

# Physical and Topical Structure Analysis of Professional Writing in Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles of English

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## Abstract

There had been a growing interest in the differences of the three concentric circles of English over the years. The current study aims to contribute to genre-specific studies by dealing with the letters to the editor of an international magazine. Following Lautamatti (1987) and Simpson (2000), 39 one-paragraph letters from the Inner, Outer, and Expanding circles of English were investigated as to their physical and topical structure features. In the concluding section, some implications to ESL teaching are outlined.

## Introduction

For almost four decades now, the study of textual differences between and among languages termed Contrastive Rhetoric (henceforth, CR) has become an interesting field of inquiry. The rather immature article of Kaplan in 1966, popularly known now as “Doodles,” has clearly gone a long way. Although Kaplan (1987) admits having made too strong a claim, he never regrets having made the case. The expansion of focus of study from student expository writing to academic to professional writing is remarkably increasing.

In her overview of text linguistics studies in CR, Connor (1996) points out, “One of the biggest changes in CR research is the diversification of genres that has been studied” (p. 99) yet she believes that the existing literature on this field is not yet enough. She, thus, argues that more studies be conducted in this area, as she puts, “Despite the enhanced research activity on genre-specific writing cross-culturally, only a few isolated studies have examined each genre” (p. 149). Swales (1990) confirms that one of the important approaches to CR is genre analysis. This study aims to fill this apparent gap within the area of professional writing and to contribute to the growing number of genre-specific studies.

Among the recent studies in professional writing include Thatcher’s (2000) investigation of L2 professional writing in a US and South American context, and Scollon’s (2000) study on the generic variability of texts in a Chinese newspaper and its English counterpart.

In the Philippine context, genre-specific studies have been explored by Gonzales (2002), which focused on the use of politeness in letters to the editor in Philippine English, American English, and Singaporean English; Gustilo (2002) likewise analyzed the news leads of American and Philippine English; Genuino (2002) examined the cohesion markers in commentary articles of the Philippine,

Singaporean, and American newspapers; and Rojo-Laurilla (2002) probed on the 'presentation of self' and 'self-disclosure' in Philippine advice columns.

Likewise, several studies have explained the cultural differences in writing of native speakers of English as opposed to nonnative speakers. B. Kachru (1985, in Y. Kachru, 1995) divides the English-using world into three concentric circles: 1) The *Inner Circle* consists of the native English-speaking countries, e.g. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the U.K. and the U.S.A.; 2) The *Outer Circle* comprises the former British and American colonies, e.g. India, Kenya, Nigeria, the Philippines, Singapore, among others; 3) The *Expanding Circle* consists of countries where English is fast becoming a dominant second language in the domains of education, science, and technology, e.g. China, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, among others.

Various researchers espouse that there is a perceived norm of writing in the English-speaking community which is generally characterized as linear, direct, or explicit. However, Connor and Lauer (1988) claim that there are systematic differences among students writing in English from the U.S., Britain, and New Zealand which constitute the Inner Circle.

On the other hand, the major claim of the CR hypothesis is that writers from other cultures [outer and expanding circles] employ a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native [inner circle] reader (Kaplan, in Kachru, 1995).

Kaplan (1966, as cited by Connor, 1996) argued that Chinese as well as other "Oriental" writing is indirect. Cai (1993, as cited by Connor, 1996) describes that the Chinese writing is greatly influenced by the classic eight-legged pattern and is now evolving to the four-part model called *qi-cheng-jun-he*. Moreover, Chinese rhetoric tends to "suggest" or be indirect and uses quotations and allusions very often. Likewise, Hinds (1983) reports that the common organizational framework of the Japanese is the *ki-shoo-ten-ketsu* where *ki* begins the argument, *shoo* develops the argument, *ten* is the intrusion of an element which is not directly connected to the theme of the composition, and *ketsu* concludes the argument. Likewise, Eggington's (1987) study of the Korean written academic discourse suggests that Koreans prefer a rhetorical structure called *ki-sung-chon-kyul* which is very similar with the Japanese *ki-shoo-ten-ketsu* and the Chinese *qi-cheng-jun-he* styles. While Kachru (1997, p. 56) claims that "Indian writing, like its Chinese and Japanese counterparts, has been characterized as non-linear, circular, spiral, etc.". Also, Indian English manifests stylistic features that re-create the Sanskritic noetics (Kachru, 1999)

Ostler (1987) reports that Arabic writing relies heavily on the use of coordination thus producing parallel construction while Mohamed and Omer (2000) list a number of contrasts between English and Arabic culture and cohesion. As emerged in the study, Arabic cohesion is generally context-based, generalized, repletion-oriented, and additive in nature while English is text-based, specified, change-oriented, and non-additive. With regard the cultural dimensions, Arabic is characterized as oralised, collectivist, high-contact, high context and reader-responsible as opposed to literate, individualist, low contact, low context, and writer-responsible English.

To date, there is no single study that attempts to draw the distinctions of the three concentric circles of English as identified by Kachru (cited in Kachru, 1997). The current study is an ambitious attempt to fill this gap in the research arena.

The present study dwells on professional writing, specifically, letters to the editor. Gonzales (2002) opines that letters to the editor are a good venue to express one's personal stand of an issue or bring this issue into the attention of concerned citizens or institutions.

There are various limitations of the study though that need to be mentioned. First, the corpus of the study was generally taken from an international magazine; hence, the senders [of letters] come from all points of the world. This means that there is no possible single topic where the three concentric groups of English have reacted to all at the same time. Second, with that limitation, the scope of the letters are varied, from general interests to specific issues. Third, the only basis of identification of the writers is the country where they presently stay during the time of writing. Whether they are a native of the country they represent is beyond my control. Finally, the amount of intervention by the editorial staff of the magazine is not identified either.

The focus of this research is two-pronged. The first part of the analysis in the present study is a quantitative description of the physical characteristics of the 39 paragraphs. The second analysis focuses on the internal coherence of the text by using Lautamatti's (1987) topical structure analysis.

With these, the following research questions are posed:

1. What are the physical characteristics of the letters among the inner, outer, and expanding circles of English?
2. What topical progressions are adapted by these three groups?
3. What are the pedagogical implications of the physical and topical structure analyses to second language writing and teaching?

## Method

### *The Corpus*

Thirteen letters, which are all one-paragraph, for each circle (39 in all) were taken from the "Letters" section of the *TIME Asia*. Given the nature of letters to the editor in an international magazine such as *TIME*, sources of letters come from all points of the world. Hence, it was difficult to choose a particular topic where the three groups of English are represented. Noteworthy of mentioning, too, is the limited samples of the Expanding circle in the 'letters' section of the magazine. For the span of six months, only thirteen samples came from the Expanding circle. Due to this scarcity, it was inevitable to purposely choose sample texts for the study. As expected, most of the letters came from the Inner circle. To address possible problems of incomparability, a total number of thirteen samples for each group was taken. In addition, all letters consisted of just one paragraph. As Simpson (2000) did in her study to avoid potential diachronic changes in the language, all letters came from the second half, July-December, of 2004.

**Table 1**  
*Distribution of Samples*

Inner Circle		Outer Circle		Expanding Circle	
Country	paragraphs	Country	paragraphs	Country	paragraphs
USA	4	India	3	China	1
UK	3	Nigeria	3	Japan	5
Canada	3	Philippines	2	Taiwan	3
Australia	2	Singapore	2	Korea	2
New Zealand	1	Malaysia	1	Slovakia	1
		Hong Kong	1	Cambodia	1
		Pakistan	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>

### Methods of Analysis

#### *Physical Analysis*

A simple count on the number of words, number of clauses, number of sentences, number of words per sentence, number of clauses per sentence, and number of sentences per paragraph was done. This is to establish differences on the face value of the data.

Clause, as Simpson (2000) adapts in her study, is a unit of thought consisting a subject and a predicate which could be independent or dependent. Some clauses are also modifiers such as noun, adjectival, or adverbial. Sentence, on the other hand, represents one unit of thought. It may consist of single clause or series of clauses, as the case may be.

For the purposes of this study, all types of clauses are identified in the physical analysis but only independent and dependent clauses are included in the topical structure analysis.

#### *Topical Structure Analysis*

To describe coherence in texts, Lautamatii (1987) developed topical structure analysis which can be traced back to Prague School of Linguistic's theory of *theme-rheme* or *topic-comment*. This framework inspects the semantic

relationships between sentence topics and overall discourse topics by looking at the repetitions, shifts, and reoccurrences of topics. Through topical structure analysis, these relationships illustrate how topics in the sentences work through the text to build meaning progressively. Or in Connor and Farmer's (1990) words, TSA considers the global and local coherence of texts" (p.127).

Pertinent to the identification of the thematic progression is the three basic sentence elements which Lautamatii (1987) explains in her study. She identifies the initial sentence element (ISE), which is what comes first in the sentence. This may be the subject of the sentence or any introductory phrase. The second element is the mood subject, or the grammatical subject of the sentence. The third element is the topical subject (henceforth, TS) which is the topic of the sentence or what is being talked about in the clause. This is not necessarily the grammatical subject of the sentence. For the purposes of the study, only the topical subject is identified in each sentence. It should be noted that one inter-rater was asked to identify the topical subjects of the sentences. He is knowledgeable of Lautamatii's concept of sentence elements and TSA and even intends to use the same framework in his forthcoming study. The difference in the results of the topic identification is not statistically significant. In the sample text below, the topical subjects are boldfaced.

Lautamatii identifies three possible types of progression of sentences: parallel, sequential, and extended parallel progression. Simpson (2000) introduces another probable type of progression which she calls 'extended sequential progression.' Connor (1996) shows that coherence can be mapped using a system of three distinct types of progression; Hoenisch (1996; 2004) codifies the progression using letters:

1. **parallel progression**, In which topics of successive sentences are the same, producing a repetition of topic that reinforces the idea for the reader (<a, b>, <a, c>, <a, d>);
2. **sequential progression**, In which topics of successive sentences are always different, as the comment of one sentence becomes, or is used to derive, the topic of the next (<a, **bb**, c>, <c, d>);
3. **extended parallel progression**, In which the first and the last topics of a piece of text are the same but are interrupted with some sequential progression (<a, b>, <b, c>, <a, d>).
4. **extended sequential progression**, In which the comment of one clause becomes the topic of a non-consecutive clause; hence, <a, **bb**, e>.

For the purposes of exemplification, authentic texts are taken from the corpus to illustrate further the concept of topical progression. The underlined words or phrases show the progression. It must be noted that the semantic relationships of ideas is taken into account here.

## Parallel progression:

- [1] *Bush's aggressive, unilateralist foreign policy and blinkered support for Israel have made him hated throughout the Middle East. His presidency has provided plenty of recruitment material for al-Qaeda.* [1A-Inner]
- [2] *In Hong Kong, the lack of democratic legitimacy is crippling the chief executive, and the same cycle is inevitable in China.* [7A-Outer]

## Sequential Progression:

- [3] *Voters were called on to recognize fundamental differences between the candidates. The issues of character and values may have given the edge to Bush.* [6A-Expanding]
- [4] *the hard-liners in Tehran are waging war against the U.S. in key spots worldwide. The U.S. and other Western governments should not negotiate with the mullahs.*[2B-Inner]

## Extended Parallel Progression:

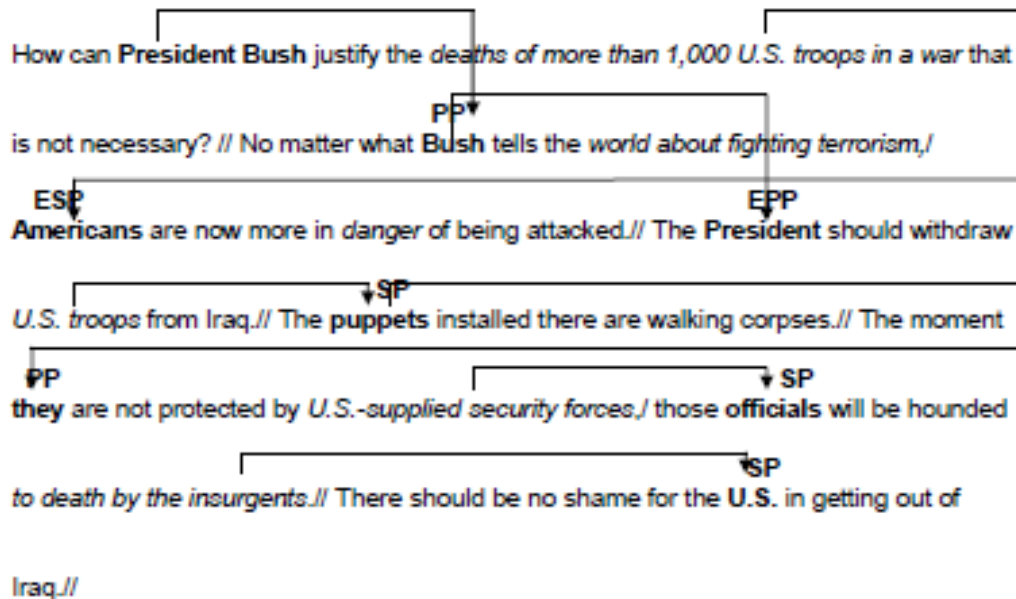
- [5] *The Iraqi police and defense forces should want peace and freedom in their country enough to fight for it. The U.S. should stop sacrificing its soldiers for a cause that Iraqis are not willing to fight for themselves.* [2B-Outer]
- [6] *Any successful war on terrorism must start, however, with finding a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is at the epicenter of the wider war. Because of the consequences of America's biased support of Israel, the U.S. faces strong and increasing anti-American sentiment among Muslims. The U.S. needs to change the perception that the war on terrorism is a war on Islam.* [3A-Expanding]

## Extended Sequential Progression:

- [7] *it was Japan that taught China how to make technological advances. So now the two countries are even. Why should the Chinese hesitate to make a fresh start alongside the Japanese?* [2A-Expanding]
- [8] *I have lived in Singapore my entire life, and I am sometimes appalled by and ashamed of the actions of fellow drivers. Singapore has its share of aggressive, me-first motorists* [1B-Outer]

Moreover, the following sample text was taken from the corpus to illustrate the four types of thematic progression, originally identified by Lautamatti and supplemented by Simpson, which are utilized in the analysis of the coherence of the texts. Unlike Simpson (2000), both independent and dependent clauses were identified. Two slanting bars are used to separate sentences and a single slanting bar is used to separate clauses. For purposes of clarity, the *themes* are boldfaced while the *rhemes* are italicized. Arrows are used to trace or to point the development of topics. Above the boldfaced topical subjects are the types of

progressions used; PP for parallel progressions, SP for sequential progressions, EPP for extended parallel progressions, and ESP for extended sequential progressions.



The first sentence is always used as the basis of comparison. The second clause is an example of dependent clause whose topical subject, *Bush*, is a parallel progression from the original sentence's topical subject, *President Bush*. *Americans* is an example of extended sequential progression because it is drawn from the *rheme* of the first sentence and a semantic equivalent of the *US*. It is an ESP because a PP has intervened between the *rheme* of the first sentence and the *theme* of the third clause. *President* is an extended parallel progression as it refers back to *Bush* in the second clause. *Puppets* is a sequential progression which is derived from the *rheme* element, *U.S. troops*. *They* refers to the *puppets*, hence a parallel progression. *Officials* and *U.S.* are examples of sequential progressions since they are taken from the *rheme* of the preceding clauses.

In the sample text above, the need to include both independent and dependent clauses became apparent since the topical subject of the independent clause is taken from the *rheme* of the dependent clause. Unlike Simpson (2000) who limited her analysis to independent clauses, I am including dependent clauses in the current study as it is deemed necessary.

The following example illustrates that the topical subject of the independent clause is drawn from the *rheme* element of the dependent clause.

- [9] *The moment they are not protected by the US-supplied security forces, those officials will be haunted to death by the insurgents.*

Connor and Farmer (1990) demonstrate how topical structure analysis can be used as a revision strategy in process writing. Although it has been conceived that topical structure analysis is only applicable to English texts only (Lautamatii,

1987), Simpson (2000) used this framework in investigating the coherence of academic texts written in English and Spanish.

## Results and Discussion

### *Physical Analysis*

The physical analysis of the paragraphs shows some predictable and unpredictable differences of the three groups of English (based on results of previous studies). As can be seen in Table 2, of the three groups, the Inner circle got the highest total number of words which is 1,399. This is in congruence with Hinkel's (2003) findings that the native speakers have richer lexical repertoire. However, the data show that in contrary to the total number of words, the pattern for the total number of sentences is the total opposite. Apparently, the more the sentences, the lesser the words; or the other way around. The expanding circle has 75 sentences in all but has 1,215 words only. This is in contrary to Hinkel's (2003) findings that native speakers use more syntactic varieties over non-native speakers. It can be deduced from the data that the Inner circle utilizes more words than sentences. On the other hand, the Outer and the Expanding circles tend to use lesser words but more sentences.

**Table 2**  
*General Data*

Expanding	Inner	Outer	
	Circle	Circle	Circle
Total number of words	1,399	1,270	1,215
Average words per paragraph	107.6	97.7	93.5
Total number of sentences	66	69	75
Average sentence per paragraph	5.07	5.3	5.76
Average words per sentence	21.19	18.4	16.2

The clause data suggest something else. It appears that the Outer circle utilizes the least number of clauses, but the Expanding circle uses clause the most. This does not mean though that the Expanding circle uses syntactic complication more than the Outer or the Inner circles.

In the initial analysis of the corpus, the inter-rater and I felt the need to label all clauses, may they be noun, adjectival, or adverbial clauses. In the TSA however, only the independent and dependent clauses were taken into account. Surprisingly,

the Expanding circle has the highest number of clauses. This may debunk prior findings that non-native speakers utilize syntactic simplicity.

**Table 3**  
*Clause Data*

Expanding	Inner	Outer	
	Circle	Circle	Circle
Total number of clauses	109	101	117
Average clauses per paragraph	8.38	7.76	9
Average clause per sentence	1.65	1.46	1.56
Average words per clause	12.83	12.57	10.38

In summary, based on the subjects of the study, there are two important generalizations that can be drawn. First, the total number of words in the Inner circle is much greater than the Outer and the Expanding circles. This finding coincides with Simpson's (2000) in her comparison of English and Spanish academic texts. Second, the total number of sentences and the total number of clauses in the Expanding circle is much greater than the two other circles. This is quite unpredictable based on the figures on the number of words. It should be made clear though that these generalizations hold true to the samples of the current study.

### *Topical Structure Analysis*

Table 4 summarizes the topical development in the 13 Inner circle paragraphs. As can be seen, all of the paragraphs manifest some kind of topical recurrence. Of the 109 clauses, only six new topics surfaced. This suggests a stronger degree of coherence since there are fewer inclusion of items not derived from previous topics. This is in contrary to Simpson's (2000) earlier findings on English academic paragraphs where she summed up 113 new topics out of 154 independent clauses. The interpretation of such figures, however, was not elaborated by Simpson as to the existence of new topics. Notably, the most common type of topical development is parallel progression which explains that thematic development is usually done through repletion of key words. While the least common of progression is ESP which suggests that there is very slim chances of drawing themes from previously mentioned *rhemes*. This somehow matches Simpson's findings.

**Table 4**  
*Summary of Topical Development in the Inner Circle*

<b>ID</b>	<b>Clauses</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>EPP</b>	<b>ESP</b>
<b>Number</b>		<b>Topics</b>				
1A	8	1	5	0	0	1
1B	4	0	2	1	0	0
1C	11	0	6	2	1	0
2A	4	0	1	1	1	0
2B	11	0	6	1	1	1
3A	3	0	2	0	0	0
4A	12	1	4	3	2	1
4B	13	2	3	3	1	0
4C	5	0	2	1	0	1
5A	12	1	3	2	3	0
5B	9	0	3	2	1	1
5C	9	0	4	0	1	1
5D	8	1	2	1	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>

In the Outer circle, there are more instances of new topics considering the lesser number of clauses compared with the Inner circle, as shown in Table 5. This may suggest probable intrusion of a topic not connected with the theme of the paragraph. Similar to the Inner circle, on the other hand, the most common type of topical development is still parallel progression. In addition, the instances of EPP and ESP are particularly higher in the Outer circle than in the Inner circle.

**Table 5**  
*Summary of Topical Development in the Outer Circle*

<b>ID</b>	<b>Clauses</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>EPP</b>	<b>ESP</b>
<b>Number</b>		<b>Topics</b>				
1A	10	1	4	2	2	0
1B	11	0	6	1	1	1
2A	8	0	2	3	1	1
2B	6	0	0	1	4	0
2C	6	1	1	1	2	0
3A	3	0	2	0	0	0
3B	8	3	2	1	0	1
3C	7	0	2	1	1	2
4A	9	1	2	0	0	3
4B	5	1	2	1	0	0
5A	6	0	2	1	1	1
6A	12	1	4	2	1	0
7A	6	0	1	2	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>

Whereas, Table 6 displays the summary of the topical progression in the Expanding circle. Worth mentioning is the least number of instances for new topics. This may suggest some degree of coherence of the texts as opposed to previous assumptions or findings of earlier studies that the writing of the Expanding circle is less direct and incoherent (Y. Kachru, 1995). Moreover, this finding is also in contrast with prior assumptions that the writing of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean (e.g. Eggington, 1987; Hinds, 1983) is characterized by the intrusion of an element that is not related with the discourse topic of the paragraph. Just like the two other circles, parallel progression is also the most common type of topical development used in this group. Moreover, this group also got the highest number of extended sequential progression which may suggest that the Expanding circle tries to lend some sophistication in their paragraph as they take up a previous *rheme* to become the *theme* of the sentence.

**Table 6**  
*Summary of Topical Development in the Expanding Circle*

<b>ID</b>	<b>Clauses</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>EPP</b>	<b>ESP</b>
<b>Number</b>	<b>Topics</b>					
1A	9	1	2	2	1	1
2A	16	0	7	2	0	1
2B	5	0	2	2	0	0
2C	9	0	2	1	2	0
2D	8	1	4	0	0	0
2E	10	1	2	2	1	1
3A	9	0	2	1	4	0
4A	6	0	3	1	1	0
4B	7	0	2	1	0	2
4C	6	0	2	1	1	1
5A	6	1	1	1	0	2
5B	10	0	5	0	2	1
6A	16	0	5	4	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>

To sum up the topical structure of the three groups of English, Table 7 displays the comparison of figures. Of the three groups, the Inner circle displays the highest percentage of progression, 72.47%, which means that out of 109 clauses there are 79 instances of progression. Whereas, out of 101 clauses in the Outer circle, there are 71 cases of progression or 70.29% in all. The Expanding circle, on the other hand, incurs the lowest instances of progression. Of the 117 clauses, a total of 76 cases, or 64.95%, showed some degree of progression.

In global terms, the inner circle still manifests the highest degree of coherence in texts, followed by the Outer circle, then by the Expanding circle. This explains the level of exposure of these groups to the English language. The Outer circle, being former colonies of the two giants, the U.K. and the U.S., displays considerably high percentage of progression, hence coherence, as compared with the Expanding circle. The lowest degree of progression incurred by the Expanding circle can be equated with the attempt of this group to make English their second group. Hence, the data show 'struggling' instance of progression.

Table 7  
*Comparative Summary of Totals for TSA*

<u>Circle</u>	<u>Inner Circle</u>		<u>Outer Circle</u>		<u>Expanding</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clauses	109		101		117	
New Topics	6		8		4	
PP	43	54.4	30	42.25	37	48.68
SP	17	21.51	18	25.35	16	21.05
EPP	13	16.45	14	19.71	12	15.78
ESP	6	7.5	9	12.67	11	14.47
<b>Total Progressions</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>72.47</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70.29</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>64.95</b>

### Conclusion

It is important to point that the present study attempted to point out the differences, not of two or three languages, but of the global divisions of the English-speaking communities. As a consequence, the results and findings of the study can not be taken as generalization for the circles of English. With all the limitations previously mentioned, it can be deduced that the findings in this study can only hold true to the chosen subjects. Further, the findings in this study are supported by previous studies on the potential disparities between native and non-native speakers.

Although TSA was originally conceived to be applicable to English text alone, as noted in this study, this framework proved to be an effective means of identifying the degree of coherence among the texts written by non-English authors as well. As recommended by Simpson (2000), other academic fields and other types of writing be explored to test the workability of the framework.

### *Implications*

The results of the physical analysis and the topical structure analysis suggest distinct differences of the three concentric circles of English. These findings may further strengthen previous assumptions on the rhetorical characteristics of the Outer and the Expanding circles. In this light, ESL teachers should strive to improve some areas, as suggested in this study: first, the production of more words in the sentences, rather than more sentences with fewer words, among the Outer and Expanding circles; second, the need to improve internal coherence of the

Outer and the Expanding circles; third, the need to encourage more use of the other types of progression which may increase sophistication of the texts. And most importantly, teachers should make writing letters to the editor a supplemental classroom activity to provide interesting venues of exposure. Also, letters to the editor are characterized as argumentative. The provision for more activities of this sort may not only enhance the writing skills of ESL students but also increase their interest to participate in activities outside the classroom.

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## Appendix A The Inner Circle

### 1A

Bush's actions in Iraq have proved Osama bin Laden's charge that the U.S. is trying to conquer Islamic lands. Bush's aggressive, unilateralist foreign policy and blinkered support for Israel have made him hated throughout the Middle East. His presidency has provided plenty of recruitment material for al-Qaeda. Four more years will doubtless provide more. Yes, bin Laden knew exactly what he was doing when he released that videotape. And his efforts paid off.

Lorna Forse

*Manchester, England*

### 1B

The situation in Darfur reminded me of the lawless state of nature described by the philosopher Thomas Hobbes, in which life is "nasty, brutish and short." If urgent steps are not taken by the Sudanese government and the international community to end the Darfur atrocities, the fighting may extend to the neighboring East African region and further deteriorate the existing socioeconomic and political problems of the entire African continent.

Okeke Jide Martyns

*Bradford, England*

### 1C

It is good that TIME highlighted the fact that there are moderate Muslims who denounce Islamic terrorism and strive for a more tolerant and open interpretation of Islam [Sept. 13]. Sadly, many of those Muslims learned their moderation from contact with the West; current Islamic culture by itself seems unable to produce such broad-mindedness on a large scale. That is not too surprising. In most Muslim countries, citizens are not exposed to the true teachings of other religions; indeed, they are often encouraged to despise others' beliefs, although ignorant of their probably suffer grave consequences. Until such attitudes change, the voice of Muslim moderates will always be curtailed, and Islam will continue to be a vehicle for uninformed hatred of the West.

Colin Sowden

*Abergavenny, England*

### 2A

Time and time again I am amazed by the quality of reporting by Australian journalist Michael Ware, who has tirelessly covered the war on terrorism for TIME in very difficult, trying and dangerous circumstances. It is easy to take articles like his for granted, but we must pay tribute to remarkable people like Ware who continually provide us with gritty, high-quality journalism directly from the front lines. As an aspiring journalist, I wholeheartedly salute Michael Ware.

Nick Smart

*Gold Coast, Australia*

### 2B

The connection between al-Qaeda and Iran from October 2000 to February 2001 that the 9/11 commission uncovered [July 26-August 2] is not news to everyone. Thanks to Iran's vast oil revenues, the Iranian mullahs are able to finance Islamist terrorists worldwide. Iran is, in fact, the mother of modern Islamist terrorism, with its truck bombings, suicide attacks, hostage taking and international assassinations. Iran has been on the wrong side of the law for a long time, and the world has made only minimal attempts to stop it. Misusing the funds that belong to the Iranian people, the hard-liners in Tehran are waging war against the U.S. in key spots worldwide. The U.S. and other Western governments should not negotiate with the mullahs. Instead, they should help the youth of Iran bring an end to the mullahs' regime and drain the terrorists' source of money.

Sam Savanna

*Sydney*

### 3A

The decision by the Philippines to withdraw its peacekeepers from Iraq in exchange for the release of a Philippine truck driver who was kidnapped by insurgents is to be applauded [Aug. 9]. Surely it is the duty of any government to safeguard its own people before anything else. The Philippines did not cave in to U.S. pressure or sacrifice one of its citizens to satisfy the Bush Administration.

C.A. Van Meurs

*Christchurch, New Zealand*

#### 4A

Your article "redefining torture" described efforts by the Bush Administration to reshape the U.S. stance on the torture of prisoners during interrogation [June 21]. Have we sunk to the level of those we are fighting—those who we say are using immoral methods? I never thought I would see the day when high-level U.S. government agencies would be exchanging memos attempting to justify actions that Americans would condemn if perpetrated by others. I remember the outrage that we felt during the Korean War when the North Koreans were accused of brainwashing American prisoners. Similar activities were decried in subsequent wars. Now, as an American living in Canada, I see us carrying out equally repulsive actions.

Richard Andersen

*Victoria, Canada*

#### 4B

The Iraq war is being portrayed as an unmitigated disaster. If that's the only drumbeat the American public hears, many people are going to feel apprehensive and negative about it. My parents told me that after World War II, many cases of brutality and viciousness occurred in Europe—like the aftershocks of an earthquake. But eventually those events played themselves out, order was restored and life in dictator-free societies was allowed to thrive. That is the reality of war. You don't have instant peace, affluence and harmony just because a document has been signed. I am convinced the result, perhaps many years away, will be a free and democratic Iraq that will benefit the world.

Christa Gruninger

*Vancouver, Canada*

#### 4C

The U.S. government has nowhere to hide in its shameful inaction over yet another African humanitarian crisis. The U.S. trumpets its intention to bring freedom and justice to economically important places in the Middle East but allows sadistic violence and true crimes against humanity to fester in less strategic areas, such as Africa. How can the Bush Administration look at itself in the mirror with this knowledge? And how can the international community believe the U.S.'s self-righteous claims of valiantly "liberating" oppressed nations when it took months of debate within the Administration to begin pressuring the Sudanese government to halt the slaughter of Darfurians?

Scott Whittal

*Waterloo, Canada*

#### 5A

I have been haunted and sickened by the photos and news coming out of Sudan [Oct. 4]. Most of the world seems to ignore completely the genocide in the region of Darfur carried out by the government-backed Janjaweed Arab militia against non-Arab Muslims. Although I am wondering what I can do to help, world leaders appear to be waiting for the murder to come to an end magically. With all the wealth and power in this world, why aren't they jumping in to save the people in Darfur? Are Sudanese oil interests and political alliances so important that 50,000 people must be allowed to die? It feels as though we are losing our sense of humanity. My hope for the future of our world is diminished each time we blatantly ignore the needs of our fellow human beings.

Kristy Caruso

*Sauquoit, U.S.*

#### 5B

Unless the U.S. is smart enough to make the right decision soon, it is going to have one Fallujah after another in Iraq for years to come [Nov. 22]. Sunnis and Baathists were able to control Iraq for

decades under Saddam Hussein. They will fight forever, because the Shi'ite majority would defeat them in a general election. Why not create an Iraq federation of three states—Shi'ite in the south, Sunni in the middle and Kurd in the north? Each state would govern itself, and the Iraqi federal government would be in charge of the oil industry, defense, foreign diplomacy and smoothing over religious differences. What other scheme will get the U.S. out of the Iraqi quagmire anytime soon?

Martin Michaelis

*Amherst, New Hampshire, U.S.*

### 5C

"Meet the New Jihad," on the Islamic insurgency in Iraq [July 5], provided another example of the folly of U.S. foreign policy regarding Islamic nations during the past 50 years. The U.S. helped arrange the overthrow of Iran's democratically elected President and wound up with a fundamentalist Islamic state. Our opposition to Soviet influence in Afghanistan led to the creation of the Taliban. In the process we aided and empowered Osama bin Laden. We have given uncritical support to Israel and as a result made a viable Palestinian state a virtual impossibility. We launched a unilateral and pre-emptive war on Iraq on the basis of false claims, and now a new jihad has formed against us there. Will our foreign policy again midwife into existence a new fundamentalist state?

John A. Bertsche

*Normal, U.S.*

### 5D

Sudan's Arab Janjaweed, the country's government-backed militiamen, have declared war on the black Africans of Sudan [July 5] and begun a virtual genocide against those defenseless people. Didn't the nations of the world say "Never again" after the Holocaust of the 1940s, the starvation of Biafrans in the '60s, the slaughter of Cambodians in the '70s and the wanton butchery in Rwanda in 1994? What does it take for the world to act? The U.N. is ineffectual, the European Union is asleep and Arab nations live in denial. If we Americans continue to allow genocide to repeat decade after decade, how long will it be before that crime arrives on our own shores?

Michael Bussio

*Scotts Valley, U.S.*

## Appendix B The Outer Circle

### 1A

The Japanese people should ask themselves why their national flag is being torched with greater frequency than the Stars and Stripes or the Union Jack [Nov. 29]. Like most Chinese whose grandparents bore the brunt of Japanese aggression, I am sickened by half-hearted and insincere "apologies" framed in the language of "regret" and compensation called "economic aid." I am also outraged by constant denials by the Japanese government on topics ranging from the biological-weapons program to comfort women, and I am disgusted by the deliberate omission or glorification of the war in Japanese history books. Therefore, every visit by Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine adds insult to the injuries of victims of Japanese militarism. The animosities would have been laid to rest had General Douglas MacArthur applied the denazification process used in Germany to Japan in 1945. We do not want the blood of the Japanese people. We only want them to recognize the blood of millions of innocent people they shed from 1931 to 1945. Is that so difficult?

Liew Kai Khiun  
*Singapore*

### 1B

I can relate to your cover story on Asia's "Highways to Hell" [Aug. 9]. I have lived in Singapore my entire life, and I am sometimes appalled by and ashamed of the actions of fellow drivers. Singapore has its share of aggressive, me-first motorists, yet we have the lowest number of traffic deaths among the major Asian countries, as reflected in the chart with your article. Why is this so? Singapore's small land area allows efficient administration, and its hefty traffic fines and extensive use of cameras to catch speeders act as deterrents to fast driving. An ideal traffic environment, however, is one that relies mainly on the conscientiousness of the drivers, as opposed to one that is governed by deterrents. Creating a caring and conscientious society of road users will require dedication and persistence.

Joel Kan  
*Singapore*

### 2A

How can President Bush justify the deaths of more than 1,000 U.S. troops in a war that is not necessary? No matter what Bush tells the world about fighting terrorism, Americans are now more in danger of being attacked. The President should withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq. The puppets installed there are walking corpses. The moment they are not protected by U.S.-supplied security forces, those officials will be hounded to death by the insurgents. There should be no shame for the U.S. in getting out of Iraq.

Nats Onoja Agbo  
*Lagos, Nigeria*

### 2B

Innocent American lives should no longer be wasted in Iraq. The Iraqi police and defense forces should want peace and freedom in their country enough to fight for it. The U.S. should stop sacrificing its soldiers for a cause that Iraqis are not willing to fight for themselves. The U.S. cannot secure Fallujah against further attacks from insurgents if the Iraqi police don't stand up to their responsibilities and fight for their own freedom.

Tunde Ogunjana  
*Lagos, Nigeria*

### 2C

The killings in darfur are an even greater challenge to the Muslim world than the devastation in Iraq. Muslims should know that Islam abhors racism, terrorism and all other forms of injustice. The Janjaweed's terrorist tactics are un-Islamic. Human life is sacred and so is a woman's chastity. These murderers and rapists should repent and embrace reconciliation.

Abdullahi Kirfi  
*Lagos, Nigeria*

**3A**

People holding extreme views need to understand that terrorism is a shortsighted approach that triggers an unending chain of actions and reactions. Attackers who take innocent people hostage must learn that violence against civilians only undermines their credibility, even when world opinion supports their cause. Tragedies like the Beslan killings should bring all nations together to root out terrorism. No country should be allowed to harbor terrorists.

M. Farooq Shah  
*Srinagar, Kashmir*

**3B**

No one can deny the honesty, soberness and austere public life of Singh. But there are also inabilities and inefficiencies that could work against him. Political problems may outweigh Singh's good personal qualities. India needs a firm initiative to establish political consensus. Mere advice to the political parties is not enough. Singh's humility and avoidance of personal publicity are exemplary and should be a permanent rule for all politicians. He should, however, have the courage to introduce compulsory family-planning legislation. A bold and decisive Singh will take India on a path of development and prosperity.

Madhu Agrawal  
*New Delhi*

**3C**

Your article on the suicide bombing in Jakarta focused on the terrorism still prevalent in Indonesia [Sept. 20]. That attack came less than two years after the October 2002 bombing on the island of Bali that killed 202 people. Indonesians today are praying for peace in the region and an end to terrorist activities. The devastation in Indonesia has shocked the world and clearly shows that Muslim nations are strongly affected by terrorism, the same way other countries are. Peace is something the region demands.

Akshay Mor  
*Bombay, India*

**4A**

Re *TIME*'s selections of "Best of Asia" [Nov. 22]: I can't believe you named Tokyo's Club Quattro as the Best Live Music Venue. Everyone in the region knows that the best live music is in the Philippines. Check out any happening music club in Asia, and you'll find that Philippine bands are at the center of the action. The bands at Club Quattro, which you called "rock's leading lights," like Oasis and the Red Hot Chili Peppers, are anglophone global brand names. For real musicianship, grit and oomph, the mecca for live bands is the red-light underbelly of Manila, the sin city. That's where you'll hear people who can really play. Live.

Kail M. Zingapan  
*Manila*

**4B**

South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun may have stood firm with plans to dispatch 3,000 Korean soldiers to Iraq, but one of his citizens was murdered after being taken hostage there. From this example, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo learned a lesson [Aug. 9]. Her decision to pull out our peacekeepers from Iraq in order to save a kidnapped Philippine truck driver may have been against the wishes and plans of Washington and other allies, but her actions saved a life.

Dionne Lee Esteban Caytiles  
*Quezon City, the Philippines*

**5A**

The whole world watched the nail-bitingly close presidential election, but it was followed here in Pakistan with special concern. As the most important front in the war against terrorism, Pakistan had much at stake in the outcome of the election. The man in the street had no liking for either candidate, as both Bush and Kerry seemed anti-Muslim. Kerry's belligerent and aggressive promises

to be a much stronger Commander in Chief than Bush further antagonized common Pakistanis. Now they are resigned to the re-election of Bush as the lesser of the two evils.

Colonel Riaz Jafri (ret.)

*Rawalpindi, Pakistan*

#### 6A

There is a lot of speculation about the explosion in North Korea that produced a mushroom-shaped cloud [Sept. 27]. Although Pyongyang denies it blew up anything nuclear, I wouldn't mind if North Korea acted as a counterweight to the U.S. People the world over are supposed to accept the opinions and directions of the West and to follow the American way of life. Different viewpoints, which used to be valued by democratic societies, are not very popular these days; therefore, it is good when other nations and cultures try to resist domination by the West. The North Korean government feels threatened by the U.S., so it is highly understandable that a little country aims to protect itself. That, of course, could best be achieved by developing nuclear weapons.

Tahir Niap-San

*Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

#### 7A

Re "The Battle for Hong Kong," on the struggle between Beijing and the pro-democracy camp [July 5]: In Hong Kong, the lack of democratic legitimacy is crippling the chief executive, and the same cycle is inevitable in China. China must realize that power can be derived only from the consent of the people, not from persecution and oppression. The demand for democracy in China will become so great that there will be no way for the Beijing government to suppress it with guns and tanks.

Lester H.L. Lee

*Hong Kong*

## Appendix C The Expanding Circle

### 1A

Your report on the friction between China and Japan may send the wrong message to the people of both countries. As a Japanese studying in Beijing, I have never encountered an anti-Japanese demonstration in the two years I have been here. Although there are some Chinese who are hostile to the Japanese, they are in the minority and regarded simply as impolite. In Japan, as far as I know, those who view China as an enemy are also in the minority. Nationalism in either country is not a threat to the Sino-Japanese relationship. The people of Japan and China must not be misguided by the media and should continue to deepen their understanding of one another.

Norihisa Kodama

*Beijing*

### 2A

For long periods of history, it was Japan that learned fundamental technological skills from China. During recent decades, it was Japan that taught China how to make technological advances. So now the two countries are even. Why should the Chinese hesitate to make a fresh start alongside the Japanese? Do they hate us? I don't care. Do they want to invade us? They can't. Isn't it time we put our emotions behind us and became good negotiators to get what both of us really want? I believe we can do it. Let's give it a try.

Takehiro Hashimoto

*Tokyo*

### 2B

I am not American, but I respect the choice of those who re-elected President Bush [Nov. 15]. I wish to remind them, however, that the decision they have made will also affect the citizens of the rest of the world, who desperately hope to see a less violent world in the next four years.

Patama Udomprasert

*Tokyo*

### 2C

"The Morning After" [Nov. 1] asked if, when the presidential campaign is over, it will "be possible to pick up the pieces, bridge the gaps and reunite the United States." Now that Bush has been elected for another four years, the stakes could not be higher for the people of the world, the majority of whom seem to be against him. Bush's victory was a defeat for the world. It's too bad we don't have global suffrage for U.S. presidential elections.

Tetsu Suzuki

*Kariya, Japan*

### 2D

Re "Unfinished Business" [July 12], about Japan's elections: Junichiro Koizumi has what it takes to be a great Prime Minister: dedication, sincerity and a good sense of humor. He has been getting lots of criticism from the public, but as the country's leader, he will never leave his job unfinished. He is a man of his word. We all need to wait and see. I believe we can trust Koizumi.

Takehiro Hashimoto

*Tokyo*

### 2E

The notebook item "Princess Diaries" [June 21] said that Japan's Crown Princess Masako is "utterly miserable," possibly because she is not allowed to take advantage of her career experience. When Masako married Crown Prince Naruhito, I was so happy. I admired him for having waited for Masako for six years. It must have been true love. The imperial marriage was a good model for Japanese young people. I wish the Imperial Household Agency [the ultra-traditional overseer of the activities of Japan's royal family] would change, so that the Harvard-educated princess, who worked in the Foreign Affairs Ministry, could live her life to the fullest.

Yoko Ninomiya  
*Hiroshima*

### 3A

The priority for President Bush's second term should not be Iraq but the global war on terrorism. Any successful war on terrorism must start, however, with finding a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is at the epicenter of the wider war. Because of the consequences of America's biased support of Israel, the U.S. faces strong and increasing anti-American sentiment among Muslims. The U.S. needs to change the perception that the war on terrorism is a war on Islam. The U.S. needs to be a neutral arbitrator that tolerates, supports and loves Israelis and Palestinians equally and fairly. Only then can the war on terrorism be won.

Volak Sao  
*Phnom Penh*

### 4A

Powell's comments on Taiwan's lack of sovereignty hurt the hearts of most of its people. Taiwan, by all means, is a de facto political entity with its own constitution and a government under a gradually maturing democratic system. Taiwan's people are fed up with being spectators of a tedious "one China" tug-of-war. What we desperately need from the international community is basic respect and formal recognition of our sovereign status. Taiwan's interests should not be sacrificed as U.S. foreign policy leans toward accommodating China for the foreseeable future.

Chang Huan-Lin  
*Tucheng, Taiwan*

### 4B

"The Exile and the Entrepreneur" [June 7] reported on how the 1989 protests and their brutal suppression by the government is rapidly fading from the Chinese people's memory. That is too bad. China is still haunted by the ghosts of Tiananmen Square, as the Communist Party continues to ignore the people's best interests. Compared with the democratic movements in Taiwan, the 1989 Tiananmen uprising was hardly a call for radical change. And it shouldn't have been ended with a massacre.

Song Xiaowen  
*Pingzhen City, Taiwan*

### 4C

Your article achieved a rich understanding of the health, functioning and well-being of adolescents. The ideas presented contribute to urgently needed scientific, policy, and public discussions about how we prepare our young people to become thoughtful, responsible and effective participants in their societies. Parents, teachers and professionals in relevant specialties should develop strategies to modify or mitigate the impact of the challenges, both biological and social, young people have to face. The answers to the optimal planning for producing the next generation of self-sustaining citizens have important implications for our own future, because the youth of today are the adults of tomorrow.

Angela Fan  
*Taipei*

### 5A

The attitude of Asians toward North Korean leader Kim Jong Il has changed because he has tried to do a lot for the region. Now it is time for the Bush Administration to change too and do something practical. North Korea wants diplomatic recognition and a noninvasion treaty. On your cover you show a proud Kim who is smiling, but in fact he still feels threatened.

Cheol-Ho Jang  
*Yongin, South Korea*

### 5B

North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il seems to be pushing for the unification of North and South Korea while lobbying against America's influence. Kim has been increasingly successful in strengthening his position in Asia and the world, as you correctly reported. South Korea's conservative opposition Grand National Party (GNP), once staunchly anticommunist, has changed. Many of the older generation of politicians were expelled, and its leaders are insisting that the GNP should not disturb inter-Korea projects, as the party once did. Has the North been trying to infiltrate the party? The GNP might be the last remaining obstacle to Kim's goal of improved relations with the South.

Min Jeong Koh  
*Jeju, South Korea*

#### 6A

The election campaign was extremely divisive. Voters were called on to recognize fundamental differences between the candidates. The issues of character and values may have given the edge to Bush. So how can one call for a truce if such important issues are at stake, and why should the nation fall in line behind President Bush? If you voted for Kerry, what is wrong with accepting that for the next four years this President does not speak for you? What is wrong with recognizing disunity? Harmony does not come from a nation united behind its leader, giving him a second chance. It comes from responsible citizens working toward and arguing about the principles they want to build their society on. Do not expect the divisiveness to be healed by a leader. That leader, whoever it may be, needs it to win next time.

Peter Molnar  
*Pezinok, Slovakia*

#### About the Author

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