth”]
“He bought an apple <u>but not</u> orange.” [Negatives]
“Otherwise my father’s legs <u>probably</u> won’t work.” [Hypotheses or modals]</td></tr>
<tr><td>Explicatives/Causal Explanations</td><td colspan="4">“He took off his coat <u>because</u> he felt scorching.”</td></tr>
<tr><td>Facts Per se</td><td colspan="4">“I caught the <u>biggest</u> fish.”
“He <u>wanted to</u> watch.” [Intentions or desires]
“He <u>had to</u> go home.” [Compulsion words]</td></tr>
</table>

Others	**^Setting or environment descriptions; characters' facial expressions; etc.**

(Note: Some example sentences in the table are cited from Chang and McCabe)

Contextual Data Analysis

After textual data are analyzed through the above multiple perspectives, Pavlenko's "context analysis" will be included next. The background information participants leave at the end of their writings and the follow-up interviews will feed into my deeper analysis. These data not only inform me of participants' writing context, perception of narrative functions, interactional concerns to the audience, reasons for choosing certain linguistic forms and rhetorical devices, but also trigger me to infer the historical, political, educational, and cultural factors that might have influenced their narrative production.

To sum up, my complete data analysis (textual and contextual) attempts to answer what (quantitative) are the differences between stories written by Chinese and Americans and why (qualitative) they are different.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The first section of this chapter demonstrates research findings involving differences and similarities between Chinese and American participants' narratives. The subsequent section interprets these findings by inferring textual and contextual factors that might cause participants' different rhetorical choices.

An Overview of the Collected Data

Among all the 40 participants I recruited, 7 American and 11 Chinese participants are freshmen and sophomores whereas 13 American and 9 Chinese participants are juniors or seniors. The American participants write an average of 175 minimal units (ranging from 66 to 339) while their Chinese counterparts compose relatively shorter stories of 117 minimal units on average (with a range from 57 to 227). In general, they all have touched on the key plots in the film and presented the story with a fully developed structure. The macro-structure they use follows a similar pattern (see Figure 2):

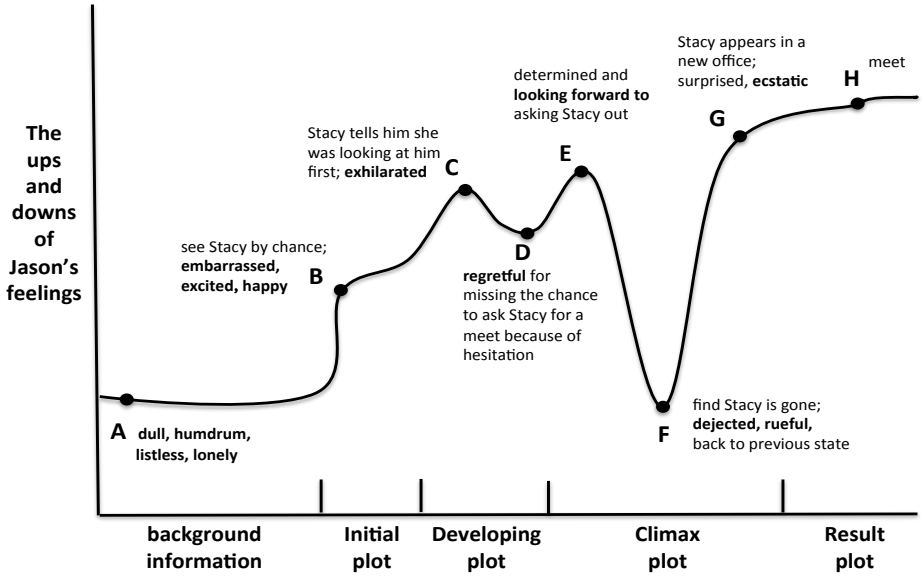


Figure 2: The Macro-Structure of the "Same" Story

As is shown, most of the participants start by introducing the background information of the protagonist Jason, an office worker who leads a monotonous life and has little motivation and passion for work in a big city. The key point here is to showcase Jason's routine life and foreground his boredom, depression, and loneliness. The initial plot of the core story begins when one day Jason accidentally sees through the window of his office the heroine Stacey whose office is in a building across the street. Here, storytellers are expected to demonstrate how the two "talk" through signs they hold up and how Jason's attitude toward life is starting to change. The developing plot attends to Jason and Stacey's growing relationship, which peaks at the moment when Stacey tells Jason that she was watching him first. So exhilarated is Jason that he

even thinks about asking Stacey to meet; however as he soon hesitates if such act is too abrupt, Stacey is called away and Jason misses the chance. The subsequent morning comes the climax of the story, where Jason jumps out of his bed and wastes no time sprinting to his office, holding up a piece of paper against the window in order to ask Stacy for a meeting, but only to see that Stacey's office has been cleaned out and someone new is moving in. Thereafter, Jason plunges again into depression and turns back to his previous hopeless state. Nonetheless, as striking conflict usually happens in the climax, a day or a couple of days later, Jason is thrilled at finding that Stacey is still there but in a higher room—she is promoted. This time, and we finally see the resolution of the plot that Jason immediately asks Stacy to meet and then they race to each other and meet in the street. From my observation, all participants have followed this route of plot progress.

Besides the above conspicuous five components, all participants have also interposed evaluations and descriptions (though in varying degrees) throughout their narrations. On the whole, this macro-structure resonates with Labov's structural theory (abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda) and with Chinese contemporary four-part structure: *kaiduan* (beginning), *fazhan* (development), *gaochao* (climax), and *jieju* (conclusion). However, it remains disputable if it resembles Chinese traditional *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* structure. As Kirkpatrick and Xu (46-47) examined, unlike the contemporary four-part structure being extensively used in narrative texts, this traditional structure stemmed from the structure of poem (Tang Dynasty) and developed into a structure of prose in Yuan Dynasty, and "has altered in both form and function over several hundred years." Further, as "*zhuan*" is supposed to convey indirect criticism or tangential information but few texts I collected (especially those by Chinese participants) contain any obvious transition or divergence in the climax part, I agree with Kirkpatrick and Xu (45-47) against equating *gaochao* (climax) with "*zhuan.*" Therefore, whether *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* structure is a universal structure for narrative writing and how we might define "*zhuan*" in contemporary context need further discussion.

Data Findings: Differences and Similarities

Compare from the Perspective of Narrative Micro-Structures

Notwithstanding the generic macro-structure, or to say, the common basic elements of stories, American and Chinese participants' narrations (I will sometimes use "EL1" and "EL2" for reference hereafter) show cultural-specific ways in arranging information and emphasis to each structure constituent. Below, I will illustrate with excerpts from their stories how they "perform" each narrative component in particular ways (excerpts from Chinese participants are indicated and ordered by "C1., C2., …" while those from American participants are with "A1., A2., …").

(1) Abstract

An abstract summary in the beginning of stories is rare in both EL1 and EL2. However, out of expectation, while none of the alleged "deductive-oriented" American participants produces an abstract at the outset, the only two abstracts (C1, C2) are both found in the so-called "inductive-oriented" Chinese participants' writings.

C1. *Signs* tells us a story about how a young man and a young women fall in love with each other in

a special and uncommon way.

C2. The story I am going to tell you is about my friend Jason. It is about his life-changing love story with his wife Stacey, which impressed me a lot.

This might more or less pose a challenge to those who, in regardless of genres, deemed deduction is the norm to Americans while induction is partially favored by Chinese. On one hand, even if we grant that Americans do prefer deductive reasoning in argumentative essays, we have no reason to take it for granted that they would use deductive logic in all genres. When interviewing several American participants about why they would not add an abstract to their story, I received the answer that an explicit summary of the story at the very first might risk reducing the readers' curiosity and expectation. In other words, the avoidance of an abstract bespeaks a tendency to be implicit, and the use of a deductive abstract depends on the choice to be explicit or implicit. Hence, although it is widely accepted by Americans that presenting an explicit thesis statement in argumentative essays is necessary, the case is not the same as to narrative writing. On the other hand, Chinese people's preference to inductive rhetoric also entails a reexamination. If simply assuming that Chinese people only favor induction, we might think that the two Chinese participants who add an abstract are taking an unconventional writing style or even mistakenly applying the "rules" they learned about English argumentative writing to their narrative writing. However, from my experience of reading Chinese essays and based on eight CL1 texts I collected (stories written in Chinese by eight of my Chinese participants), I find abstracts are by no means abnormal to Chinese—at least they are commonly seen in the "deduction-induction-deduction" structure, which is as frequently used as the inductive format by Chinese writers according to Kirkpatrick and Xu's study (158-160). More important, whether to be explicit or implicit is not a major concern influencing Chinese writers' decision on adding an abstract. Otherwise stated, Chinese writers worry less about their stories being too explicit. What they appear to care most about are what other functions the abstract could potentially fulfill. Take C1 and C2 for example, the first one aims to provoke readers' curiosity about how "special" and "uncommon" this love story could be while the second one foretells the happy ending of Jason and Stacey and leads readers to wonder "why the story impresses the writer." Moreover, we see both of them immediately build a relation and interact with their readers by using words like "us" and "you." The second abstract even establishes a relation between Jason and the writer, making her storytelling sound more "sincere." In all, the preference to deductive or inductive thinking is by no means absolute and fixed in either culture; it hinges upon different genres and different purposes of the writer no matter what culture he or she is from.

(2) Story about Story

"Story about story" manifests writers interacting with their readers "at the door" of the actual narration in order to frame a situation for their storytelling. I find five Chinese participants utilize such strategy. As the following examples show, some of them make general arguments in order to stimulate readers' resonance (C3, C4); some raise thought-provoking questions for readers (C5); some even unveil or forge the storyteller's identity to win readers' trust (C6).

C3. Everyone who is single dreams for love. But not everyone is lucky to find it. Those of you who haven't met it doesn't mean that you are not excellent enough, but that your fate in love has not arrived yet.
C4. Some people may regard life as a journey and sometimes you are on the train, looking out of the window. Maybe you will feel bored, but do not forget, the train will take you somewhere fascinating

you've never been to.

C5. Sometimes we laugh just because others are laughing. We don't have our own thoughts but follow the herd. We think that we can never be the heroes in life. Most people have a boring life in most of the time, and sometimes we even do not know what we live for. What can light up our dull lives? What can save us from the horrible dullness? I think the love of a stranger may help with that, but where is my special someone? Am I too stupid to find one?

C6. My friend Jason is an ordinary office worker and he repeats his boring life every day…[background information about Jason]…We, just like him, are always longing for love or something new in our lives. But we know, it hardly happens. We don't want to get up every morning just because we know that this day will be exactly like yesterday. Life doesn't want to give us surprise.

In contrast, none of the American participants writes a "story about story;" rather, they directly embark on depicting the background setting and habitual status of the hero Jason. To be exact, in fact, there is one American participant who performs a quasi- "story about story." She starts with seven clauses describing Jason's background, but soon acts as a listener to Jason who is telling his story, and simultaneously passes on Jason's telling to her readers (see A1). Regardless of her initial seven descriptive clauses, she is actually framing a "live" storytelling situation, which resembles the function of the "story about story" though it is less explicit an address to the audience than the Chinese participants'.

A1. He told me about the adventure, but at first he wanted me to know just how monotonous the whole thing had become, he said, "I wake up, get ready for work, catch the train…go home, eat and to bed"… He pauses and then continues "…"… He says as he has this sheepish grin. "…"… He laughs at the memory "…"… I asked him if he was excited and he said, "…"… He then said, "…"… "And that was the beginning of a new life for me."

(3) Setting or Background Information

American participants fling themselves rapidly into the actual narration, but as they allocate bigger proportion of clauses (29.5% averagely with a minimum at 9.7% and maximum at 53%) to depicting the character's background situation, they approach the core event much later. In comparison, Chinese participants only assign 18.7% (ranging from 11.9% to 38%) information to the character's background and would quickly shift to the core event. With a close look, American participants offer more specific identification of the character. Most of them specify the age, the job title, the city location (London, New York, etc.), and even the nationality of the character (Australian, Englishman, American). However, most Chinese participants introduce Jason generally as "an office worker in a big city" and some even call Jason "the hero A" and Stacey "the heroine B." Only a senior Chinese student offers relatively detailed information: "My name is Jason. I am 28 years old. I am a businessman and I work in New York."

American participants' specification is also reflected in their subtle observations and descriptions of the settings. Unlike Chinese participants stating "Jason wakes up, gets himself dressed, had his breakfast quickly, and rushes to work…he usually has his lunch on a bench in a park …," American participants would go into details of the objects, actions, times, and places such as:

A2. It was **Monday morning** and Jason's alarm clock woke him up from his dreamless sleep at **6 AM** like any other day. He slowly **sits up** in bed. His head **hangs down** and he looks at the floor…He puts on a **grey suit and tie**… He eats **a bowl of tasteless cereal** alone and stares around his spotless apartment… At lunchtime, he usually sits on a bench in the nearby **Central**

Park…Breathing deeply, he **bites into his sandwich**…

A3. A man lies in bed with an **exposed and hairy chest.** The **sheets are white** and so are the **pillow** he is laying against. The shrill and persistent beeping of an alarm sounds and he slowly **tosses the sheets aside**. He **swings his leg over the bed, clad in striped boxers, and rises for the day.** The man studies himself in a **bathroom mirror**. He is wearing **a gray suit and a gray tie**. He **eats a bowl of cereal** for breakfast, mechanically, before leaving. He rides a **subway** without interacting with anyone, then navigates a **crowded street**.

This preference to specification implies a tendency to "show" rather than "tell" the characteristic and current status of the characters. Moreover, I find American participants are keen on "showing" the characters' reactions, attitudes, and behaviors in more than one background scene. Sometimes, background scenes are so thoroughly depicted that they make the whole text seem like containing a series of embedded small stories (see A4).

A4. Beep…beep…beep…Jason's eyes flew open. He laid in bed until he absolutely had to get up ... **On his way to work, Jason saw a beautiful woman with a perfectly styled bob on the escalator** next to him was looking at him, but her gaze slid right over him as she scanned the crowd below her. Jason averted his eyes shyly... He lowered his head as he made his way to his desk… **At lunch outside, Jason counters another pretty, blonde woman, who smiles at him but walks away**…**After lunch break, during a meeting with his coworkers, Jason's boss tells a work-related joke**, and everyone in the conference room laughs hysterically… He looks around the room as though searching for a social clue to let him know how to react. Upon seeing that everyone else in the room is laughing, he forces a stiff laugh in return…**On the subway commute home, Jason watches an old couple kiss**…Jason **returns to his small, dreary apartment to hear and plays a voicemail from his mother**... as he stares down at his the mush he is eating for dinner again. He yanks his tie off as he walks to his bedroom, and falls on the bed. He wakes up the next morning, still leading his lackluster life. It's the same routine. Wake up. Shower. Eat. Train. Work…

Admittedly, participants might have been influenced by the filming strategy, which shows Jason's lethargic state by shooting different background scenes; however, while 15 American participants "recount" these background scenes, only nine Chinese participants do so. In addition, these nine Chinese participants' "recounts" are much shorter and less elaborate since most of them are in fact summarizing Jason's reactions to selected background events (see C7 and C8). Furthermore, the rest 11 Chinese participants who do not mention these scenes tend to "tell" or "summarize" the characters' personality, current situation, and habitual behaviors in brief and then quickly switch to the core event (look at C9). This summary-like introduction is even more apparent in CL1 as it is easier for Chinese participants to express meanings concisely in Chinese.

C7. Jason is a gloomy young man, who lives a changeless and bland life everyday. He has no one to talk to; he speaks little; he is too shy to look at the beautiful girls in the escalator; he cannot even get others' punch line in the meeting. Life seems indifferent to him and he dislikes it.

C8. Jason was a handsome single man who had just moved into this city. He thought both his work and his life were boring and seemed meaningless. He couldn't enjoy his work or get involved in his company. He had no friends here. Sometimes, he might pay attention to some women on the lift or in a park, but they seemed not interested in him, and he was not willing to make the first step and try to talk to them.

C9. Jason was a young man who struggled alone in a bustling city. Life for him was dull. Every day went by repeatedly. Nothing new or special ever happened. The alarm clock ringing, he began a day. Dressed tidily, walking among the crowd, he wore a weary face. It had been hard for him to find a bosom friend, not a girlfriend either. People around him were busy with their work. They seldom talked to each other, most of which wrapped themselves up in their own world. They showed little emotion. Jason always felt absent-minded, for he didn't enjoy his work at all. Every day, he worked just like a machine… One day [core event begins]…

Another reason that EL1 have longer background information might come down to American participants' predilection to add imaginative scenes, which are intended to foil Jason's current unsatisfied situation. It could be, as A5 shows, a contrast between the happiness at home and the loneliness in the city. Or it could be a psychological gap between expectations and the reality like A6 instances. There are five EL1 texts showing this feature but none of the EL2 does so. Though C10 suggests that imagination or fantasy also exists in EL2, we need to be aware that it is in essence different from those in EL1. The imaginative scenes in EL1 reside in real world but those in EL2 are ambiguous and connotative fantasies in projected world.

> A5. I eat my krispies and drink my orange juice in total silence, but I can hear home. Mum's kitchen full of sun and my seven siblings, and my dad cracking jokes like he cracks scrambled eggs, messily, landing half on the counter, but we love him for it. My house is never quiet or clean…
>
> A6. When I was in college… In my head I pictured classy bars with even classier women. I pictured traveling to a new city every weekend and I pictured dream of the massive paycheck that would wait in my gold plated mailbox each week. I thought of the fancy apartment and the incredible parties. What I didn't picture consider was the loneliness that I would soon experience.
>
> C10. A world, brimming over with noise at different level of decibel, has been long covering his ears…Along with deafness came blindness and mute."

(4) Scene (Description and Interpretation) and Plot

American participants' propensity to "showing" is also prominent in narrating the core story; nonetheless their "showing" here focuses more on actions than on specific details in settings (see A7). They on average allot 40.3% (ranging from 18% to 56%) clauses to eventful actions whilst their Chinese counterparts only devote 21.9% (ranging from 5% to 51.7%) to plot actions. Further, as American participants are apt to recall and provide a "running account" of actions at all phases of the story, Chinese participants tend to restrict action descriptions to the climax plot, the "focus of performance" as they might call it.

> A7. The next day, he is in hyper drive – **dodging** commuters on his way to work, **skipping** the elevator to **sprint up** the stairs and almost launching himself headfirst into his chair. He **pulls the sign out** of his pocket, **unfolding it** in such a haste he almost rips it. He **turns it to show** Stacey, only to see that her desk is empty. Her boss **enters, sweeps off** the desk, and admits in a new employee, a curly-haired man who doesn't look out the window.

Compared to the "action- or showing-oriented" American participants, Chinese participants are "interpretation-oriented," keen on "telling" readers what the actions mean and "explaining" what the characters' inner feelings are like. Their interpretations can either fasten or slow down the forwardness of the plot. From time to time, they even "predict" the forthcoming events. For instance, during the transition from background information to initial plot, eight Chinese participants "predict" the change in Jason's life by inserting sentences such as "Jason didn't know that his true love is creeping into his life," "he does not realize that his life is going to be changed," or "however, something changes." But only two American participants do so.

(5) Coda

One of the most striking differences between EL1 and EL2 is about how American and Chinese

participants end their story. While no American participants write a coda, twelve Chinese participants close their story by "selling" to readers their reflections (C11) or generalizations of the living philosophies or empirical laws (C12, C13), encouraging certain actions in an imperative tone (C14, C15), preaching and reasoning out morals (C16), or raising thought-provoking questions (C17, C18). Most of these codas, some of which even echo back to the story title or the "story about story," are attempted to explicate, repeat, and stress the theme of the story.

> C11. That's how the story ends. Inspired by the story, I find that love is essential and precious for people. It's so magical that it can lighten our life and rid us of sorrow. As the story tells us, we can gain true love only when we are brave enough. As a result, this story is especially suitable for people who attempt to seek for true love. And that is how the story enlightens me.
>
> C12. If you feel life is boring, it is just because you do not try to find the interest. And everyone should be brave to find the chance and clutch it. Then you will not regret losing the chance.
> C13. Life is wonderful and will always surprise you. You love life, an then life will love you.
>
> C14. Love needs our courage. Don't hesitate. Just speak out!
> C15. Open your heart. Life is much more interesting than you thought.
>
> C16. ... Science and technology are developing faster and people are much easier to communicate. However, we tend to seal ourselves off from the outside world. We are not good at talking to others and we are not ready to embrace our life. In such a beautiful world, always being in the situation of seclusion is really a pity. We need to love and to be loved. Life wouldn't be wonderful without love. Therefore, we should learn to overcome our shyness and get access to the world around us so as to gain happiness, love, and the sense of identity. In fact, every one of us has a sun in our hearts but it is always shaded by some clouds. What we can and should do is to push aside those clouds and let the sun shine. Life is great. We just need to fill it with some sunshine and love. Don't be shy and open our arms to life. The results we get will usually surprise us all.
>
> C17. This is the love story between Jason and Stacey. We've learnt that signs sometimes are better than words. So are you ready to send a sign to people around you?
> C18. Did you dream that you had a special someone rushing into your dull life? Someone to last your whole life? I found one. Her name was Stacy.

In view of the EL1 data, American participants all wrap up their story in the resolution plot, neither jumping out of the storytelling context nor addressing readers to the coda. Their ending lines, still being a part of the plot, may serve as a signal of the characters' future (A8, A9) or a change undergone by the character (A10), or just as a conclusion of the story (A11, A12). Worth to be noticed, A13 shows a "natural" way of generalization without breaking the narrative flow. By "natural," I mean it does not deliberately preach the philosophy (the line in bold fond) to readers; rather, it is embedded in the plot and would invite readers to read between its lines.

> A8. Jason grinned. Standing in front of Stacey, he decided he might come to love the city after all.
> A9. Jason doesn't think his smile will ever go away.
>
> A10. Maybe this city wasn't so bad after all. Jason thought.
>
> A11. I can only stare and fell lucky that I managed to meet someone so wonderful who could change my boring life.
> A12. These are the signs of the signs of the start of a beautiful romance.
>
> A13. He opens his mouth and she stops him by holding a finger to her mouth. Shyly holding up a sign, she smiles. "Hi," surrounded by a heart. **Sometimes that is all anyone needs-A simple hello.** Jason smiles.

To sum up, in a general sense, the "preferred" pattern of information distribution in EL2 and EL1 could be illustrated by Figure 3, wherein we see EL2 follow a "deductive-inductive-deductive" or "general-specific-general" pattern whereas EL1 track what Hinds calls the "quasi-inductive" pattern, which refers to an inductive sequence without an explicit theme statement (Jia 3).

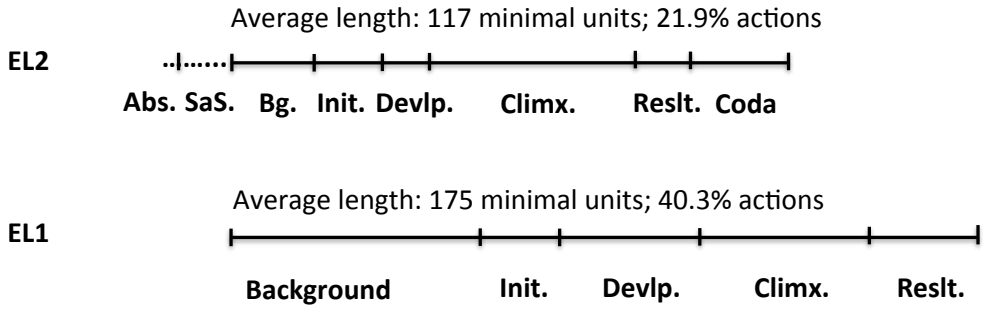


Figure 3: The Micro-Structure of EL2 and EL1

Compare from the Perspective of Narrative Styles

Though the filmmaker's narrative strategies might have posed great influence on my participants and thus homogenized some of their narrative styles (i.e., the chronological narration sequence), I still find some differences between EL1 and EL2 from the perspective of narrative styles.

Table 3: Number of Participants with Preference of Certain Narrative Style

Stylistic Analysis			
Participants		**American (EL1)**	**Chinese (EL2)**
Plot	**Chronological**	20	19
	Achronological	0	1 (parallel/episodic)
Setting	**Backdrop setting**	8	**17**
	Integral setting	**12**	3
Theme	**Explicit theme**	0	**14**
	Implicit theme	**20**	6
Figurative Language (see specific usage count in Table 5)		- Analogies (metaphors) - Hyperboles ("restrained") - Exclamations (oral phrases!) - Parallelisms/Repetitions - Rhythm (alliteration) - **More** pacing & ellipses - **More** onomatopoeia - **More** capital letter stressors	- **More** Analogies (similes & metaphors) - **More** hyperboles ("flamboyant") - **More** exclamations (!) - Parallelisms/Repetitions (poetic) - Rhythm (end rhythm) - Pacing & ellipsis - Onomatopoeia - Capital letter stressors
Other Descriptive Features		- Colors/tastes/sounds - Character descriptions (first impression, appearance, facial expressions, action) - Subtle observations - Showing: details, actions	- Sounds - Character descriptions (first impression, appearance) - Broad and vague settings - Telling: generalizations

First, as Table 3 shows, Chinese participants tend to apply backdrop settings, placing overt time and place phrases such as "One day," "The next day," "Several days after," "The next morning," "On another day," "At home," "In his office" in the beginning of sentences and paragraphs so as to shift readers' attention to different events, scenes, or occasions (i.e., C19)—this feature is also prevalent in CL1 (i.e., C20). However, by contrast, American participants use less of these independent temporal and spatial phrases but more plot-dependent or plot-integrated statements of time and place. A14 to A16 are examples of such integral setting:

> C19. **One day**, I happened to glance at the opposite building and there happened to be a girl sitting in the office… **The next day**, I woke up and went to work hopefully… **During the boring conference**, I played chess with her by drawing the checkerboard on the paper… **Another day**, she played funny faces to me… **One morning**, I even burst into laughter when she drew breast and behaved really funny… **The next day,** I rushed to the office and was desperate to see her again… **For that second,** I found that I had fallen in love with her… **The next few days,** I can't focus on my work… **One morning,** I sensed a strong light shining at me. I looked along with it and found it was her… **In the middle of the street**, I finally meet her face to face…
> C20. **有一天**，他透过办公室的窗户看见了对面办公楼里的一个女人…**接下来的每一天**，他都笑容满面、充满激情地去上班并和女主用纸片进行交流，他感到无比快乐… **终于有一天**，他鼓起勇气想用纸片约女主见面…**第二天**，他再一次鼓起勇气…**突然有一天**，窗外射进一束很强烈的光逼得他睁不开眼，当他转头向光传来的方向看去时，他出现原来女主并没有离开…
>
> A14. I woke up **this morning**… **After that** we both went back to our work… **Those two months were the best I have had in a long time. Until one day**… **That day started** as all the others had… **After lunch is over**…
> A15. The alarm goes off, **another workday**, but **today is different**… he rushes to work **the next day…**
> A16. The **next morning** brings another day of work… Days at work dragged by. **Until**, sick of staring at his computer monitor, Jason looked out the window of his cubicle… **The next day is another eventful one for the man**… Finally, **the morning came**!

To interweave the information of time and place into the plots, temporal connectors such as "when, after, as soon as, once, while, until" are more frequently used by American participants in contrast to Chinese participants who would simply put, for example, "One day," to start mapping out a new scene, American participants will go in sentences and in detail like: "It was Thursday, June 11 at 8:53 a.m." or "It was the 106th time as Jason sits in this cubicle."

A second stark contrast is about the presentation of story themes. While American participants value implicit ways to convey the main ideas of the story to their readers, Chinese participants are tempted to explicitly express what they learn from the story. They might utter the theme wherever in the story especially when they are "interpreting" the events and are most likely to articulate it in the coda as we see before. And whenever they are explicating the theme, they would prefer to interact with, or to say, to "persuade" their readers.

Third, in terms of figurative languages, Chinese participants utilize way more analogies, hyperboles, and exclamations while American participants wield slightly more ellipses in pacing strategies and phonological devices such as onomatopoeia (i.e., "beep…beep…beep…the alarm clock breaks the cycle, separating sleep and waking") and capital letter stressors (i.e., "I really want to see her, NOW!"). Both groups employ parallelisms, repetitions, and rhythms with a similar frequency. But it is noteworthy that, although all types of figurative languages are found in both EL1 and EL2, the nuances of their applications and perceptions of the function of a specific device should not be overlooked.

Take the use of analogies for instance; Chinese participants are inclined to adopt similes (C21-C24) whereas American participants are prone to use metaphors (A17-20):

> C21. Living without him is **like** floating in a big ocean.
> C22. She smiles **like** the sunflowers basking in sunshine.
> C23. Before I encountered you, life went on without any expectation and hope **like** an old tree that can no longer sprout.
> C24. In front of a photocopier, I gazed at the copies coming out—one page after another, **just like** my life, one day after another…

> A17. His life is drab, depressing—**he's yet another cog** in the gears of the daily grind, the **bow** used to make a cello sing.
> A18. He could be mistaken for **a zombie**.
> A19. Jason laughs out loud and receives looks from the other **worker bees**.
> A20. I still feel **fire and needles** dancing across my shaking hands.

Interestingly, when they are using hyperboles, exaggerations, or fantasies, the situation kind of reverses—American participants becoming more "restrained" (like A21-A23 illustrate) yet Chinese people turning to be more "straightforward" (see C25-27).

> A21. It is **as if** the weight of the world has come to sit firmly on his shoulders.
> A22. I felt depressed and could hardly breathe **as if** I were suffocated.
> A23. He was **like** being struck by lightning.

> C25. The telephone was ringing endlessly, **loud enough to wake the dead.**
> C26. My heart **literally skipped a beat** just now.
> C27. We approached gradually, seeing each other step by step, forgetting the hurried people around and **entering a world only including two of us**.

Both groups use exclamations though Chinese participants apply a lot more. Moreover, I find American participants like using oral expressions such as "Oh God. Oh no. Wow! Ouch. Crap! Oh Gosh.," which make their exclamations sound more oralized and naturalized. Please see below how they are used in full sentences.

> A24. I stared at her dumbfounded until-Shoot! She saw me staring. I quickly looked away and hoped she hadn't noticed.
> A25. What! How could this happen on the day I was going to ask her!

Pacing strategies, which make the narration at once fast and slow, are found in both EL1 and EL2; however, there are more cases in EL1 and it seems that American participants are bolder to omit subjects and leave a single word in one sentence. Though ellipses of subjects are also common in CL1, I find when these Chinese participants are writing in English, they are more "careful" and "standard" and would choose to keep the subject. This might result from rigid EFL instruction that English is a "subject-dominant" language and students' unfamiliarity of the "unconventional" no-subject sentence structure in English. As for the one-word-one-sentence structure (A27, A28), I find few Chinese participants use such strategy in either CL1 or EL2; instead, they would put commas between individual words (C28).

> A26. Hyperdrive again. Down the stairs, out into the street, dodging commuters to the cross walk where Stacey stands. **[No subject]**
> A27. I can literally feel my life spiraling downwards. **Loneliness. Confusion. Sadness. Regret**.
> A28. He wakes up the next morning, still leading his lackluster life. It's the same routine. **Wake up.**

Shower. Eat. Train. Work.

C28. **I took my shirt, dashed downstairs, raced to the street**… When the traffic light turned green we walked toward each other. **One step, two steps, three steps**, and we finally meet face-to-face.

Rhyming is rare in both EL1 and EL2, but I do find two Chinese participants use prosodic end rhythms whilst one American participant performs alliterations. Whether this represents a difference inevitably requires further study.

C29. The first hatred of sound came when the morning alarm set off. Waking up **tired**, putting up **tie**, swallowing down the hard food on the table **lie**, worming the way in the metro like a sardine and sometimes hear[ing] a baby **cry**, Jason had the same schedule of daily life, fixed at each **time**.

A29. Same people, **day** in and **day** out. Walk to my desk, **same** desk, **same** people **surround** me. **Same scenery, same scents**.

The usage of parallelisms and repetitions bears some resemblance in EL1 and EL2—aiming to reinforce the mood and tone. But from my observation, more parallelisms and repetitions in EL2 are intended to demonstrate lyric, poetic, or aesthetic expressions. Sometimes, in order to reach artistic or poetic effects, Chinese participants would even add digressive information (C32, C33). In contrast, paralleled sentences in EL1 are more relevant to the story content (A32).

C30. The clock rings **as usual**. I brush my teeth, wear my suit and tie **as usual**, and then go to work by bus, well again, **as usual**."
C31. **Tomorrow. Tomorrow. Yes, tomorrow**! I will definitely ask her to meet.

A29. Today was like yesterday **and the day before** that **and the day before that**.
A30. Wake up in my shabby apartment **(alone)**, journey through the permanently congested subway **(alone)**, sit in my unadorned cubicle **(alone)**, go to bed **(alone)**.

C32. The girl on the escalator towards the opposite way never came back;
the reports printed out in a row never had the chance to amend;
the bottle casted into the dustbin by passerby never returned to dedicate boutiques;
the joke made on the meeting never unveiled its connotation to Jason;
the voicemail of parents covering long distance via cables never softened the lonely night.
C33. Fish cannot live without water;
Cars cannot run without an engine;
I cannot be happy without you.

A32. What if she doesn't want to?
What if it's too much?
What if she refuses and hence our conversation ends?

Apart from figurative languages, American and Chinese participants also show particular styles as regard to descriptions. An interesting discovery is that, while describing settings to serve as a foil to the atmosphere and the characters' emotions, American participants are more sensitive to tastes, colors, and sounds in the settings while Chinese participants merely place attention to sounds. Excerpts below are telling examples:

A33. the breakfast is even more **tasteless** than usual
A34. I can **taste the candy floss flavor** of my heart in my throat
A35. His favorite **cereal tasted like dust** on his tongue

A36. Amidst the **grayness** of the city. The sheets are **white**. The office environment he works in is just as suffocating as his **plain white apartment** with relentless fluorescent lighting. My office looks the same as it always does: **colorless walls** men in suits, and ring phones next to cubicles…

A37. A young, dejected man wakes up in the same bed as he has been, walks to his **monotone-colored kitchen**, and **eats a bowl of cold, bland cereals**… The man arrives at his work place. Here, just as at home, there are **no bright colors** to be seen.
A38. Like my **gray room and my plaid sheets** and my life right now, the same as the day I arrived…As I straighten my **striped gray tie**, I stare at my **gray eyes and brown buzz cut** in the mirror…

C34. What I only heard is **telephone's ringing, people's talking, and pen scratching**.
C35. His world suddenly becomes **quiet** again…

In describing characters, both American and Chinese participants accentuate the first appearance of the characters, but with a closer examination, American participants attach much more attention to characters' facial expressions and emotion-related physical actions throughout the whole story. Just look at the following excerpts from three American participants, we will soon get impressed by their subtle observations:

A39. He froze, mouth open… He held his breath… He gulped… He frowned… He grinned…
A40. His facial expression returns to its usual place… smiles reaching slowly toward their ears… He averts his gaze and ducks his head…
A41. Jason's face folds into shame and embarrassment… the relief lives on Jason's face only to be replaced a moment later by happiness… his continuing insecurity shows on his face… Jason's grin is in full-force…

As a salient feature of EL1, subtle observations by nature beget detailed descriptions of objects, settings, actions, to name a few, and thus make EL1 seem all the more "showing-oriented" as before mentioned. In contrast, EL2 are prone to offer vague and general descriptions and thus are more "telling-oriented."

Compare from the Perspective of Narrative Interactional Effect

Findings from this perspective are fruitful; therefore I sketch out two tables to illustrate them. Table 4 indicates how many American and Chinese participants respectively adopt a certain type of frame and role perspective. As is shown, a similar percentage of participants in both groups identify themselves as the character Jason or as a film-critic—retelling the story in the short film meanwhile making comments on its cinematic techniques and theme presentation. What differs most is about the use of storyteller frame and other creative frames. American participants seem more likely to play the role of a storyteller whereas Chinese participants strive to create some other fictional stances such as letter-writer, diary-writer, or friend-of-Jason (see later in detail). In line with my previous discovery about participants' preference to "telling (Chinese)" and "showing (Americans)," it is shown here that most Chinese participants like to narrate the story as an interlocutor, "explaining" the story to their readers. Even when sometimes they are dubbing the character or playing the narrator's role, they still remember to keep their interlocutor tone. However, by contrast, the showing- and action-oriented American participants prefer to play the objective narrator's role. And the character's role and interlocutor's role are oftentimes in service to this predominant narrator role. Since every text would embrace all three roles, the way I am classifying them is to see which role perspective is the mostly emphasized. Thus, if a text attaches equal attention to each role perspective, I would label it as taking all three role-perspectives. Seven EL1 and four EL2 are put into this "All Three" category. I find texts in this category are relatively well-written and good reads. Another thing worth noticing is that three out of the four EL2 texts in this category are from Chinese senior participants.

Table 4: Number of Participants with Preference of Certain Frame and Role Perspective

Interactive Analysis			
Participants		**American (EL1)**	**Chinese (EL2)**
Frame	**Storyteller/Narrative frame**	**12**	5
	Jason's frame	5	6
	Film-critic/viewer frame	2	2
	Other creative frames	1	**7**
Role Perspective	**Interlocutor Role**	1	**10**
	Character Role	0	0
	Narrator Role	**4**	1
	Interlocutor + Character	0	**3**
	Interlocutor + Narrator	**5**	1
	Narrator + Character	**3**	1
	All Three	**7**	4 (3 are higher-grade)

As one of the major findings, the use of creative frames is worth to be highlighted here. In light of my data, I find Chinese participants take more diverse and creative frames or metaphorical stances to tell their story. Diary and letter writers are typical roles that they like to identify themselves with. Interestingly, while some play Jason's role in writing diaries (C36), others would play Stacey's (C37). As is shown, diary writings do, to some extent, facilitate writers to better express the main characters' mental state and connect plots in a clear and orderly format. The seemingly rigid parallel paragraph structure of C36 might in turn make the story refreshing to read in that simply structured private writings by others are rarely seen in reality. The writer of C37 strategically inserts Stacey's diary to the narration of Jason's story, juxtaposing two plot clues and meanwhile slaking reader's curiosity of Stacey's mentality. This participant also takes advantage of Stacey's angle to "observe" Jason's background situation and "hint" the main idea of the story in the coda. Such double perspective—one from Jason's while the other from Stacey's lens—is found in another participant's work, which presents the story in an episodic order. The first episode tells about Stacey's routine life and how she starts interacting with Jason while the second and third episodes shift focus to Jason's reactions and activities.

C36. **[Diary-writer: Jason]**
May 20. Today was as boring as usual...[narration of events]
May 21. Today something interesting happened…
May 22. I was in a good mood today…
May 31. Today was the saddest day in my life…
June 2. Today was the happiest day in my life…

C37. **[Diary-writer: Stacey]**
Dear Diary:
Recently, I've noticed a man who works at the opposite building. Now and then, I will watch him through the window of my office. He always frown, less inclined to smile. Though his workplace is full of people, it seems that he is isolated from them, abandoned by the world. What a poor man! If he could become happier and smile more, that would be wonderful.
… [narrating Jason's story]
Dear Diary:
I did it, I really did it! I have communicated with him through paper for several days. He looks happier than before. So should I tell him the secret to make him happier than now?

> … [narrating Jason's story]
> Dear Diary:
> Now I am totally convinced, whenever we send a sign to a hopeless stranger, you not only save that poor lonely guy, but may also brighten your own life, or probably find your true love.

Letter writing is another creative frame that Chinese participants like using. In both EL2 and CL1 texts, I find two participants act as Jason writing a love letter to Stacey, recalling their romantic encounter and trying to consolidate their relationship, while another one plays Jason's role and writes a letter to inform his intimate friend of his fortuitous meeting with Stacey. Some do not directly take the letter-writer frame; however, they envision or suppose a group of audience on their own by adding subtitles such as "—dedicated to people losing hope in finding true love." I call this frame "love-advisor frame" as it often offers advice or encouraging words in the coda. Generally speaking, all these creative frames aid Chinese participants in "telling" or "interpreting" the story and conveying their own reflections in an unconventional way—if compared to the dry "telling" and "preaching" in the conventional storyteller frame. Now, you might ask, why the storyteller frames do not bother American participants? It is probably because American participants less often take an interlocutor tone in the storyteller frames. Otherwise put, they rarely "tell" or "preach" but would rather "show" from the narrator's role perspective in the storyteller frames. Therefore, even though they adopt the storyteller frame, their story is less likely to suffer from "dry telling." In sum, Chinese participants care more about how to creatively "tell" their story whereas American participants focus on how to vividly "show" their story. And such different concerns might influence their choice of frames.

Another issue worth raising is that, the extensive use of creative frames by Chinese participants does not mean this feature is unique to Chinese writers. In fact, American participants also create innovative frames. As before mentioned, one of my American participants identifies herself as a listener to Jason who is in the process of telling his story and simultaneously as a message deliver passing on Jason's telling to her readers (A42). This listener-to-Jason frame nicely sketches out a rather authentic storytelling scene and meanwhile preserves the space for "showing" by keeping the role of Jason, who is the first-hand experience of his own story.

> A42. He told me about the adventure, but at first he wanted me to know just how monotonous the whole thing had become, he said, "I wake up, get ready for work, catch the train…go home, eat and to bed"… He pauses and then continues "…"… He says as he has this sheepish grin. "…"… He laughs at the memory "…"… I asked him if he was excited and he said, "…"… He then said, "…"… "And that was the beginning of a new life for me."

Unlike Tannen's finding, I do not see American participants' penchant for criticizing film techniques. Instead, I find an equal number of American and Chinese participants take a film-critic frame, though their criticism style is not entirely the same. Chinese participants incorporate comments on the film techniques with generalizations and reflections in the coda (C38) while American participants embed cinematic jargons and criticisms into the ongoing plot from beginning till end like A43 and A44 show and thus make them an integral part of the story presentation.

> C38. **This micro film doesn't have any dialogue**, but it is a very touching one because it gives us hope. Besides, **it is a true portrayal of the society nowadays.** The protagonist Jason is just one of tens of thousands of unhappy or introverted people. **The monotonous and fade color used throughout this film indicates the dull life of most people. There exists a contradictory phenomenon.** Science and technology are developing faster and people are much easier to

communicate. However, we tend to seal ourselves off from the outside world... Life wouldn't be wonderful without love. Therefore, we should ...

A43. Beep. Beep. Beep. The alarm continues to sound **as names of actors, producers, and directors flash across a plain black screen**. Finally, the deafening sound comes to a halt, and a man named **Jason lies in bed staring at the camera**…**The music changes from violin playing to more upbeat and energetic music…**

A44. The room is dark and dingy, and an alarm continually rings. **The man shown in the video** is slow to get out of bed get ready for work... **In the next, brief scene,** the man is shown among coworkers at the office**. Viewers of the video can hear the sound of his boss** telling the end of a corporate joke... The boss telling the joke **represents the first time that** a person's voice is introduced into the plot; up until now, **the background music has been the only notable sound** and, with the exception of the main character's brief laughter later on, remains the only voice to be heard. … After this, the two introduce each other; her name is Stacey and his Jason…his apartment is gradually shown brighter**, an effect most likely chosen by the director to mirror Jason's lightening mood…**Jason instantly becomes sad again. His home is again dark…At that moment, **the film ends, leaving the viewer to imagine** whether the two carry out the rest of their lives together or part without a spoken word.

Table 5 illustrates evaluative devices American and Chinese participants prefer to use for conveying affections and emotions, meanings of the events, and interpretations of the characters' inner states to readers. The total number of occurrence of each device in EL1 and EL2 data is recorded respectively. For those with a big number, I just indicate with "+" to mean "more" and "-" to mean "less." While discussing my findings, I also touch on the effect of involvement reached by American and Chinese participants using particular evaluative devices.

Table 5: Total Usage Count of Certain Evaluative Devices in EL1 and EL2 Texts

Interactive Analysis			
Participants		**American (EL1)**	**Chinese (EL2)**
Physical Condition Descriptions		10 (complex)	12 (simple)
Words Per se		+ (adj.) (n.) (v.)	+ (adj.) (adv.)
Comparators Per se		+ (gap + change)	+ (change)
Predictions of Changes		2	**8**
Tangential Info. /Generalization/Philosophizing		4	**13**
Second Person Singular/Depersonalization		2	**10**
Idioms/Proverbs/Quotations		1	**5**
Utterance of Inner States	**Direct Statement-** Omitting the Verb of Thinking/Saying	Play characters' role (65) max. 15/each Play interlocutors' role (13)	Play characters' role (27) max. 4/each Play interlocutors' role (2)
	Direct Quotation- Keeping the Verb of Thinking/Saying	7	7
	Indirect/Reported Utterance	4	9
Figurative Language (see Table 3; already discussed)	Analogies (Similes, Metaphors, etc.)	10	**24**
	Exaggerations/Fantasies	11	**21**
	Exclamations/Stressors/Pet Phrases	12	**27**
	Pacing/Ellipses	**8**	3
	Onomatopoeia	**5**	1
	Elongators/Capital Letter Stressors	**3**	1
	Repetitions	5	6

	Parallelisms	4	7
	Rhythms	1	2
Detailed Recount of Events	Actual Actions	+	-
	Results of the High Point /Actions in Climax	+	+
	Culturally Symbolic Actions	0	0 (two are found in CL1)
Subtle Observations	Concrete Details	+	-
	Characters' Facial Expressions	+	-

From the table, we see similar occurrences of physical condition descriptions, words per se, and comparators per se in EL1 and EL2, but there are subtle differences behind the surface. Speaking of physical conditions, Chinese participants use simpler sentence structures to describe the characters' physical reactions (C39-C41) whereas American participants' descriptions are more complex and diversified (A45, A46). Since human beings share similar physical reactions to certain situations, the more "lifelike" the descriptions of physical conditions are, the easier it is for readers to put themselves in the characters' shoes, or to say, to get involved in the story.

> C39. Jason's heart pounds as he hears… His heart crumbles… his heart starts to pound again.
> C40. He feels dizzy all day long.
> C41. He is panting.
>
> A45. My stomach dropped and I am suddenly shaking with heart thundering in my chest.
> A46. I could feel my anxiety turning into the butterflies that I used to get in my stomach when I was in high school.

In view of words per se, both groups use a great number of adjectives but the percentage of usage is larger in EL2. Besides, similar to Xu's findings, Chinese participants are more assertive in tone, using many intensifiers in front of adjectives such as "he is extremely lonely" or "I am super excited." The case is the same in CL1 since Chinese two-character adjectives always go with adverbial intensifiers to show the scale of graduation. However, in contrast, the graduation scale can be reflected in one individual word in English. For example, the single word "thrilled" is able to express the intensification in "super excited." Though Chinese four-character adjectives also possess this function, Chinese participants might feel difficult to "translate" them into English and thus would resort to adverbial intensifiers. What's more, Chinese participants are fond of putting adverbs, such as "Excitedly," "Magically," "Surprisingly," "Dramatically," "Disappointedly," in the beginning of sentences so as to foreground these emotions. By contrast, American participants adopt fewer adverbs but more nouns and verbs to display the emotion-related actions (i.e., A47-A50). To some readers, too many straightforward adjectives and adverbs elucidating the characters' feelings might hamper them from "sympathizing" with the characters. Rather, they prefer "showings" of the emotion-related actions that impress them and let them "feel" the characters' feelings on their own.

> A47. He shakes his hand and writes in excitement.
> A48. He wears a shroud of sadness everyday…
> A49. He freezes in nervousness.
> A50. I jump out of bed, throw on my clothes, and take just enough time to scarf down breakfast before flying out the door [excited].

As for comparators per se, both groups like comparing Jason's attitude towards life—in the reflection of his actions, feelings, and visions—before and after he meets Stacey. However,

American participants show more interest in portraying the characters' psychological gaps between anticipations and reality. In contrast, Chinese participants prefer to contrast the real settings and the characters' fantasies like C42 does, or to compare other people's opinions with the characters' as C43 shows. I think different readers might achieve different degrees of involvement in this respect in that their engagement here depends on how much common ground they share with the writer.

> C42. The street is full of people but what I can only see is her.
> C43. Most people believe that New York is an amazing city—the city is prosperous, vigorous and full of golden opportunity. But or me, the city is nothing but strange. People here appeared to be lost in the humdrum of their work. I am no exception.

Due to that EL2 are replete of writers' interpretations in an interlocutor's tone, the use of predictions of changes, generalizations, philosophizing, depersonalizations, and quotations are rather salient. Moreover, oftentimes, they would appear hand-in-hand to "promote" a certain argumentation. For example, depersonalization or second person singular devices always go with divergent generalizations such as:

> C44. You know, everybody can turn into a rabbit before love.
> C45. You know, every girl will pretend before a man she loves.
> C46. You must understand, when one falls in love, time seems like an arrow flying quickly.
> C47. Things usually happen unexpectedly but you can never imagine how thrilled I was.

For another example, philosophizing and generalizations will come either before or after quotations to help the writer make an argument or lead the character to buy a belief (C48-50). With no need to "persuade" in narratives, American participants seldom use quotations. The only "quotation" I find in EL1 is A51, which is actually from private realm—unlike Chinese participants quoting publically known sayings (C48, C49).

> C48. However, as a famous saying goes: Everything has a good ending. If it is not good, it is simply because it has not come to the end. Therefore, it is worthwhile to be patient and wait for the best to come.
> C49. Buddha said, "Five hundred times in our prelife, I passed by your side, hence I lay my eyes on you this life."
> C50. It made me think of the lyric of my favorite song: "I would have gone through life half-awake, if you had the decency to leave me alone."
>
> A51. I remembered how my mother always said, "If it is important, it goes on the fridge!"

The effect of involvement aroused by the above devices depends largely on the extent to which readers accept explicit "preaching" of the story's theme. For Chinese readers who are more tolerant to the explicitness in narratives, predictions of changes may evoke their curiosity of the upcoming plot; tangential information and generalizations might remind them of their own experiences and make them better understand the characters' situation; quotations, philosophizing, and second person singular devices are likely to help writers interact with readers, convince readers on their arguments and provoke readers' further reflections on the story. Nevertheless, since American readers cherish the implicitness in stories, they might treat these devices as "lumbers" impeding their recount of the dramatic plot.

In order to animate the characters' mental states, American participants employ a lot more direct utterances than their Chinese counterparts. An extreme example is one EL1 text that practices 15

times of direct statements, playing the character's role and directly articulating the character's monologues or thoughts (A52). There are two forms of direct utterances of inner states: one is what I called the "direct statement," which always omits the verb of saying or thinking (i.e., A52). Both EL1 and EL2 prefer this one. The other one, the "direct quotation," however, would keep the verb of say and thinking. C51, C52, A53, and A54 are examples in this category and they show that the form of American participants' "direct quotation" is more diverse and complex.

> A52. She looked, I couldn't tell, guilty? Maybe ashamed? Even a little nervous? … I started to worry. She probably has a boyfriend. Or she is quitting her job and I'll never see her again. Maybe she just wants to stop talking with me altogether… I couldn't wait any longer. I had to ask her… What was I thinking? Is it too early to ask? Does she even want to meet me? What if I messed it up and then we couldn't even have our daily conversation? …
>
> C51. "What? Where is she?" **Jason shouted**.
> C52. "How may I ask her out? Will she say yes?" **Jason wonders**.
>
> A53. "I will never see her again." **A voice from the bottom of my heart tells me so.**
> A54. **A million thoughts raced through my head in those few seconds:** Have I offended her? Is She laughing at me?

From A55 and A56, we further see that American participants employ direct statement not only when they are playing the character Jason's role, but also when acting as an interlocutor. Though Chinese participants play the role of interlocutor more often, I find they hardly wield direct statement when as an interlocutor. Instead, they would adopt indirect utterance of inner states. To illustrate, suppose they want to express the same meaning of A55, they would probably go, "That night, he practices in the mirror with the sign and worries about how he should present his question"—this is apparently an indirect presentation of the character's inner state. Such lack of direct statements in the interlocutor's role perspective explains why Chinese participants use more indirect utterances than their American counterparts. However, the small "outnumbering" of indirect utterances reminds us that Chinese participants have special outlets to unleash the character's inner feelings—remember the diary-writing and letter-writing frames? They take over the function of "direct utterance" in EL2.

> A55. That night, he practices in the mirror with the sign. How should he present his question? Confidently? Nonchalantly? Stoically?
> A56. Had she been fired? Should he look for her? She knew where he worked, would she look for him?

From my point of view, direct statement, direct quotation, and indirect utterance might exert respectively the highest, middle, and lowest effect of involvement as readers are easier to get moved by animated, lifelike, and lively presentations of inner states. Additionally, "secret confessions" in Chinese participants' diary-writing and letter-writing frames also manage to "move" readers in a special and refreshing way.

Figurative Languages, generally speaking, are of great help in boosting the effect of involvement: analogies provoke readers' imaginations or associations; hyperboles, phonological stressors, and exclamations amplifies the emotions; parallelisms, repetitions, and rhythms strengthen the mood; pacing strategies guide readers to closely follow the story line; onomatopoeia livens up the narration, etc. As discussed in the prior section, the usage rate of repetitions, parallelisms, and

rhythms are similar in both EL1 and EL2. While American participants excel slightly at applying ellipses and phonological devices like onomatopoeia and capital letter stressors, Chinese participants employ much more analogies, hyperboles, and exclamations. Therefore, on the whole, Chinese participants rely more on figurative languages to trigger readers' resonance. Nonetheless, whether those used merely for the sake of lyric, poetic, and aesthetic demonstrations are beneficial to the effect of involvement hinges on readers' perceptions.

Unlike Chinese participants' heavy reliance on figurative languages and infective telling, American participants devote more energy to showing concrete details and actions to attract readers. Their detailed descriptions and implicit narrations aim to invite readers to "experience" the story by themselves and thereby maximize the readers' engagement. However, no one can guarantee that this feature will necessarily achieve maximal effect of involvement since readers from different cultures might differ in their willingness to "experience" the story. For example, Chinese readers might judge widespread detailed recount of events as being verbose and wanting a focus or a high point. Indeed, I find my Chinese participants tend to "save" detailed action descriptions to the climax plot in order to "excite" their readers to the utmost merely at this particular point.

In conclusion, fruitful albeit overlapping findings have been reaped from micro-structure, stylistic, and interactional analyses. I feel necessary here to tease out and summarize my biggest findings before approaching the next section. Generally speaking, EL2 are telling-oriented and explicit in theme statement whereas EL1 are showing-oriented and implicit. EL2 create more fictional frames and interact with readers in an assertive interlocutor's tone while EL1 prefer to play the objective narrator's role and the lifelike character's role. EL2 are shorter in that they annotate a series of actions, offer vague descriptions, and center on the climax plot; however EL1 are specific about the settings and the character's background and subtle reactions. EL2 rely more on figurative languages such as analogies, exclamations, hyperboles, and parallelisms to attract readers' resonance and demonstrate artistic competence whereas EL1 engage their readers mainly by inviting them to assimilate with the characters and "experience" the story by their own. EL2 feature backdrop settings, generalizations, depersonalizations, and quotations while EL1 characterize integrated settings, story for its own sake, strategic pacing, and oralized stressors.

Data Interpretations: Why Different?

In view of the above summary of the differences between EL1 and EL2, I will discuss in this part possible causes of these differences by referencing the macro-contexts (social, cultural, historical, and educational) and the micro-contexts (immediate writing situation, audience, power relation, etc.) of my participants and their responses to my survey and follow-up interview questions. Before starting, I want to make three disclaimers. First, the pairs of differences I state in the following in no sense mean that each group has a fixed and unique feature exclusive to the other; instead, they only represent general group tendencies, or to say, the mostly salient or unmarked features of each group. Second, my focus on the interpretations of the differences does not mean to conceal similarities between the two cultures. It is just because a focus on differences can generate more pedagogy implications. Third, since stories I collected are very likely to be the crystallization of the tradition and modernization, the western and eastern, and the globalization and localization, any dichotomous single-factor explanation cannot suffice to account for the

differences. What I need is to complicate the explanations as far as I can and try to bring more to the table.

Telling-Oriented versus Showing-Oriented

It is shown from all three analytical perspectives that Chinese participants are telling-oriented whereas American participants are showing-oriented. Otherwise stated, this pair of difference is so paramount that it engenders different features in aspects of information arrangement, narrative styles, and interactive rhetoric. The following five pairs of difference are either causes or results of this most prominent difference.

(1) Explicit Theme versus Implicit Theme

The telling orientation is first manifested in Chinese participants' explicit statement of the story theme—most of them end their story with didactic exhortations and repeated ideas. Hinds might be correct that it is because modern Chinese are turning to be writer-responsible (67) so that they would directly tell readers the key ideas of the story. But the underlying reasons could be more intricate. Indrasuta also finds this telling orientation in Thai community. She attributes it to the reason that Thai people regard narratives as a vehicle for instruction and thus would emphasize the instructive ideas of the story in the coda; however, she claims, the main purpose of Americans' storytelling practices is to entertain and interest their audience; therefore the educational function of stories is not that important for them. Lee agrees with Indrasuta and applies her theory to account for Chinese students' habit of offering an explicit moral admonition in the coda. Fang challenges their claims by proving that both cultures value both the entertaining and instructional functions of narratives. My research findings echo one aspect of Fang's argument. In responding to my survey questions, both Chinese and American participants acknowledge that the priority of storytelling is to inspire people and to teach lessons. However, their perceptions diverge when it comes to "how to teach." A majority of my American participants caution against direct lecturing of certain ideas. They think stories are unique in that "they can show you a message rather than tell it to you directly," or to borrow another participant's word, "they allow the storyteller to express their views without being blatant about it and for the audience to interpret the storyteller's purpose in a way they like." My American participants even liken stories to "ideas clothed beautifully;" that warns us, if we directly preach the ideas, the beauty and specialty of stories will vanish. Thus, they stress the importance of "making readers experience emotions and a deep connection with the characters" and "producing vivid mental imagery" during storytelling so as to impress readers on a "beautifully clothed" idea. In comparison, few of my Chinese participants object to direct moralism. They do not mind inspiring or teaching readers simply by "telling people something valuable," "sharing ideas with others," or "conveying thoughts and reflections of the story to readers." From this lens, we see the difference concerning explicit and implicit theme stems not from different perceptions of the story function but from different means to perform the primary instructive function of storytelling. Chinese participants prefer to inspire readers by directly exchanging with them their ideas and reflections while American participants tend to enlighten readers by encouraging them to draw the lesson from the story through their own "experience."

To interrogate the principle of Chinese people's interpersonal communications, we might better

understand why Chinese participants "dare" to be explicit when telling stories. Chinese society has long featured a hierarchical system and its people are rather sensitive to even the subtle difference in their social statuses (Xue & Meng 91). In interpersonal communications, the relative status or the power relations between the participants exert a fundamental effect on the speaker's choice to be direct or indirect (Kirkpatrick & Xu 23). Such rhetorical practice is theorized by an ancient Chinese thinker *Gui Guzi*, the founder of the Zong Heng school, as the "*yin-yang*" theory of persuasion: persuasion from inferior to superior is *yin* and requires special effort while persuasion from above to below, which is *yang*, requires less effort and hence encourages straightforward speaking (Kirkpatrick & Xu 21-22). Bearing this principle in mind, Chinese people are rather vigilant about the uneven power in speech and thus inclined to be implicit; however, it does not mean they are indirect all the time. In situations where they think *yang* persuasion is appropriate, acceptable, or requisite, they would not bother to be explicit. My Chinese participants might have perceived storytelling as one of these *yang* situations. It is understandable in that the situation for storytelling usually conjures up an authoritative senior imparting living philosophies to youngsters through telling a story, or a teacher teaching students by sharing an inspirational anecdote, or just two intimate and equal friends exchanging daily experiences. My assumption is further confirmed by the finding that some Chinese participants even "scheme" to elevate the storyteller's position—either "commission" the storyteller as a love-advisor or "assign" him to keep diaries or write letters to friends—creating frames suitable for *yang*-style storytelling. Shortly put, Chinese participants are bold to tell their story explicitly and directly because they have less worry about offending their audience given the equal or top-down power relations in storytelling.

The prevalent moral preaching in Chinese classic texts might to some degree influence Chinese participants' theme-explicit style as well. According to Kirkpatrick and Xu, the ancient Chinese chronological history book *Zuo Zhuan*, which has long-standing influence on Chinese narrative style, "contains extensive narratives that demonstrate moral lessons and these narratives are interspersed with participants' speeches that discuss proper conduct. Judgments on individuals or events are supplied by a third person, usually Confucius" (20). From my preliminary observation of the narratives in *Zuo Zhuan*, *Guo Yu*, *Zhan Guo Ce*, *Shi Ji*, and a selective collection of ancient narrative works *Gu Wen Guan Zhi*, the judgments from a third person often appear at the end of the stories in service to advocating certain morals or conducts. Though no one is sure if the influence of these classic narratives on contemporary students is still evident, we at least witness some transmission of the didactic narrative style and the use of a theme-explicit coda.

Writing guidance in Chinese composition textbooks could be another influential factor. As Kirpatrick and Xu reveal, the notion that "theme is the soul of writing" is overwhelmingly emphasized in Chinese writing textbooks (195); therefore, as an easy way to highlight the theme, explicit reiterations of theme in the coda are prevailing. Further, Chinese writing textbooks attach great importance to the ending of essays. The closing, or the "*heju,*" is required to be convincing (Kirkpatrick 256), just like "leopard's tail" or "some deep pond or overflowing river" leaving readers "pondering over the meaning" (Kirkpatrick 230). This guidance is probably a subconscious force driving Chinese participants to simply fill their coda with inspirational remarks, repeated ideas, or avowals of ideology that they think are powerful and convincing.

Gaokao, the college entrance examination in China, for sure is another factor shaping Chinese

participants' theme-explicit narrative style. Since almost all my Chinese participants had to undergo this national standardized test, we have no reason to neglect the writing requirements of *Gaokao*, which might have wielded a huge influence on students' writing style if considering the nation-wide test-oriented educational system in China. In spite of slight regional discrepancies, *Gaokao* normally requires all examinees to write a more-than-800-words essay in whatever genre within one hour in response to a specific topic. When preparing students for this test, teachers usually encourage students to write a mix of narrative and argumentative essay in that it is easier for them to stick to a central theme, demonstrate diversified means of expression, and meet the word count request. As a result, a narration plus some reflective comments or a persuasion with narrations as its evidence become the most common writing formats in *Gaokao.* Such combination of narrative and argumentative writing determines that students' narrations are no longer "pure narrations;" in other words, they are prone to add personal opinions or interpretations to their stories so as to show what lessons they draw from the story, and needless to say, these "lessons" should facilitate presenting the theme or meaning of their narrations. From this viewpoint, Chinese participants who are still in the habit of making arguments and reflections in their narrations may have not freed themselves from the bondage of *Gaokao*.

Participants' different intuitive perception of the writing task I assigned to them might also influence their outputs. Along with the influence of *Gaokao*—writing less "pure" reflective-style narrations, Chinese participants seem liable to translate my writing assignment into a post-viewing retelling and reflection task, "outlining" the story and then focusing on expressing personal thoughts. By contrast, American participants appear to simply take the writing task as a recount of a story, wherein they seldom directly convey their own reflections. My assumption here is inspired by Chang and McCabe's finding that American children utter twice more reflective comments than Taiwanese children (50). That is to say, if my American participants perceived the writing task as a reflection activity, they would have produced more personal comments in that they were encouraged since childhood to express personal opinions and feelings. Their non-doing suggests they do not see this writing task as for communicating self-reflections. Moreover, Chang and McCabe's research reminds us that even though inserting comments to stories is common among American children, once they grow up, they would no longer follow this suit but rather deem explicit reflective narrations as "childish." This just explains why American participants take pride in being implicit in their narratives.

(2) Action/Emotion Interpretation versus Action/Emotion Showing

Chinese participants' orientation to telling is also reflected in their interpretations of the storyline. Rather than providing an objective account of the characters' actions, they tend to summarize what have happened and interpret at length how the characters, or even they themselves, feel about the happenings. Of course, out of the demand of theme assertion, Chinese participants have to summarize plots to spare room for stressing the main ideas and promoting their reflections, but there are some other reasons behind this orientation.

First, Chinese participants value the functions of telling over those of showing. Though I mentioned that both Chinese and American participants regard instructive function as the primary function of storytelling, a larger number of American participants simultaneously emphasize the entertaining function of storytelling. They are more willing to combine "education"

with relaxing "recreation." A majority of them maintain that stories are meant to share experiences and feelings, to connect readers with the characters, to "make others feel some sort of emotions," and thus "allow them to escape the limits of their own lives and learn new things from other people's experience." Hence, in pursuit of these "entertaining" and "empathy" effects, American participants think highly of "showing" as it engages readers to actively "experience" and "feel" the event and meanwhile preserves the recreational function of their story. Similarly, to safeguard the "entertaining" and "empathy" effects, they would avoid any solemn "lecturing" that might break the narrative flow, undermine the "realness" of the story, and spoil readers' interest in assimilating with the character. On the contrary, Chinese participants are less cautious about the shortcomings of "telling" or "lecturing." What they concern most about is how to make full use of the telling space to show off their erudition (ideas, thoughts, propositions, memorizations of classic expressions, etc.), artistic ability, and literary competence, which are what they deem the pivotal purposes of writing more important than the "entertaining" purpose (Fu & Townsend 129). In sum, different writing purposes render different judgments on the effect of telling and showing and lead the two groups to pick different orientations.

Second, the time-honored narrative tradition might have not retired from the stage entirely. Lu compares Homeric poems and *Shi Jing* (*The Book of Odes*, a collection of songs and poems in China's Zhou Dynasty) and finds that, "the ancient Greeks seemed to place value more on overt actions of characters through an elaborate coverage of events, while the ancient Chinese appeared to place more emphasis on internal feelings expressed in the moment or in episodic fashion" (101). The agreement between Lu's findings and mine more or less implies that the Greek narrative feature might still cast a light on American participants' narrative writings while Chinese participants may just have followed their traditional narrative style, focusing on expressing and interpreting feelings rather than describing actions.

Third, the writing caveat "*Xiang Lue De Dang"* ("stressing and ignoring" or "sifting of information"), which has been dinned to Chinese students by their teachers and parents could have curbed Chinese participants from performing extensive "showing." On one hand, teachers always exhort students to distinguish core events from subordinate ones before deciding on where their demonstration focus should be. The differentiation method usually acts up to what Zhang Weidong a Chinese literature scholar calls the "sifting system." According to Zhang, traditional Chinese narrations are "atypical," or in my translation "non-pure"—events or "facts" are strictly "sifted" and only those that can serve the theme are expected to be kept. Under the influence of this teaching and tradition, students form the idea that only those substantial events that serve the theme deserve stressing whereas other peripheral ones just need summaries. Indeed, my Chinese participants devote thick action descriptions to the climax plot (which they perceive as the core event) but summarize most subordinate plots. In contrast, American participants attach no less attention to auxiliary plots as long as they sound "interesting" or "appealing" to readers, no matter if they are less relevant to the theme. On the other hand, Chinese parents always educate their children to "hit the point," grasp the key pulse of the story, and avoid ostentation and irrelevant narration whenever they are communicating a story to others. Such "silencing" parenting is aimed to cultivate children's proper behavior in public and foster their humility and respect for other people's time during interpersonal communications. Perhaps, it is because of this bringing-up that my Chinese participants have formed the habit to "quicken" their plot narration while reducing "showing" strategies. In case you would ask why Chinese

participants do not shorten their "telling" or "lecturing" under this bringing-up, I should note that the silencing parenting might pose more influence on children's "pure narrations" than on the lecturing-loaded "reflective narrations" since what children engage in at their young age are mainly "pure narrations" but "reflective narrations." That is to say, the telling-oriented theme-preaching style might develop later owing to schooling rather than parenting.

Lastly, participants' action verb repertoire and writing motivation are factors that cannot be overlooked. As reported by Fang, when writing stories in Chinese, Chinese students are also good at performing vivid motion descriptions to dramatize their stories. Therefore, the lack of action verbs in EL2 may result from students' limited L2 lexical resources. I agree on this point but would doubt a small L2 vocabulary base is a determinative factor for choosing telling over showing. In fact, the usage rate of action verbs in my CL1 data is still lower than that in EL1 though it is a bit higher than that in EL2. This indicates that even if Chinese students master abundant action verbs, they still prefer "telling." Furthermore, writing motivation also plays an important role in the choice between telling and showing. This is best reflected in American participants' writings: when participants are eager to write longer, they would allot more time for "showing;" but when they show little interest in the project, they write shorter with plenty of "summaries."

(3) Vagueness versus Concreteness

A direct result of telling and showing is vagueness and concreteness respectively. For American participants, one ideal approach to showing is to make the settings, the scenes, and the characters' actions, facial expressions, and feelings as "real" as possible; therefore, they are more sensitive to tastes, colors, sounds, and any other concrete details in the story. They believe the more real they portray the scene, the easier their readers will get involved to "experience" their story. However, due to Chinese participants' telling orientation and their major concern on conveying ideas to readers, concrete details are not significantly important for them. Several Chinese participants' responses to my follow-up interview suggest they might seek to create some effect on readers via productive vagueness. For example, the enigmatic background of the character may provoke readers' curiosity and association to any other figure they know in real life. The blurred settings of the story invite readers to fill them up by their own imaginations. From this lens, storytelling for Chinese people is more like a collaborative work between the writer and the reader while American writers may take on more responsibility.

Another quick guess is that, as a result of different worldview, philosophy tradition, and thinking pattern, Americans might have got used to seeking certitude and definitive precision whereas Chinese are more tolerant to ambiguity and vagueness. In accordance to Hall and Ames, western philosophers have long privileged a single-ordered world wherein all entities are arranged, defined, and specified; hence they disparage chaos, formlessness, ambiguity, confusion, or "yawning gap" (10). However, Chinese ancient thinkers admired an ad hoc, contingent and vague framework for it allowed more imaginative construal (Hall & Ames 264). In view of this, it is be possible that the cultural-specific thinking tradition and value system have rendered participants' different attitudes toward concreteness and vagueness in writing narratives.

Provided that concrete descriptions are not uncommon in Chinese well-known fictions, I infer

the lack of concreteness in EL2 could be attributed to a lack of instructions on creative writing or literary writing to Chinese participants. Writing instruction in China is notoriously test-oriented. Before going to colleges, Chinese students' knowledge about writing is at best the rules and requirements of *Gaokao.* When they enter college, even worse, Chinese writing instruction ceases altogether and all the writing instructions they receive are attempted to prepare them for all types of English proficiency tests. This phenomenon is also reported in Kirkpatrick and Xu's book. Except for a few Chinese majors, literary writing is never given enough attention to in Chinese schools. Thus, even though concrete descriptions are also normal in Chinese literature, Chinese students are rarely trained to apply them in their short narrative writings.

(4) Diversified and Creative Frames versus Uniform and Commonplace Frames

This pair of difference is another result of the divergent telling and showing orientation. As American participants are concerned about how to objectively show the plot, the third-person-perspective storyteller frame best satisfies their demand. Besides, their strategy of implanting direct utterances of the characters' inner state into the storyteller frame prevents their story from lacking outlets for the characters' voice. The situation is quite opposite as for Chinese participants. The low use of direct statements and the desire to interpret and preach within the storyteller frame make them feel their story sounds dull; therefore they would seek new frames beneficial to combining their telling and the characters' voice. Letters and diaries, which are perfect venues for both self-reflections (preaching) and confessions (characters' voice), meet Chinese participants' demand and hence are frequently adopted.

Now, you might question, isn't the letter-writing or diary-writing frame equivalent to the first-person-perspective Jason's frame? Not necessarily. For one thing, the letter-writing and diary-writing frames are more complex than the Jason's frame. They could either take the perspective of Jason or Stacey, or even integrate both in one text. For another thing, the degree of the "confession" is not the same. It is true that Chinese participants employ relatively more direct statements when they play Jason's role, but the usage rate is still much lower than that in EL1 and that when they apply the letter-writing or diary-writing frame. The reason for American participants using more direct statements in Jason's frame might be that it is easier for them to connect "deeper" with Jason since the film is starred by a western-look man and situated in a western society. Most importantly, it is because their culture encourages them to express their personal feelings. In Chinese culture, however, directly uttering how "I" feel is not as welcome as it is in the West. In accordance to Dirk Bodde, "the great religions of China all deemphasize the importance of the individual. Confucianism subordinates the individual to the group; Taoism subordinates the group to Nature; Buddhism denies that the self exists. And the new belief system, Marxism, rejects and denounces 'bourgeois individualism'" (Matalene 794). From this angle, the suppression of expressing individual feelings could be one reason for Chinese participants' low use of direct statements in Jason's frame. However, once they are provided with a private outlet for venting inner feelings, like writing diaries or letters, the case is different—they are more relaxed and freer to express how they feel. Thus, letter-writing and diary-writing frames generate "deeper" confession than the Jason's frame.

Besides letter-writing and diary-writing frames, there are some other innovative frames that sketch out unconventional structures and invite special perspectives for narration. Chinese

participants' such desire to seek uniqueness may result from the cut-throat competition in *Gaokao*. Amid hundreds and thousands of exam takers, Chinese students usually bet on newfangled structures or inventive perspectives to stand out and to attract the judges' appreciation. In addition, the invention of diversified narrative frames also owes to the flexibility of the narrative genre and to Chinese writing education's openness to different structures. First, compared to argumentative essays, which are dominated by five-paragraph persuasion, narrative essays lend more space for various means of expressions. Second, just as Kirkpatrick and Xu comment, unlike English writing instruction's emphasis on the rigid format, Chinese writing instruction does not require students to follow specific structures but would rather encourage them to be inventive and original (197). It is based on all these factors that Chinese participants create varied narrative frames.

(5) Assertive Interlocutor Tone versus Restrained Narrator Tone

One purpose of telling is to interact with readers; therefore EL2 take the interlocutor tone more often. Moreover, conforming to Jigang Cai, a famous Chinese contrastive rhetorician's judgment, when addressing readers, EL2 are more assertive and flamboyant while EL1 sound calmer and restrained (337). EL1 stick to the actual settings and happenings and narrate in an objective and rational tone whereas EL2 apply many a hyperboles, exclamations, fantasies, and intensified adjectives, and converse with readers from story about story to coda through depersonalizations, generalizations, quotations and meaning repetitions. Below are further reflections on why Chinese participants are inclined to interact with, "convince," and infect their readers by using corresponding strategies.

①. Interact with the Reader: Interlocutor Tone and Depersonalizations

As I have mentioned, American participants take most of the responsibility in presenting the story as real as possible and then leave their readers to "experience" the story individually. In contrast, Chinese participants collaborate with their readers to interpret the story all along. That they raise inspirational questions and make clear the storytelling context and purpose in the "story about story" not only arouses readers' expectation but also establish their storytelling "ethos." They play an interlocutor's tone and use second person singulars (depersonalizations) as a gesture to invite readers to join their "reflection." Koven deciphers this interlocutor tone in a French-Portuguese bilingual's French narrative as "aggressive." I would caution such interpretation on Chinese participants' doing so. After all, their self-reflective argumentations are not aimed to "persuade" or "win over" readers but just to strike a chord in readers' heart.

However, admittedly, Chinese participants' moral exhortations or imperative suggestions in the coda may smack of an authoritative tone. But they are not so much meant to be "authoritative" as to be "solicitous." The "authoritative" connotation may stem from the traditional "top-down" *yang* rhetoric where speakers hold overbearing power over listeners. It may, according to Kirkpatrick and Xu, have been reinforced during China's Cultural Revolution when every Chinese citizen was required to recite the *yang*-style or cultural-revolutionary-style slogans in Chairman Mao's *Little Red Book*. However, no matter how influential the authoritative-toned *yang*-rhetoric could be, I think what my contemporary Chinese participants "inherit" from the tradition is merely the form but not the original "authoritative" connotation of the *yang* rhetoric.

Said another way, there might be new meanings (i.e., showing solicitude to readers) in the old authoritative-toned form in my Chinese participants' admonitory coda.

②. "Convince" the Reader: Generalizations and Well-Known Quotations

Again, the "convince" here does not mean to "persuade," or to "win over." In Chinese culture, the ultimate goal of argumentation is to seek harmony or common grounds. Hence the seemingly persuasive acts in Chinese participants' narratives are actually attempted to draw readers' resonance and thereby carry forward the collaboration between the writer and the readers in interpreting the story.

By the same token, as Chinese people admire and value harmony and consensus, classic texts, commonplace empirical laws of human nature, popular sayings and worldviews that the whole community agrees upon are of great help to buttress one's argument and show off one's competence and erudition (Matalene 798; Kirkpatrick & Xu 106). Therefore, for my Chinese participants, the widely accepted quotations and generalizations are among the best devices to earn readers' approbation and consonance. They have little awareness that their English readers who favor logic reasoning may achieve no resonance from these "unjustified" quotations and generalizations.

③. Infect the Reader: Exclamations, Hyperboles, and Fantasies

Why EL2 sound more flamboyant, excitable, and unreal? First of all, as discussed, showing and realness is not a priority for Chinese participants. Non-realness and vagueness instead help them stimulate readers' imagination. According to Lu, Daoist thinkers *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* are successful practitioners of this rhetoric—They have successfully "awakened" readers by the use of enigmatic, imaginative, and exaggerating words in several of their classic narrative texts (Lu 228-250). Zhang also asserts that one of the purposes of "sifting" out real events is to make way for fantasies and imaginations that seem attractive to Chinese readers.

Second, as Chang and McCabe put, English is an "intonation language" while Chinese is a "tone language" (47). In intonation languages, the stress of sentences is indicated by the rise of pitches in view of the whole sentence; however, in tone languages, individual word has a fixed meaning-related pitch and thus the stress of sentences entails other devices beyond the sentence to indicate such as the exclamation mark. This reliance on exclamation marks further makes Chinese participants' narratives sound excitable.

Furthermore, fomenting audience's affections and emotions is a well-established rhetorical tradition in Chinese people's interpersonal communications. In the light of Garrett's study, ancient Chinese rhetors seldom spoke to a large body of audience; what they face was usually one single audience with superior power. In this case, "the situational, psychological, and interpersonal factors often had much more bearing on success than the logical validity of the inferences" (Garrett 299). Thus, with no need to convince audience with rigorous logical reasoning, Chinese rhetors placed more effort on infecting the audience's moods and feelings. Needless to say, exclamations, hyperboles, and fantasies are just effective tools supporting this effort. Though it has been centuries and the communicative paradigm in China may have

undergone some changes, it is possible this tradition is still influencing my Chinese participants.

Backdrop Setting versus Integrated Setting

The finding that American participants tend to interweave settings with characters, actions, and events while Chinese participants like to isolate them resonates with Indrasuta's findings about American and Thai narrative styles. Indrasuta explains this pair of difference by arguing that Thai students are highly influenced by Buddhism creed—which warns people against having desire to control over events in their lives—so that they would segregate the divinely pre-determined settings. In contrast, Americans hardly doubt they are in charge of their own life; therefore they are fearless to "plan plot, setting, scene and theme in terms of cause and effect, and action and reaction" (Indrasuta 221). Though it is hard to say that Buddhism has the same impact on Chinese students, Indrasuta does inspire us that the native Daoist notion of "go with the flow of the nature" could have checked Chinese participants from "intervening" the "nature" settings too much.

The influence of Chinese and English linguistic system could be a stronger explanation. As Berman and Slobin inform us, form, function, and rhetorical style cannot be separated. Linguistic forms usually subconsciously guide the channel of our attention, change the way we reach a function, and influence our rhetorical patterns. According to Berman and Slobin's study, English is a "satellite-framed language," whose action verbs often conflate satellite information like time, manner, direction, and cause. "Bare verbs" are rare in English; thus it is easier for American participants to fuse the setting information into the actions or events. However, for "verb-framed language," like Chinese, bare-bone verbs are prominent and one verb usually conveys only one core information. Consequently, the information in Chinese narratives is more "scattered" and Chinese narrators have to provide more separate "stage-setting" (Berman and Slobin's term) or "backdrop-setting" (Indrasuta's term) information. In view of my EL2 data, this linguistic form might have influenced Chinese participants' rhetorical preference, which is further "transferred" to their L2 writing. Moreover, in line with Flynn's Principal Branching Direction theory, English is a right-branching language while Chinese is left-branching (Cai 312). As a result, Chinese participants are more used to arranging the backdrop-setting information like time and place to the initial part of a sentence. The above two factors together explain why we see a lot of left-positioned "One day," "Two days after," "On the subway,"—the so-called "backdrop-setting"—in EL2 and CL1.

Kirkpatrick and Xu provide us with another explanation. The typical Chinese sentence structure follows a topic-comment pattern. Topics in such topic-prominent language oftentimes address "what the sentence is about" but may fulfill other functions such as to "set a spatial, temporal or individual framework within which the main predication holds" (Chafe, qtd. in Kirkpatrick and Xu 109). In light of this, the left-positioned backdrop setting could be taken as a topic, which sets a frame wherein an individual event is depicted. By such, it functions to hint readers that a shift of focus or event is about to happen. It is perhaps because of their awareness of this special function of the backdrop setting that Chinese participants are willing to transfer their L1 rhetorical preference of backdrop setting to their L2 writing.

Figurative Languages

(1) Analogies (Metaphors and Similes)

Chinese participants use more than twice as many analogies as American participants do. A close look further reveals that Chinese participants' analogies perform multiple functions. First, they serve to "make a point"—to borrow Lu's words when he is explaining Confucius's use of metaphors—in the writers' interpretation or "telling" part. Due to Chinese people's analogical or correlative thinking pattern, as Lu introduces, analogies in China "are not simply treated as rhetorical devices, but as logical arguments in and of themselves, although relatively indirect" (168). That is to say, analogies in Chinese participants' "telling" in their stories can help convince readers on certain ideas or beliefs.

Second, analogies in EL2 also contribute to furthering explanations and filling gaps in Chinese participants' L2 vocabularies (Silva 215). *Hui Shi*, a representative thinker of China's School of Ming, first conceptualized the use of metaphors as "using what people know to convey and explain what people do not know" (Lu 140). This definition, though overly simplistic, happens to reflect the writing situation of Chinese participants—forming metaphors or similes with relatively limited L2 resource in order to vividly describe and explain the characters' complicated inner feelings and actions. When answering my survey questions, 17 Chinese participants think they are not good at English writing, especially as to describing and explaining emotions in English. The reason is two-fold. First, under the illusion that one best way to demonstrate literary competence is through using set phrases and quotable expressions, Chinese students always feel they have not read much classic English literature or memorized adequate quotable English phrases and expressions and so writing English is like "fighting without good weapons" or "cutting beef with dull knife" (Fu & Townsend 130). Second, unlike writing in Chinese, where they can employ four-character set phrases to describe feelings concisely, profoundly, and vividly (Fu & Townsend 130), they now find no English equivalent "four-character set phrases" and only hold in hand limited L2 vocabularies and expressions. However, fortunately, as half of my Chinese participants report in the follow-up interview, the feeling of inadequacy declines when they manage to portray and explain the emotions through "vivid" analogies constructed by simple English vocabularies. From this view, analogies do help Chinese participants convey meanings in ways that uplift their confidence in L2 writing.

The third function of analogies is to boost artistic effects. Though Lu acknowledges the argumentative power of analogies, he insists analogies in Chinese texts are more like "a happy marriage between artistic expressions and rational thinking" (Lu 168). The artistic function is the essence of analogies and in truth it is the most obvious one in Chinese participants' writings.

(2) Lyric and Poetic Expressions (Parallelisms, Rhythms, and Repetitions)

Apart from analogies, parallelisms, rhythms, and repetitions are also frequently applied to create artistic, lyric, and poetic effect in Chinese participants' narratives. Why? The first reason could be, as Fu and Townsend contend, Chinese writers treat writing as a platform "to show mastery of the established forms, to demonstrate knowledge of literary tradition, and, most important, to display artistic ability" (Fu & Townsend 129). Some ancient Chinese literati even saw the entire

narrative text as a service to lyric (Dong 1-19). Although my Chinese participants have not gone that far, it seems they still hold the concept that lyric and poetic expressions can embellish their story and make their narrative sound more like a "good writing."

In the second place, there have long been two competing writing styles—*pian wen* and *gu wen*—in Chinese literature (Kirkpatrick & Xu 31-41). *Pian wen* refers to florid and verbose parallel prose which privileges form over content. *Gu wen,* on the contrary, admires a simple, plain, and succinct style and values content over form. In spite of the *Gu Wen* Movement in Southern Song dynasty and the promotion of simple vernacular/*baihua* Chinese in the early 20th Century, Chinese writers seem more willing to seek a balance between these two styles and thus the long-lasting *pian wen* style may still have some influence on Chinese participants' writings.

CHAPTER FIVE: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on previous analyses and interpretations of the differences between Chinese and American participants' narrative rhetoric, this chapter aims to put forward suggestions for training multilingual writers and readers (teachers)—with a pilot study of formulating a lesson plan for students with similar backgrounds as my Chinese participants—so as to construct a relatively productive cross-cultural communication environment.

Cultivating Multilingual Writers

EFL writing instruction has long pressured EFL students to write in accordance to L2 standard, the time is ripe to seek an alternative pedagogy that does not sacrifice EFL students' L1 rhetoric but take it as a resource to L2 writing. The goal should be to cultivate not only competent L2 writers but also creative multilingual writers who can exploit the L2 standard to their advantage by opening up space for their creation—either to strategically insert their L1 accent or invent a third style beyond their L1 and L2. My discussions below will center on approaches to teaching my Chinese high-level EFL participants to write short creative fictional stories in English.

Design Writing Task

As shown in the previous chapter, students' writing motivations will influence their narrative rhetoric; thus a good narrative writing task should be one that can stimulate students' imaginations and trigger their interests in narrating a story. Pictures, short films, and songs are good writing elicitors, and teachers can also organize a multi-cultural story sharing activity before asking students to create their own story. When clarifying the writing task in a formal writing prompt, teachers should remind students to think about the purpose and the context of their storytelling, and most importantly, what audience their stories are targeted to—whether they are Chinese English readers or American English readers? Are the American English readers conservative or open-minded to different styles?

Pre-Writing Activities

Instead of directly telling students the differences between Chinese and English narrative styles, teachers could select representative Chinese and English stories for students to read, discover, and discuss their different features. Provided with an analysis sample, students could then be encouraged to engage in comparative rhetorical analysis, interrogating social, cultural, and historical factors that lead to the differences. Saville-Troike and Johnson (243) advocate this method as the best learning procedure for EFL students on the ground that students undergoing this process will better understand and attain a firm impression on the conventions of both culture's narrative writings. Moreover, being familiar with each culture's narrative conventions is a foremost and indispensable step toward creatively merging L1 and L2 narrative strengths.

In the same vein, teachers could assign students to communicate their rough ideas of their story to one or two of their targeted audiences or reference corpus databases and thereby infer potential readers' group expectations and tolerance to different rhetorical styles. With the gathered information and their knowledge about L1 and L2 narrative norms, students can start

preparing for writing: planning on narrative structure, sequence, and role perspective and making up the gap between their preferred rhetoric and the readers' expectations. For instance, if their readers expect to see more action descriptions, they could brainstorm or search in dictionaries a list of to-be-used action verbs. For another example, if integrated settings, onomatopoeias, oral phrases, non-subject sentences, ellipses, direct utterances of the characters' inner states, subtle descriptions of the tastes, colors, and sounds in the settings and the characters' facial expressions are preferred in the readers' culture, EFL students could accumulate and practice such expressions in advance. Though this preparation work may not all end up in actual writings, students may feel "safer" and more confident in L2 writing at the starting point. In brief, this preparatory stage aims to make students competent in both L1 and L2 narrative writing though more effort needs to be put on the L2 writing.

Teacher-Guided Writing

When students are writing the first draft of their story in class, teachers could remind students now and then to remember their readers' expectations and envision their reactions but meanwhile not forget to negotiate the tension between their home and target rhetoric with an effort to strategically inserting L1 features within the L2 writing standard. Based on my research findings, possible effective coping strategies Chinese EFL students could use are as follows:

First, Chinese EFL students can keep their advantage in creating different identities and narrative frames for the storyteller but meanwhile seek a way to embed the context of storytelling into the characters' background scene, reducing direct addressing to readers but taking the narrator's tone instead. In brief, they can try to integrate the "story about story" with "background information" in ways just like how one of the American participants employs the listener-to-Jason frame (refer to excerpt A1 in the previous chapter). In this newly integrated narrative component, students can learn to strike a balance between summarizing and showing the storyteller's and the characters' background status. Such integrated strategy can also be applied to deal with the "coda." Chinese students who are tempted to preach general living philosophies in the coda can explore how to implant their arguments into the plot and into the characters' "mouth" so as to diminish the degree of explicitness and assertiveness. To better facilitate students' "integration" practice here, teachers could show students the first and final drafts of prior year students' writings and let them observe and discuss how the integration shift was actually made from the first draft to the final draft.

Second, Chinese EFL students can try to balance their use of backdrop settings and integrated settings, preventing both from being overly used and giving full play to the each one's special functions. Such pursuit of moderation and quality is also of significant importance to the showing and telling, to the vagueness and concreteness, to the calmness and excitement, and to the three role perspectives. In real practice, teachers could ask students to indicate their use of these pairs of features in continuums as a way constantly remind them of seeking a balance between the opposite features. In all, students are expected to have the ability to combine both cultures' rhetorical strengths into their writing.

Third, proper amount of figurative languages can still be used to lubricate students' L2 expressions but there are some caveats students need to bear in mind: 1) metaphors and similes

are supposed to be fresh and original. Cliché analogies should be avoided or repurposed; 2) figurative devices along with tangential information merely for the sake of demonstrating artistic, poetic, and lyric expressions should not be overused. As for the use of quotations, idioms, proverbs, or cultural symbolic actions, students must be more careful. Canagajarah's suggestion of using footnotes to explain their connotations and provenances is undoubtedly advisable (610) and students can explore even more devices to tactically introduce these new perspectives to their readers. When applying fantasies and hyperboles, students can strive to situate most of them in the real world scenes in order to gain more understanding and resonance from their readers without compromising their preference of using this technique. Further, exclamations could emerge in forms such as capital letter stressors or elongators other than the mere exclamation marks.

Peer Review or Story Sharing

After students finish their first draft, teachers could carry out all kinds of activities for students to share their stories and gain feedbacks from others. The most common way is to let students exchange their story with one or two peers. During the peer review, readers should inform the writer which part of the story confuses them most and which interests and engages them most. Teachers could also design an evaluation form for readers to check the writers' narrative macro- and micro-structure, style, and effect of involvement. With the assistance of the evaluation form, students in each peer review group can compare their stories and discuss how to improve the writing concerning specific aspects. To liven up the peer review, storytelling competitions or role-play activities could be held. Students select, speak out, or act out one story in their group in teamwork and then the rest of the class read the selected story, compare it to the performance, and come up with suggestions for ameliorating the writing in the form of class discussion under the teacher's guidance. In this reciprocal evaluation process, students not only enhance their judgment or knowledge of good narrative writing but also gather plural feedbacks for further revising their story.

Revise and Edit

With enough feedbacks from peers and the teacher, students can start revising the organization, content, and rhetoric of their story. Following this step is the editing of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and format. As EFL students have long been used to conflating these two processes, teachers have the responsibility to explain to them the differences between revision and editing and the benefit of following this sequence (editing as a last step avoids repeated and futile editing because of the alteration of the content or rhetoric). More important, distinguishing revision from editing can help unravel EFL students' entrenched misconception that rhetorical issues are equal to linguistic issues and thus uplift their confidence in their rhetorical competence in L2 writing.

Cultivating Multilingual Readers/Teachers

In assessing EFL students' writings, most EFL teachers used to privilege the English standard and reject students' "alien" expressions and foreign rhetoric. However, as the call for multilingual writers is reverberating louder and the actual transformation requires collaboration between students and teachers (Fu & Townsend 132), an increasing number of EFL teachers are

urged to develop a tolerant and appreciative attitude toward non-English rhetoric. Any one who could be called a qualified multilingual reader/teacher should dare to question their valued standard and stay curious about EFL student's motivation for using unusual expressions (Canagajarah 610). In specific, whenever they find something difficult to understand in students' writings, they can ask students why they use a certain unique expression before giving any authoritative judgments or modification suggestions. To better navigate when they need to negotiate with students, EFL teachers had better engage in contrastive or comparative rhetoric research or at least constantly update their knowledge about the differences between English and any other culture's rhetoric. When enquiring students about their writing motivation, teachers can discuss with them how to better incorporate their L1 rhetoric into L2 writing instead of persuading them to abandon their foreign accent altogether or conniving all of their uncritical interpositions of L1 expressions.

Both objectives of cultivating multilingual writers and readers entail a long-term process and the realization of these goals demands collaborative efforts from scholars and educators, students and teachers, writers and readers all across the world. Though my pedagogical suggestions here are preliminary, I believe every small step will contribute to a big leap in the future.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

In retrospect, this study so far has answered my three research questions and achieved my anticipated objectives. Strictly following my methodology—analyzing twenty Chinese and twenty American participants' film retellings from the perspectives of micro-structure, style, and interactional effect, I find both similarities and differences regarding these two cultures' narrative rhetorics. My examinations on the differences further help me formulate pedagogical suggestions for multilingual writing in today's cross-cultural context.

Primary findings are worth to be recapitulated herein. Through the lens of narrative structure, I find both groups share a macro-structure but differ in arranging information to each narrative component. Chinese participants show a slight tendency to offer a context of the storytelling while American participants starts their narration immediately. Chinese participants summarize the background information of the character, interpret plot actions by explicating characters' emotions except for the climax plot, and preach philosophies in the coda whereas American participants depict the characters' background specifically, attend to showing the characters' real actions, and end their story in the resolution plot without a coda. These findings overall reflect that Chinese participants are telling-oriented and explicit in theme whereas American participants are action-oriented and implicit. Through stylistic analysis, Chinese participants are found keen on applying backdrop setting, explicit theme, analogies, hyperboles, exclamations, and vague and general descriptions while American participants are fond of integrated settings, implicit theme, ellipsis, onomatopoeia, concrete showing, and subtle descriptions. From the perspective of interactional effect, Chinese participants prefer to play the interlocutor's role, using depersonalizations to interact with readers and invite them to join in their interpretations and reflections on the story, "convincing" readers with generalizations and quotations, and infecting readers by virtue of taking an assertive tone and using exclamations, hyperboles, and fantasies. For better telling and to demonstrate their literary ability, they create diversified fictional identities or frames and utilize artistic, poetic, and lyric figurative languages such as analogies, parallelisms, and repetitions. By contrast, American participants tend to take the narrator's role or sketch out a storyteller frame, objectively showing the settings, the events, and the character's reactions in order to let readers connect to the characters and "experience" the story by their own. They also play the characters' role frequently, directly articulating the characters' inner states, and employ onomatopoeia, phonological stressors and oralized exclamations to invigorate their story.

When interrogating factors that might result in the differences, I take into account the influence from the past (rhetorical and communicative traditions, classic works, traditional writing instructions, influential ancient schools of thought) and the present (contemporary writing textbooks, writing instructions, and tests like *Gaokao,* new meanings in old forms), the local (local linguistic pattern and thinking logic, cultural specific perception of the purpose of writing, individualism and collectivism) and the global (Chinese participants' L2 competence and accommodating strategies in L2 writing,), the textual (the cause and effect of certain rhetorical preferences) and the contextual (perception of the writing task, writing motivation, individual perception of the purpose of storytelling, power relations, competitive social environment, parenting and schooling) so as to complicate the interpretations and paint a larger picture for

readers from other cultures to understand Chinese participants' narrative rhetoric.

With a more profound understanding of Chinese EFL students' writing preferences, I suggest EFL teachers do not always require Chinese EFL students to compromise or sacrifice their L1 accent in L2 writing; rather, they should teach them how to incorporate L1 and L2 rhetoric and cultivate them to be a successful multilingual writer who is not only familiar with their L1 and L2 rhetorical conventions but can make full use of both to produce a more creative story.

Limitations and Future Work

Limitations are unavoidable yet play productive roles in pointing out the need for future work. A fundamental limitation of my study is about the data elicitor. Just as Chafe (xvii) points out, film retelling cannot avoid the influence by the filmmaker. Therefore, my participants' retellings of the film story may not reflect their authentic narrative style. Personal narratives could overcome this problem but the content usually varies from person to person. Future work could explore a way to control the content of personal narratives and make them comparable data. For example, researchers can organize an impressive event (i.e., charity work, bungee jumping, hiking, etc.) for all participants to participate and then ask them to narrate their own experience in the event.

Second, due to time and energy constraint, I was not able to work on a larger database. The only forty narrative texts analyzed here are far from representative of the similarities and differences between English and Chinese narrative styles. Also, as I am the only person doing all the data collection, coding, and analysis work, deviations may have happened here or there. Future work is expected to take more writing samples into research and improve the quality of data analysis.

Third, my interpretations of the differences can be further deepened. Horizontally, I could incorporate more dimensions and perspectives into the interpretations of any cultural-specific rhetorical feature. Vertically, I had better examine closer Chinese classic narrative texts like *Zuo Zhuan, Guo Yu, Gu Wen Guan Zhi,* or *Shiji* for a better understanding of Chinese narrative tradition. Besides, contemporary Chinese narrative writing instructions, textbooks, and assessments merit deeper interrogation. In additions, findings from more Chinese literature or linguistic scholars could be referenced for interpretation and global and local influences on EFL students' writing demand a further reflection.

Fourth, pedagogical implications are supposed to be more specific and practical. Future work could draw from existing successful bilingual writers' works the actual strategies of combining two cultures' narrative strengths and thus provide multilingual students and teachers with a broader as well as concrete view of multilingual writing.

In view of these limitations, we should be cognizant that findings in this study are just tentative and provisional. More future work needs to be done cooperatively by all of us interested in contrastive rhetoric, comparative rhetoric, and multilingual narrative composition.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Indrasuta's Coding of Forms and Functions of Narrative Clauses

Form	Function
Generalization - statement of logical truth or empirical laws and philosophies of human nature **Comment** - interpretation, judgment, and evaluation **Action** - with human beings or animate things as its subject **Mental state** - occurs while the writer is writing the composition **Description of mental state** - past feelings in service of sequential chain or casual chain function **Description of action** **Description of character** **Description of setting** **Description of thing** **Dialogue**	**Sequential chain** - beginning - forward - backward - simultaneous - future
	Causal chain - cause - effect - causative - consequential - adversative - alternative
	description - elaborative - additive - locative - temporal - analogous

Appendix 2: An Overview of Martin and White's Appraisal System

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Sub-systems and Subdivisions</th><th colspan="2">Example Expressions</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="9">Engagement:
("attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse")</td><td rowspan="7">Contract</td><td rowspan="6">Disclaim</td><td>Deny</td><td colspan="2">no, didn't, haven't, never, not at all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Counter</td><td colspan="2">yet, although, still, but, even, only, just,</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Proclaim</td><td rowspan="2">Concur</td><td>Affirm</td><td>naturally, of course, obviously,</td></tr>
<tr><td>Concede</td><td>admittedly…[but]…; sure…[however]…</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Pronounce</td><td>Explicit</td><td>I contend that (subjective), the facts are that (objective)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Implicit</td><td>It <u>was</u> the worst address (subj.);
<u>Really</u>, it's the worst address (obj.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Endorse</td><td colspan="2">the report shows/proves that,</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Expand</td><td>Entertain
(internal voice of the writer)</td><td colspan="3">I believe, in my view, I think, it may be, it seems, probably, possibly, must, apparently,</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Attribute
(external voice)</td><td>Acknowledge</td><td colspan="2">many Americans believe, in Dawkin's view, the report states, Halliday argues that, it is said that,</td></tr>
<tr><td>Distance</td><td colspan="2">Chomsky claimed that,</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Attitude</td><td colspan="4">Affect
(emotional reactions)</td><td colspan="2">Jason is disappointed; her departure upset him; sadly, he had to go; he dislikes/hates/detested her</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Judgment
(ethical judgment of behavior)</td><td colspan="2">Jason proved a splendid husband; he behaves bad</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Appreciation
(aesthetic evaluation of things)</td><td colspan="2">It was a wonderful night; the moon is bright</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Graduation
("grading phenomena whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred")</td><td rowspan="4">Force
(grading according to intensity or amount)</td><td rowspan="3">Quantification</td><td>Number</td><td colspan="2">a few, many, a trickle of enquiries</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mass</td><td colspan="2">tiny, small, huge, slip of a girl</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Extent</td><td>Proximity</td><td>recent, nearby</td></tr>
<tr><td>Distribution</td><td>long-lasting, wide-spread</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Intensification
(isolating/ maximization/ Infusion/ repetition/ metaphor)</td><td>Quality (degree)</td><td colspan="2">slightly corrupt→very corrupt;
contented→ecstatic
somewhat→relatively→fairly→extremely</td></tr>
<tr><td>Process (vigor)</td><td colspan="2">slightly disturb→greatly disturb;
like→love→adore</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Focus
("grading according to prototypicality and the preciseness by which category boundaries are drawn")</td><td>Sharpen</td><td colspan="3">true, really, very</td></tr>
<tr><td>Soften</td><td colspan="3">sort of, kind of, a little bit, gradually, not really</td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 3: Chang and McCabe's Coding Framework of Evaluation Devices

(1) Elongators (e.g., "We had to stay a looooong time.")
(2) Attention-getters (e.g., "You know what?")
(3) Facts per se (e.g., "I caught the biggest fish.")
(4) Onomatopoeia (e.g., "meow meow;" "bark bark")
(5) Stressors: a marked emphasis in voice (e.g., "It is true!")
(6) Exclamations (e.g., "He was frightened!")
(7) Repetitions (e.g., "Then I kept crying kept crying.")
(8) Compulsion words (e.g., "I had to go home.")
(9) Similes and metaphors (e.g., "I ate and all of my face was a mess, as a big Siamese cat.")
(10) Gratuitous terms (e.g., "Then he cried very loudly.")
(11) Words per se: including adjectives, adverbs, verbs, nouns, exclamations that are evaluative themselves (e.g., "I ran back home in a hurry.")
(12) Exaggeration and fantasy (e.g., "I was frightened to death.")
(13) Negatives (e.g., "I did not cry.")
(14) Intentions or desires (e.g., "Brother wanted to watch.")
(15) Hypotheses or inferences (e.g., "Otherwise my father's legs probably won't work.")
(16) Results of the high point (e.g., "The drink rolled and rolled and then burst. Something came out. Then I kept wiping and wiping using a wiper.")
(17) Causal explanations (e.g., "Then I cried hurt because the clothes burned me.")
(18) Judgments (e.g., "Then he was greedy and he took the eraser.")
(19) Descriptions of internal emotional states (e.g., "I was happy.")
(20) Tangential Information (e.g., "She gave me ten dollars for going in there. Ten dollars is a lot of money when you're little")
(21) Physical condition (e.g., "I got stomach.")
(22) Idioms: Chinese idioms, proverbs, slangs (e.g., "Sister got hurt but you still gloated over (*xing zai le huo*) this.")

Notes: All examples are quoted from Chang and McCabe (38-39).
The last two types are especially developed for coding Chinese children's stories.

Appendix 4: Recruitment Advertisement Email

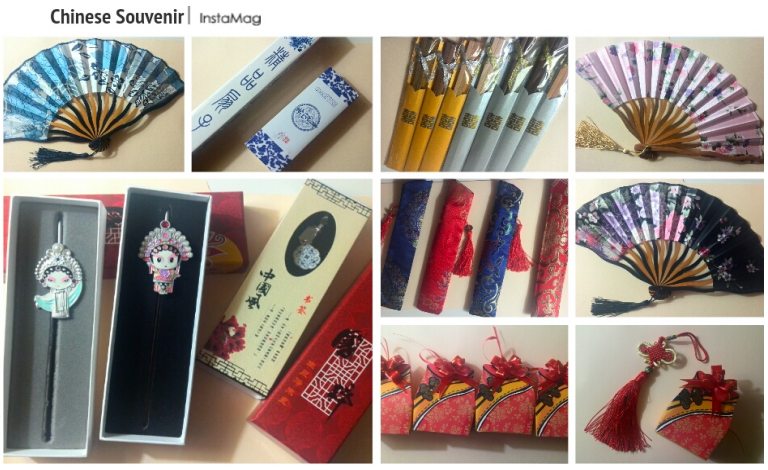
Data Collection for
A Comparative Study of Narrative Rhetoric
between Chinese and American English Majors

Dear English Major Undergraduates,

I am a MA student majoring in Composition and Rhetoric in our department. I am currently working on my thesis, which aims to analyze how English native writers and Chinese English learners narrate/tell the same story by adopting different rhetorical strategies. So now, twenty-five female Chinese undergraduate English majors from Sun Yat-sen University, China and twenty-five **female undergraduate English native speakers from our department** are urgently needed!!

This is absolutely a **wonderful experience** for you to participate in and contribute to an academic activity and you will definitely acquire impressive knowledge as well as experience about how to tell or write stories/tales to people from different cultures in today's cross-cultural context.

I sincerely appreciate your participation! Those of you who participate will get
20 dollars and an adorable special Chinese souvenir!!!



Why is this research meaningful for you to participate?
This research is hoped to illuminate EFL/ESL pedagogy for narrative writing, and simultaneously help both English and Chinese writers adjust their narration to the target audience's expectation and appreciation during cross-cultural interactions.

What do you need to do?
After signing a consent form, you will be asked to watch twice and take notes of a ten-minute short film (http://www.197c.com/dianying-284412-1-1.html). You will then write down the story displayed in the film (a detailed Writing Guideline will be sent to you via email) within **any two days** you choose **before mid-June at your home** and then send back its complete version to me.

If you are interested in this research and want to **sign up**, please contact me as soon as possible **by the end of April**!

My email: zhaoy15@miamioh.edu; my phone: 513-593-4731.

Looking forward to your participation and **THANKS** a million,

Yebing (Yvonne) Zhao

Appendix 5: Research Consent Form

Research Consent Form

Research Background

I am a Chinese exchange MA student majoring in Composition and Rhetoric in the Department of English a Miami University. This data collection project is expected to feed into my thesis, which attends to analyze hov English native writers and Chinese English learners narrate the same story by adopting different rhetorica strategies. The result of my research is hoped to fill the blank and meet the demand of EFL/ESL instruction i narrative writing, and simultaneously help both English and Chinese story-tellers/writers raise awareness an understanding of the rhetorical conflicts before adjusting their narration to the target audience's expectation an appreciation during cross-cultural interactions.

Research Activity

Twenty-five female Chinese undergraduate English majors from Sun Yat-sen University, China and twenty-fiv female undergraduate English native speakers in the Department of English at Miami University will be randoml recruited to participate in the present study. After granting this consent, subjects will be asked to watch twice an take notes of a ten-minute short film (http://www.197c.com/dianying-284412-1-1.html) first (a detailed Writin Guideline will be distributed via email) and then write down the story displayed in the film in English with thei preferred narrative rhetorical strategies within two days at their home before sending their written story an anonymous, unidentifiable background information such as their current grade, perception of the audience opinions about the purpose of writing stories back to me.

Right of Subject/Voluntariness

In the term of your participation, you are welcome to contact me, seek help from me or ask correspondin questions. If they are not willing to participate midway, they are free to withdraw from the research at any tim without getting any punishment. Remember, all you have to do is to act nice and inform me of your withdrawal a soon as possible.

Confidentiality and Use of the Data

Your writing will be tagged with a random number (1-50) instead of your true name; therefore your identity i never to be revealed or recognized. All the data will be stored in my personal computer and my personal onlin backup disk and only me can access to these confidentially preserved data forever.

Benefit

After I receive your writing, or to say, after you have completed the whole participation, I will award each of yo (not including those withdraw midway) 20 dollars and a randomly allotted Chinese souvenir by arranging a publi anonymous meeting in my office. Besides these explicit material awards, most significantly, you could have wonderful experience in being a part of a formal academic activity and you will definitely get impressiv knowledge about how to communicate, write or tell stories/tales in today's increasingly globalized cross-cultura context since you will be welcome to read the final draft of my thesis.

Risk

This research has very little risk. If I really have to name one, then it could be your discomfort when you se excerpt of your writing being referred to, cited or commented in the discussion part of my thesis. However, I wil for sure seek your agreement before quoting it and I think, to take a different perspective, it would be better t always take a positive attitude while seeing your work appear in an academic study as an honorable contributio Moreover, I will be very careful about my comment on your writing and will try to temper my judgment.

For questions about the research, please contact me (email: zhaoy15@miamioh.edu; phone: 513-593-4731). For questions or concerns about the rights of research subjects or the voluntariness of this consent procedure, please contact the Research Compliance Office at Miami: (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@miamioh.edu.

Assurance/Consent Section:

If you agree to participate in this research: *A Comparative Study of Narrative Rhetoric between Chinese and American English Majors*, please sign below and return to me. Please keep the information above for future reference.

Subject Name (Printed):

Subject Signature: **Date:**

Appendix 6: Writing Guideline

Story Writing Guideline

Thank you so much for participating in my research!

- **After you sign the Consent Form and finally find free time to carry out the project, please follow the following steps to do the research activities:**

1) Copy the **Writing Format** below to a new Word file; name the file with a **DATE (mm/dd/yy)**
2) Write down the date you begin this project in the Writing Format
3) Log on the website: http://www.197c.com/dianying-284412-1-1.html
4) Watch the short film online for **the first time** to grasp its main story line
5) Take down notes of the plots and details while watching for **the second time**
6) If necessary, you can watch for the third time; if not, you can begin to write; record the specific time you start writing the first draft in the Writing Format
7) For the **first draft**, retell and typewrite the story in English **at a breath** according to your notes, memory and feelings; imagine you are **telling this story to English literacy adult readers** and then create and give full play to **your own way of storytelling** by using your favorite rhetorical strategies rather than imitating how the video presents the story; for example, you can choose different narration sequence, techniques of expressions, angle of view, detailed description, etc.
8) Try to make your story as long and attractive as you can; keep in mind the theme of the story and your purpose of writing it throughout your task; and do not forget detail descriptions
9) After finishing the first draft at a breath, record the completing time in the Writing Format, then you can choose to revise it immediately or just put it aside for a while
10) Following the first draft, you have **two days to keep revising** your work
11) While **revising** your story, please typewrite **in a different color font**
12) Submit your work to my email: zhaoy15@miamioh.edu within 2 days since when you started the project, but before submitting, don't forget to leave your unidentifiable background information including grade, personal perception of the purpose of story writing, etc. in the Writing Format

- **Always feel free to contact me whenever you have questions or need help.**
- **Throughout the whole process of data collection, I will also keep in contact with you via email so as to trace your implementation of the task.**
- **This research will last for half a year, so if you have friends (female undergraduate English majors) who are also interested in this story retelling project, please introduce them to me.**

Wring Format
Date starting the project (mm/dd/yy):

Time starting writing the first draft (hh:mm)：
（story title, decided by yourself）
(CONTENT—write it as long and attractive as you can) …
Time completing the first draft (hh:mm):
Total time spent for the first draft (hh:mm)：
Date finishing the project (mm/dd/yy)：
Word count：
Background Information：
Grade: □ Freshman □ Sophomore □ Junior □ Senior
Do you think you are good at writing?
Do you think you would be good at telling stories to people from a different culture? What do you think is a better way to tell stories to people from a different culture?
Do you like reading stories and what story you've ever read interests or impresses you most? And why?
What do you think are the most significant purposes of writing/telling a story?

Appendix 7: Example Analysis of One American Participant's Work

Story Title: Signs									
Abs.	**SaS.**	**Set.**	**Scene**		**Plot (key event information)**				**Coda**
			Des.	**Int.**	**Init.**	**Devlp.**	**Clmx.**	**Reslt.**	

When I was young, **[ambitious personality; first appearance of the character]**
I had such potential, such big dreams.
I thought I could be anyone, do anything
and I never stopped to think about how attainable my dreams were.
I definitely never thought I would end up here. **[Suspension]**
When I moved to the city
I was sure
I would finally achieve those dreams of being a big business man
and being surrounded by people
and hopefully, one of those people would be my girlfriend.
But here I am, unhappy as ever. **[Contrast, Foil]**
Everyday is the same.
I wake up,
I eat breakfast,
and I go to my job
where I sit in a cubicle for hours on end
until I go home and go to bed
only to begin the process again tomorrow.
I keep seeing beautiful women
and I think *maybe they will be the one who changes my life*
But they soon walk away
and I have missed my opportunity.
I see happy couples
and it convinces me that if I had someone to love,
maybe I would be happy.
Maybe my office job wouldn't be so unbearable.
Maybe I wouldn't feel so alone.
My parents called me last night
and I haven't called them back.
They expected me to go off
and do great things-to make all these friends, to find a girlfriend.
I am too ashamed, too embarrassed to let them know the truth;
that I feel so sad and bored and insignificant.
Who knew you could be so incredibly lonely
even though you are surrounded by hundreds of people.

* I woke up this morning,
as I do every other morning,
and went to work,
feeling worse than ever.
I sat down and started my work
but quickly got bored of it
and started to look around for distractions.
I gazed out of my window
* and saw the office across the street.

* Then I saw her.
The most beautiful woman I have ever seen.
How had I never noticed her before!?
I stared at her
dumbfounded
until- Shoot!
She saw me staring.
I quickly looked away
and hoped she hadn't noticed.
But I couldn't help it
and I slowly turned my head
to look at her again.
She looked at me,
then turned away
* and came back seconds later
holding up a piece of paper.
Written across the sheet in black ink was "take a picture."
Oh God.
A million thoughts raced through my head in those few seconds.
Have I offended her?
Is she laughing at me?
But before I could worry myself any further
she held up a second piece of paper saying 'I'm kidding'
and she broke into a smile.
I was immediately relieved
and started laughing too.
She held up yet another sign that read 'Stacey'.
I understood immediately
and I scrambled
to find a blank sheet of paper and a marker on my unorganized desk.
I scrawled 'Jason' on the sheet
and held it up to the window.
She smiled
and wrote 'nice to meet you'
and I quickly responded with 'nice to meet you too'.

* After that we both went back to our work,
but something changed in me.
I started feeling hopeful.
I now had something to look forward to.
I had finally met someone.
albeit I hadn't actually talked to her,
but I had met someone nevertheless.

That night
I went home
and hung up the sign on my refrigerator
feeling better than I had since I moved to the city.
It started getting easier and easier to get out of bed in the mornings.
Knowing that I would see her, 'talk' to her, made it easy to go to work everyday.
We kept up our unique version of communication regularly for almost two months.

Those two months were the best I have had in a long time.
Until one day….
That day started as all the others had
and I felt happy to come into work.

I was excited to 'talk' to her.
I sat down at my desk
and I glanced over at Stacey
and she looked, *I couldn't tell, guilty?*
Maybe ashamed?
Even a little nervous?
She slowly pulled out a piece of paper
and started writing.
She finally held up the piece of paper
telling me she had a secret.
I started to worry.
She probably has a boyfriend,
or she is quitting her job
and I'll never see her again.
Maybe she just wants to stop talking with me altogether.

She then picked up another sheet of paper
and started writing.
I started getting nervous
and I silently willed her to write faster. **[fantacy; psychology description]**
* When she held up the sign,
I felt an incredible sense of happiness.
'I was watching you first' was written simply in the middle of the paper.
I couldn't wait any longer,
I had to ask her.
I whipped out a sheet of paper
and started scribbling 'do you want to meet' on it
* and as I was about to hold it up,
suddenly the weight of what I was doing came crashing down on top of me.
What was I thinking?
Is it too early to ask?
Does she even want to meet me?
What if I messed it up and then we couldn't even have our daily conversation.

I stared down at the paper
and tried to decide my fate.
I quickly glanced over at her
to hopefully give me some indication,
but I only caught a glimpse of her
leaving the room with someone.
She glanced back at me
looking apologetic.
Instead of feeling relieved that I had been given more time to decide,
I felt saddened.
I felt like I had missed my chance.
And that feeling alone made my decision for me.
* I went home that night
and to my eternal embarrassment,
practiced holding the paper up in the mirror.
* When I had finally decided on how I would do it,
I went to bed
looking forward to the day.

The following morning,
I practically jumped out of bed
and quickly got dressed.

I scarfed down some toast
and grabbed my coffee
as I ran out the door.
The subway felt like it was taking an extra minute at each stop.
* When I finally arrived at my stop
and walked the few blocks to the office,
I was feeling anxious,
but determined.
I am going to ask her today.

I raced to the elevator
but I quickly decided it would take too long,
so I sped up the stairs
and raced to my seat.
* But when I finally sat down
and pulled out the crumpled piece of paper,
I looked over to see that she was gone.
Her office was empty
and at that very moment,
a new employee came walking in
and started scattering his own possessions over the desk.
What!
How could this happen on the day I was going to ask her!

I silently kicked myself for not asking her yesterday when I still had the chance.
The rest of the day was terrible.
It went back to the boring place.
The day slowly passed without incident and
* I went home dispirited.
The next morning,
it was difficult to get out of bed.
I moved lethargically
and when I finally got to work and sat down
I was not feeling optimistic.
* I went about my work as usual
while constructing ridiculous ways of getting in touch with her.
* As I was fantasizing about meeting her again,
the sun had moved
* in such a way that it hit me directly in the eyes.
I was annoyed
and started squinting
* when I realized that the sun has never hit me before.
Confused,
I looked over to the source of the glare
only to see her waving from a floor above.
* Once she realized she had gotten my attention
she held up one finger
as she raced to her desk
and came back with 'I got promoted' in a piece of paper.
I was completely astounded.
There she was.

I quickly wrote 'we should celebrate!'
and she responded 'absolutely!'.
This is it; this is the moment I have to ask her.
Nervously,

I held up the sign 'do you want to meet?'
and I waited with **bated breath**
as she responded with a **smile**
<responded>'I thought you'd never ask'.
Hardly daring to believe it,
I grabbed my coat
and ran down several flights of stairs.
* When I finally reached the street,
I saw her.
We slowly walked towards each other
and I suddenly realized that I had no idea what I would say to her.
* As I opened my mouth to speak
she quickly held up one finger to her lips.
She then held up a sign with a heart on it
and written inside the heart was 'hi'.

Sub-Table 1-1: Information Distribution			
Total No. of Minimal Units	**219**		
Background Info. Prior to Initial Plot "He saw her"	20%	**Character**	Mental state description to hint the personality of the character
		Setting (Time/Place)	"big city"
Pure Event info.	41%	Full of actions	
Description	All appear in Setting rather than during the narration		
Interpretation	Few interpretations but direct utterances of the characters' mental states		

Sub-Table 1-2: Stylistic Preference			
Plot	Chronological	✔	
	Achronological		
Setting	Backdrop setting		
	Integral setting	>	More integrated statements of time and place such as "when, as, once"
Theme	explicit		
	implicit	✔	More effort on making the story interesting and vivid
Figurative Language	Parallelism, exaggeration Interior fantasy: "The subway felt like it was taking an extra minute at each stop."		
Other Features	- Fewer environmental, setting or object depictions ("the office…") - Rich descriptions of characters' appearance, actions, dialogues, and psychology		

Sub-Table 1-3: Interactive Analysis			
Frame	Storyteller frame		
Role Perspective	**Interlocutor Role**		
	Character Role		
	Narrator Role		
	Interlocutor + Character		
	Interlocutor + Narrator		
	Narrator + Character	>	The writer identifies herself as the main character and tries to tell the story with "I."
	All Three		
Evaluation & Involvement Devices	Vivid action depictions; Direct utterance of inner words.		

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