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# ARABIC RHETORIC: MAIN IDEA, DEVELOPMENT, PARALLELISM, AND WORD REPETITION

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**ARABIC RHETORIC:  
MAIN IDEA, DEVELOPMENT,  
PARALLELISM, AND WORD REPETITION**

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A Thesis presented to  
Eastern Washington University  
Cheney, Washington

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in English, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

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By  
Melissa Van De Wege  
Winter 2013

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis contributes to the body of research on Arabic rhetoric. It specifically unites research on the elements of Arabic rhetoric of: main idea, development in body paragraphs, parallelism, and word repetition. It examines the rhetorical tendencies of native Arabic-speaking students from Saudi Arabia and one way these elements of Arabic rhetoric are reflected in essays as a whole written in English by Arabic-speaking students. This thesis also addresses the issue of whether or not Arabic rhetoric may be characterized by making multiple arguments or one argument. This study found one way that the four elements are connected together and that Arabic rhetoric may be characterized by one argument from one angle. This research also establishes preliminary work for one direction further research on Arabic rhetoric and related pedagogical implications for instructors of English.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

“For them to know the world and for the world to know them” (Weinzel, 2012), in 2005, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia implemented the first scholarship program of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to send Saudi students to Western countries to earn their undergraduate or graduate degree. Since the discovery of oil, knowledge of English has gained importance, as it is the dominant language used for business and trade in the Kingdom (Mahboob, 2013, p. 18). The ability to communicate in English means more opportunity for higher education and professions. The students traveling to the United States (U.S.) come to receive an education that is different than their own. In ESL and composition classes, they expect instructors to guide them in “what they are expected to write...to acquire the code of writing in English” (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 211). The culture of Saudi Arabia is strongly influenced by a poetic oral tradition and the religion of Islam. However, English language writing is generally accepted and respected by people all over the world (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 211), and the people of Saudi Arabia clearly demonstrate a desire to learn Western rhetorical tradition. But in order for that to happen successfully, it is beneficial for Western composition instructors to learn the Arabic rhetorical tradition as well.

Learning how to write in a different culture is difficult. Research shows that written rhetorical discourse is affected by many factors. Among these factors are the education received in the target culture, L1 and L2 language constraints, innate psychological influences like personality, and culture (Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008). Research also shows that culture is affected by many variables, such as the larger

regional culture of a country as a whole and varying sub-cultures (Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008). Therefore, students' writing may often demonstrate a complex mixture of rhetorical traits associated with both their L1 and L2 cultures. I began to discover this as I started reading the essays of my native Arabic-speaking students from Saudi Arabia.

Years after the King Abdullah program began, in September, 2011 I walked into my Composition for Multilingual Students class, a bridge class before entering the required first year composition course. Since the implementation of King Abdullah's scholarship program, there had been thousands of Saudi students coming to Eastern Washington University to earn their degrees. Having been given the opportunity to teach the class, I was looking forward to learning more about my international students. Out of my twenty-five students from various parts of the world, thirteen were from Saudi Arabia. As I began to read essays written by my Saudi students, I noticed patterns unique to those students. It seemed as though some of the essays had multiple points, and they clearly demonstrated repetition. This experience ignited a desire in me to explore the writing tradition of Arabic speakers. Eventually the time came to choose my thesis topic, and I discovered contrastive rhetoric and then Arabic rhetoric. I decided to focus my thesis on how Arabic rhetoric is reflected in English essay written by Arabic speakers, thus also demonstrating contrastive rhetoric.

There is literature describing Arabic rhetoric, but much of it is dated back decades ago. Western scholars describe Arabic rhetoric as being repetitive, non-linear, and that Arabic speakers make many points from different angles. The research discussions

among Middle Eastern scholars also found the same characteristics. However, the discussions between the Middle East and the West had been silent for many years. Moreover, no research clearly demonstrates how multiple elements of Arabic rhetoric are reflected as a whole in student essays.

After much research and analysis, it became clear that certain rhetorical features needed to be grouped together and discussed in one study so that we may see how Arabic rhetoric is demonstrated in an essay as a whole. Soon, the essay writings of many of my Saudi students were becoming clearer to me. I began to understand how the features of Arabic rhetoric that I had read about related to one another and how they were reflected in the overall essay. This thesis is an effort to connect disparate research on Arabic rhetoric and to demonstrate how Arabic rhetoric is reflected in English language essays as whole pieces of work.

### **Importance of the Research**

This research is significant. It provides a foundation for understanding Arabic rhetoric and for further research on the topic. Arabic rhetoric has not been widely researched by Western scholars, and this topic needs further attention. The existing research is also disparate, focusing on only one rhetorical element, like structure, elaboration, or syntactic analysis. In addition, no research has provided analysis of whole essays written by native Arabic speakers (Mahboob, 2013, p. 18). What has been conducted thus far does not provide researchers and instructors with an understanding of how rhetorical elements may be demonstrated in a text as a whole. Moreover, some

researchers claim that Arabic speakers make multiple points or write in a vague manner, and this may be perceived as a characteristic of Arabic rhetoric. I believe this needs further investigation.

In light of these issues, I have decided to address four rhetorical elements in this study: 1) expression of a main idea, 2) development in the body paragraphs, 3) parallelism, and 4) word repetition. These elements are aligned in one study so that instructors can understand the overall picture of Arabic rhetoric reflected in essays written by native Arabic-speaking students from Saudi Arabia. Combining these elements in this way allows us to see how they are connected to one another. These elements provide an overall picture of one way a message may be structured in Arabic rhetoric, while touching on semantic aspects in the discussion of the rhetorical elements in order to demonstrate the connection. Focusing on these elements also provides a foundation for moving forward in studying other rhetorical and linguistic elements of Arabic writing, such as the content of the message, syntactic analysis and further semantic analysis beyond what is discussed in this study.

### **Goals of the Research**

Although a number of researchers have written about the problems native Arabic-speaking students face, there is no literature that groups specific rhetorical traits together and demonstrates how they are connected and reflected in a whole piece of writing. The goal of this study is twofold. First, it is to demonstrate one way Arabic rhetoric is reflected in the persuasive writings by Arabic-speaking students from Saudi Arabia. To do this, I will discuss the previous research on Arabic persuasive discourse, focusing on

the rhetorical elements of main idea, development in the body paragraphs, parallelism, and word repetition. I then will analyze and discuss a passage of the Qur'an that demonstrates these features according to the research. Finally, I will analyze and discuss an essay written by an Arabic-speaking student from Saudi Arabia that demonstrates these characteristics.

In addition, previous research on Arabic rhetoric labels is as making multiple arguments or one argument from many angles. My second goal is to discuss whether or not Arabic rhetoric may be characterized by this feature. Through my discussion of the previous research and analysis of the Qur'anic passage and student essay, I hypothesize that Arabic rhetoric is characterized by making one argument from one angle. My premise is that the student essays will demonstrate a combination of Western and Arabic rhetoric since they were written in English in a composition class in the U.S., thus reflecting intercultural rhetoric. Therefore, this thesis is a contribution not only to the body of research on Arabic rhetoric, but also to the body of research on contrastive and intercultural rhetoric.

### **The Rhetorical Elements**

I have chosen to focus this thesis on expression of main idea, development in the body paragraphs, parallelism, and key word repetition because those elements are the most prominent in the research. They also are connected together in how they are demonstrated in whole pieces of writing. I have also chosen to refer to these elements as "main idea, development in body paragraphs, parallelism," and "key word repetition" for specific reasons. The main idea in Western rhetoric is referred to as the "thesis

statement.” A thesis statement is a main idea that is expressed directly and is then developed in a way in which each idea builds off of one another. However, Arabic rhetoric does not have what is called a thesis statement, but it does have a main idea, which is expressed indirectly. Therefore, I am referring to this element as “main idea.”

The next rhetorical element is development in the body paragraphs. In Western rhetoric, this is often referred to as “elaboration” or “evidence” given as reasoning to support the thesis statement. Arabic rhetorical development is often classified as “elaboration,” but “evidence” is distinct to Western rhetoric. Both are also referred to as “development” of a main idea; thus, I am referring to this element as it pertains to Arabic rhetoric as “development.”

The next element of Arabic rhetoric is “parallelism.” This element pertains to how paragraphs, or development, are connected together. Western rhetoric is not characterized by parallelism; Arabic rhetoric is. Parallelism is designed to create a poetic balance to the message, which is significant in Arabic rhetoric. Therefore, I am referring to this element as it is referred to in research on Arabic rhetoric – parallelism.

The last element is key word repetition. I am referring to it as such because word repetition is prevalent in Arabic rhetoric and research on the topic. Specifically, I refer to it as “*key* word repetition” to distinguish that the words are those that relate to the main idea, coming from the essay prompt. In the case of this thesis, the essay prompt has the words “inside” and “outside.” Thus, repeated key words found in an essay written by an Arabic-speaking student are the words “inside” and “outside.”

## Definition of Terms

Contrastive rhetoric – the study of how a person’s first language and culture(s) influence his or her rhetoric in a second language

Culture – the norms associated with a distinct group of people associated with a geographical location, lifestyle, discourse community, religious affiliation, or other group associated with a specific community

Diglossia – one dialect for speech and another for writing. In this thesis I am discussing the written dialect with regards to persuasive essay writing, and further reference of “Arabic rhetoric” will refer to classical written Arabic, not colloquial

Intercultural rhetoric – the study of the use of rhetorical strategies associated with various cultures and rhetorical influences and how those strategies and influences are combined and affect rhetoric

Parallelism – a balance of similar phrases or clauses that have the same grammatical structure

Rhetoric – the overall presentation of thoughts in order to relay a whole message, a presentation which is affected by rhetorical influences

Rhetorical influences – the multifaceted factors affecting which specific means a person chooses to use in order to present a message

Saudi Arabian regional culture – the norms associated with people that were born and raised in Saudi Arabia

## Overview of Thesis

Before discussing Arabic rhetoric, I will first provide an overview of contrastive and intercultural rhetoric, factors influencing rhetorical strategies, the cultural dichotomies of individualism and collectivism and how they correlate with the rhetoric of Saudi Arabia and that of the United States, and the oral tradition influencing Saudi rhetoric. This is done in the first part of my literature review in chapter two. Chapter three is the second part of my literature review. In this chapter, I discuss rhetorical strategies employed in both Western and Arabic rhetoric, focusing on the elements of: expression of a main idea, development in the body paragraphs, paragraph transition, and key word repetition. I also show how these rhetorical features are demonstrated in a passage of the Qur'an.

Chapter four is my methodology section in which I discuss my use of qualitative and quantitative research methods and the process of the study and subjects involved. In chapter five, I revisit the four elements and then analyze the passage from the Qur'an that demonstrates them. I then analyze and discuss an essay written by a native Arabic-speaking student from Saudi Arabia for these rhetorical features demonstrated in the same way as the Qur'an. Chapter six is a discussion of my conclusions and suggestions for further research on this topic. This thesis ultimately is designed to create awareness about Arabic rhetoric and to understand how it may be demonstrated in essays written by Arabic-speaking students, thus creating mutual understanding between instructors and students.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE PART 1**

### **Contrastive Rhetoric**

The term we now call “contrastive rhetoric” saw its origins in 1966 as a result of a study conducted by Robert Kaplan analyzing the paragraph structure of essays written by ESL students. Contrastive rhetoric focuses on the study of the rhetorical strategies used in discourse between people of different regions of the world and addresses the question of how the rhetorical style of communication in the first language (L1) affects a person’s communication in the second language (L2) (Connor, 2002, p. 493). Through his study, Kaplan concluded that the rhetorical strategies used in a student's essay writing in English are affected by the rhetorical strategies associated with the student’s native culture. In other words, different cultures have different rhetorical tendencies (Kaplan, 1966, p. 1). This is referred to as the “contrastive rhetoric” hypothesis.

Before Kaplan, L2 text analysis was limited to linguistic analysis. Kaplan, a linguist, specifically focused on the structure of the essays in his study and concluded that texts written in different languages display organizational patterns specific to the writer’s L1 culture. Instead of calling the variation in structure “linguistic,” he claimed it was “rhetorical” (Kaplan, 1966, p. 19): The teaching of reading and composition to foreign students does differ from the teaching of reading and composition to American students, and cultural differences in the nature of rhetoric supply the key to the difference in teaching approach” (p. 1). These learned tendencies based on one's L1 culture transfer into a student's L2 essay writing through his or her choices of rhetorical strategies like structure and style (Connor, 2002, p. 493; Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 169).

The term *culture*, however, is a vague concept and must be analyzed in terms of variables. In past years scholars in the fields of second language acquisition and linguistics have tended to classify *culture* as the influences on a person associated with the region that he or she derives from, such as in Japanese culture, American culture, or French culture. This notion has been criticized in past years as “homogenous, and as all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine personal behavior” (Atkinson, 1999, p. 626). Recent research points to culture as being all-encompassing, involving numerous amounts of influences on a person’s identity associated with culture (p. 626). The cultural identity of a single person can also be influenced by other sub-cultural factors than merely the demographic culture in which he or she resides like family background, regional background *within* the home country, socioeconomic class, religious culture, the culture of the education system in his or her country, and influence from other larger regional cultures outside of one’s home region (Atkinson, p. 626; Kaplan, 1966, p. 3; Scollon et. al., 2012, p. 23). A person can come from a specific demographic region and exhibit a complex mixture of different elements associated with various cultures. Scholars agree that although a person is affected by his or her larger regional culture as a whole, culture involves more aspects involving smaller sub-cultures (Gudykunst et. al., 1996, p. 512; Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008, p. 284).

Since Kaplan’s study, further research on contrastive rhetoric has shown that culture is, in fact, one of the influencing factors of rhetorical strategies used by a writer (Kaplan, 1966, p. 2; Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 73; Connor, 2002, p. 494; Hottell-Burkhart, 2002, p. 94; Matsuda, 2001, p. 258). Matsuda (1997) states that, “Contrastive

rhetoric suggests the need for the teachers to be aware of the different cultural, linguistic, and rhetorical traditions that students bring with them” (p. 46). Since culture, though, is influenced by many factors, contrastive rhetoric, therefore, is a field that addresses texts not merely as static products but as functional parts of cultural contexts (p. 45).

### **Culture: Individualism and collectivism**

Before contrastive rhetoric, there were the terms *individualism* and *collectivism*. These are terms to describe cultural variations associated with larger regional cultures as whole. The United States has been classified by scholars as an individualist culture, and Saudi Arabia is considered to be a collectivist culture (Hermans & Kempen, 1998, p. 1112; Bennet, 1998). Individualism is regarded as a person’s identity and beliefs influenced primarily by his or her own thoughts and opinions. Collectivism on the other hand, is regarded as one’s identity and beliefs influenced primarily by the thoughts and opinions of others (Gudykunst et. al., 1996, p. 511; Hermans & Kempen, p. 1112). Individualism, linked to the Western world, is described as a self that is attributed to being independent and autonomous from others. Collectivism, linked to the non-Western world, is attributed to include a variety of the thoughts and opinions of others (Gudykunst et. al., p. 511; Hermans & Kempen, p.1111). In what scholars classify as an individualist culture such as the U.S., “individualists give priority to personal goals over the goals of collectives, collectivists either make no distinctions between personal and collective aims or, if they do make such distinctions, they subordinate their personal aims to those of the collectivity to which they belong” (Hermans & Kempen, p. 1112).

In addition to the self being construed by primarily the individual or by others, each dichotomy has attributes characterized by a term called “in-groups” (Triandis, Bontempo, & Villareal, 1988, p. 324). In collectivist cultures, people are expected to subordinate their personal goals of an in-group to which they belong such as a family or tribe, and much of the behavior of individuals coincide with the behavior of their in-groups. One may belong to fewer in-groups, but this is considered to foster greater connection with those in the group. However, in individualist cultures, there are a greater number of in-groups to which a person belongs, such as family, co-workers, clubs, organizations, sports groups, hobby groups, and so forth, but the connection with those in the groups is weaker. In collectivist cultures, the relationship of the individual to the group tends to be very strong, and even when the group makes demands on the individual contrary to his or her personal desires, the individual will still stay a part of that group. In contrast, in individualist cultures, people often leave those groups and form new groups if the demands of a particular group are too demanding (p. 324).

According to Triandis, Bontempo, and Villareal (1988), those from individualist cultures do not feel deeply attached to their in-groups, and those groups provide merely a small portion of a person’s emotional security (p. 324). In cultures with long traditions that are maintained through the present, such as the Middle East and Asia, collectivist elements may strongly persist even though the society may become increasingly individualist. However, modern industrial cultures with fewer ties to long tradition, such as Canada and the United States, can also be characterized by both independence and emotional detachment from in-groups – primarily individualism (p. 324).

Collectivism and individualism are also directly related to communication styles. In societies with more collectivist attributes, communication is less direct and more emotionally interdependent. In contrast, in societies with more individualist attributes, communication is direct and emotionally independent (Triandis, Bontempo, and Villareal, 1988, p. 327). According to Al-Zahrani & Kaplowitz (1993), “Western cultures assign priority to the goals and identity of the individual, whereas non-Western cultures place a higher value on loyalty to the...ethnic ...group” (p. 224) or in other words, the community as a whole. This difference in cultures causes the development of different conceptions of one's self: “Individualistic cultures view the self as autonomous and *independent*. In contrast, in collectivistic cultures, people see the self as *interdependent*” (Al-Zahrani & Kaplowitz, p. 223). In turn, the Western independent view of one's self is construed by the belief that one's behavior is significantly influenced mainly through one's own *individual* internal thoughts, feelings, and actions. However, the non-Western interdependent model views the notion of one's behavior as strongly influenced by the thoughts, feelings, and actions of *others* (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999, p. 48). According to scholars, viewpoints of one's self based on an individualist or collectivist cultural influence the rhetorical strategies that people from a specific culture utilize (Connor, 2002, p. 495).

Although individualism and collectivism have been used to describe larger cultures for many years, the terms have been criticized by scholars because these notions dichotomize cultures. Members of a particular culture are socialized into that culture; however, they do not learn merely one set of values or one way to perceive themselves.

Individualism and collectivism exist simultaneously in all cultures (Gudykunst et. al., 1996, p. 513). Scholars have long since classified cultures by these terms, though, thus fostering a “West versus the rest” mentality (Atkinson, 1999, p. 630; Hermans & Kempen, 1998, p.1111). Research on cultural dichotomies is based on the “implicit assumption of cultures as internally homogenous and externally distinctive” (Hermans & Kempen, p. 1117). However, with globalization, we are living in an ever-increasing multicultural world (Atkinson, 1999, p. 630; Scollon et. al., 2012, p. 2). As previously discussed, cultures are of mixed origins, and to classify them as only “individualistic” or “collectivistic” does not take this fact into account. Significant group and individual differences exist that diversify people.

Buda and Elsayed- Elkhoully (1998) discuss varying attributes of individualist and collectivist values of managers in various professional fields. The managers were from three different countries: United States, Egypt, and lumped together into other Middle Eastern Persian Gulf States. The results of their one-year study concluded that U.S. managers scored highest on the individualism scale, Egypt scored higher than the Gulf states but less than the U.S., and the Gulf state managers scored lowest on the individualism scale and highest on the collectivism scale (p. 491). This demonstrates that differences and varying levels of individualism- collectivism exist between sub-cultures of different regions like the Middle East, such as between Egypt and other Gulf states (p. 491). Egyptian businessmen also have had a “long-standing relationship with the United States” (p. 489), and many have been educated there and have thus been more exposed to Western culture than executives of smaller Gulf State nations thus causing more

individualist influence (p. 489). This phenomenon may also be said for other countries in the Middle East.

### **Criticism of Contrastive Rhetoric**

Contrastive rhetoric has also acquired many critics. Scholars have criticized Kaplan for reducing rhetoric to merely structural elements and not recognizing that rhetoric is multidimensional. The resulting notion of contrastive rhetoric has also been criticized for not taking into account the complexity of the writer and the writer's multifaceted cultural and personal background. In addition, critics have deemed Kaplan for being ethnocentric and for "alleged insensitivity to cultural differences" (Connor, 2002, p. 493) and for "dismissing linguistic and cultural differences in writing among different languages, e.g., lumping Chinese, Thai, and Korean speakers in one Oriental group" (Kassabgy, Ibrahim, & Aydelott, 2004) thus limiting the writer to merely a one-dimensional product of his or her regional culture. Some have concluded that contrastive suggests a cultural dichotomy between West and non-Western cultures, which seems to champion the superiority of Western writing (Connor, 2002, p. 493; Kassabgy, Ibrahim, & Aydelott, 2004, p. 5; Hatim, 1997). This criticism also reflects the "changing theoretical winds in Western academia" (Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008). The current traditional pedagogical approach to teaching U.S. Western rhetorical style has also been criticized because it may be viewed as superior to other rhetorical traditions (Matsuda, 1997, p. 46).

Since Kaplan's original study, many changes have taken place in the study of contrastive rhetoric. Kaplan himself responds to the criticism, maintaining his viewpoint that the rhetorical structure of languages is different (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 9), but he grants the notion that "[i]t is probably true that, in the first blush of discovery, I overstated both the difference and my case. In the years since that article first appeared, I have been accused of reductionism – of trying to reduce the whole of linguistics to this single issue" (p. 9). He then concedes that was not his intent; however, he has become more convinced that his notion has validity. He claims that in his experience, ESL students write texts that are structured differently than those of native English speakers. He simply was attempting to define the differences (p. 9). He asserts that the important differences in his study did not occur at the syntactic level, a linguistic level, but at what Kaplan classified as the "rhetorical level; i.e., at the level of organization of the whole text" (p. 10). This has led critics to conclude that Kaplan was reducing written rhetoric to be structural and only culturally influenced. Kaplan has further modified his position, moving away from an interpretation that rhetorical patterns exclusively reflect patterns of thinking in the L1. He instead holds that "cross-cultural differences in writing can be explained by different conventions of writing, which are learned, rather than acquired" (Kassabgy, Ibrahim, & Aydelott, 2004, p. 5). Kaplan's own recent writings in the past decade are clear examples of how contrastive rhetoric has advanced, but unfortunately, critics remain fixated on the 1966 article (Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008, p. 304).

Although he focused mainly on structure, Kaplan's study was foundational in the account of differences in essays written by ESL students for academic purposes. It

introduced new insights: 1) ESL students' essay writing in English is influenced by the writing they learn in their native culture and 2) writing is influenced by culture in complex ways (Connor, 2002, p. 495). The study of culture expands to much more than merely a culture associated with a specific group of people from a specific region. This knowledge provides a foundation for this thesis in analyzing the rhetorical features utilized by people of the regional cultures of the United States and Saudi Arabia.

### **Rhetorical Influences**

Instead of merely viewing rhetoric as culturally influenced, Matsuda (2001), in response to Ying's 2000 article "On the Origins of Contrastive Rhetoric," addresses the issue of Kaplan's view of contrastive rhetoric as a synthesis of "three intellectual traditions, including contrastive analysis, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and the then-emerging field of composition and rhetoric" (p. 260). In his original article, Ying contends, contrary to previous scholars' claims, that "[t]he Sapir-Whorf view of language as a causal determination is not compatible with Kaplan's position that rhetoric is evolved out of culture" (Ying, 2001, p. 265). Matsuda then asserts that Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric hypothesis is affirmed by (but not originated from) the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which claims that language influences thought. Matsuda reasons that Kaplan's theory ultimately extended the discussion of linguistic elements beyond grammar and thought, and into the realm of culture (p. 258).

According to Matsuda (1997), influences affecting rhetoric are culture, linguistic constraints (language), and education (p. 47). The linguistic explanation claims that

linguistic factors are what influence a writer's rhetorical strategies and that we need to teach the syntax of the language to students for them to be able to produce rhetorically effective texts (p. 48). The cultural explanation, derived from Kaplan's initial study, claims that cultural factors influence a writer's rhetorical strategies (p. 48). The educational explanation argues that the texts produced are the result of the education a given student received in the L1 culture (p. 48), and the writer is seen as a static "writing machine" (p. 48) in which he or she receives input from education and mechanically produces rhetoric in the form that instructors seek, according to what was taught to the student. "L2 writing is expected to signify the reader's [educational and cultural] context, not the writer's. That is, the L2 writer is writing from the context with which he or she is familiar (e.g. the U.S. academic discourse community). The L2 text in this model is placed in the reader's context, from which the writer is excluded" (p. 50). Thus, the L2 writer is writing from a line of thought that contradicts that of the reader – the U.S. composition instructor (Kaplan, 1966, p. 4).

These three theories Matsuda discusses are not "mutually exclusive...at this point, little evidence exists to support the view that any one of them is most salient" (Matsuda, 1997, p. 48), and he classifies them "static" (p. 47). Matsuda asserts that the theories have limited the application of the research involving contrastive rhetoric to the idea that teacher must program a specific rhetorical style into the L2 students' minds – a rhetorical style reflective of the educational influence theory of rhetorical influences (p. 50). This is applicable to the teaching of composition in the L1 to native English-speaking U.S. students as well. Recent contrastive rhetoric research shows that the writer, whether an

L1 or L2 writer, is affected by all three factors and many more, and thus the writer produces texts affected by many variables (Matsuda, 1997, p. 50; Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 57; Connor, 2011, p. 37; Connor, 2011; Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008; Xinghua, 2011, p. 60).

Matsuda, along with other scholars, has also expressed that rhetoric is influenced by more factors than those three: “Textual features are equated with the personal background of the ESL writer” (Matsuda, 1997, p. 51). In addition to being influenced by culture, language, and education, rhetoric is also influenced by innate personality, gender, economic stability or instability, pleasant or stressful life circumstances at the time, fear, happiness and so forth (Gudykunst et. al, 1996, p. 518; Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008, p. 81). Scholars agree that “many people in CR agree that language/ culture/ educational contexts and individual differences, the socio-historic moment, economic conditions, and many other things...play roles in shaping any given written text” (Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki , p. 284). It is also imperative to consider that although rhetorical strategies may be influenced by language, culture, education, and other personal influences, they alone do not solely determine the outcome of the message. Rhetoric reflects a complex process that the writer goes through, involving the situation and the audience, as he or she respond to the context of the writing assignment (Connor, 2011, p. 29; Matsuda, 1997, p. 52). One must take into consideration many other factors. Writing, in part, is the process of the writer deciding how to respond to the context of writing (Matsuda, 1997, p. 52).

## **Intercultural Rhetoric**

Since the study of contrastive rhetoric began, scholars have mainly been concerned with student essay writing. However, the study concerns itself with patterns of writing in English-for-specific-purposes such as contrastive texts' linguistics elements, the study of writing as a cultural-educational activity, ethnographic studies, and genre-specific studies such as journal articles, business reports, letters of application, grant proposals, and editorials (Kassabgy, Ibrahim, & Aydelott, 2004, p. 7). The field has also expanded beyond studying essay structure to include the rhetorical situation involving the written text, authorship, and audience. It is now a fully interdisciplinary field, involving many factors (Connor, 2002, p. 494; Kassabgy, Ibrahim, & Aydelott, 2004, p. 1). In 2004, Ulla Connor proposed the new term "cross-cultural" rhetoric to reflect this cross-cultural study of writing that encompasses broadening trends of study in the field to examine language in different ethnographic settings. These settings allow for the inclusion of smaller cultures while also preserving the use of text analysis, genre analysis, personal ethnographic analysis, and corpus analysis (Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki, 2008, p. 12). This term is called *intercultural rhetoric*.

In a 2004 conversation between Matsuda and Atkinson, published in the book *Contrastive Rhetoric: Reaching to Intercultural Rhetoric*, they discuss intercultural rhetoric and the future implications of it.

Atkinson states:

I would say, if I were to argue on behalf of it, that the term intercultural suggests that no rhetorical tradition is pure or purely indigenous.... That's the 'inter.' Between cultures....I don't know if intercultural rhetoric is the right term, but I personally want some kind of a concept that stresses the relationships – the 'inters,' the connections – rather than the things that have been stressed. I'm not saying that means you can't talk about cultural differences or rhetorical differences. I totally agree with you that culture has not been adequately conceptualized in CR....So even though I'm not saying we need to avoid difference at all, I think difference in and of itself is a limited way of looking at anything. I personally want some kind of a concept – or a name for the subject area – that leads us in a direction of thinking about the many complex forms of relationship, including relationships of difference (p. 286).

### **Differences and Similarities in Rhetorical Tradition between Middle Eastern Countries**

As I previously discussed, rhetorical tradition is influenced by many other factors than simply the larger culture of a region as a whole. Different countries in the Middle East, for example, have distinct cultures, and even different countries use their own dialect of English, reflecting that country's worldview (Mahboob, 2013, p. 14). In Saudi Arabia, for example, the textbooks used in the instruction of English link English with a Saudi worldview that is connected to Islamic values (p. 23). In addition, in the first part of this literature review, I briefly discussed differences in communication between the U.S, Egypt, and other Gulf States as shown in Nelson, Al Batal, and El Bakaray's 2002 study investigating implicit/ explicit Egyptian Arabic and U.S. English communication style. The study I discussed concluded that the subjects from Egypt communicated more directly than the subjects from the other Gulf States but less directly than those from the U.S. This also shows differences in the cultures associated with different countries within the Middle Eastern culture as a whole and thus reflects intercultural communication.

Like different people from distinct countries, contrastive rhetoric is truly

multifaceted. It has come from one study conducted by Kaplan in 1966 that was heavily criticized to a study that addresses complex mixes of individualism and collectivism, what constitutes culture, what influences rhetoric, and where the discipline is going from here. Contrastive rhetoric has become multidimensional, thus transforming into intercultural rhetoric – a study involving culture, rhetorical influences, and the rhetorical situation. Intercultural rhetoric will continue to expand and build bridges between people of different backgrounds.

## **CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF LITERATURE PART 2**

### **Aristotle and the Muslims**

The rhetoric of the West and rhetoric of the Middle East have crossed paths before. The history of Western rhetoric traces back to Europe from the city of Granada in the Spanish region of *Al-Andalus* or *Andalusia*, ruled by the Muslims from 711 to 1492 CE. In that time period, they were more commonly referred to as the *Moors*. In Granada's grand Moorish palace, called the *Alhambra*, Western rhetoric was born out of Aristotle.

Western rhetoric is heavily influenced by the works of Aristotle, including his famous book *Rhetoric* (Borrowman, 2008, p. 342) in which he identified and discussed three rhetorical appeals on which an argument is based: *ethos* – perceived credibility of the rhetor, *logos* – logical reasoning to support an argument, and *pathos* – emotional appeal to the audience. The rhetor must first be perceived as credible. The rhetor then uses logical reasoning to support an argument, while employing emotional appeal. These three persuasive appeals are taught in classrooms as necessary for rhetorical persuasion. The teacher may expect the student to first establish a premise for the argument, then support the argument with reasoning, and appeal to the audience's emotions. According to Aristotle, rhetoric also involves the message, whether written or spoken; the audience; the messenger; and the surrounding situation that encompasses the rhetorical discourse. In a classroom, the message is the written text produced by the student, the audience is the teacher, the messenger is the student writing the text, and the situation is the context of the discourse. This is rhetoric according to Aristotle, and Western rhetoric is based on

the works of Aristotle.

Borrowman explores the development of Western rhetoric and how the West owes an acknowledgement to Islamic scholars. This is because the Moors discovered the works of Aristotle after having been lost for centuries. After Aristotle's death, his manuscripts were hidden in a cave. But they were then found and passed from his successors to multiple owners and then became lost again. They were eventually discovered by the Moors, who brought the documents with them to Spain from Africa in 711 when they conquered Spain (p. 345).

From 711 to 1492 CE, Spain was controlled by the Moors, and the region of *Al-andalus*, or Andalusia, was the center of the scholarly inquiry for them (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 368). Following the Prophet Muhammad's command to "seek knowledge even unto China," (p. 369) the Moors brought the rediscovered works of Aristotle to their learning centers in the Spanish region of Andalusia. In the early decades of the tenth century, Islamic Spain experienced a time of significant intellectual achievement in which the Muslims, Christians, and Jews alike contributed to a flourishing of the arts, literature, astronomy, medicine, and other disciplines (Borrowman, 2008, p. 343). This was a period of tolerance of the Jews' and Christians' religions. During this time of the Muslims' Spanish rule, Aristotle's works, including *Rhetoric*, were translated from Latin into Arabic. But the Arabs did far more than merely translate Aristotle's works. "They studied it, considered it, reconciled its paganism with their own monotheism, and transmitted both the original texts and their responses to those scholars who

followed” (p. 346). In an attitude that was tolerant not only of Jews and Christians, but also of Aristotelian thinking, Aristotle’s writings flourished in Andalusia (p. 344), and many scholars agree that his works had been saved by oblivion due to the translations and close study done by the Arabs (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 370).

The most prominent of the scholars was a 12th century scholar by the name of Ibn Rushd, or his more commonly used name - Averroes. Averroes translated and commented on virtually every work by Aristotle as they existed in the Arab world (Borrowman, 2008, p. 353). Averroes was known as "The Commentator" (p.344) for his vast and multifaceted body of translation and commentaries done on Aristotle’s works, specifically, *Rhetoric* (p. 344). Averroes was schooled in the translation of Greek texts into Arabic. Agreeing with Aristotle, Averroes saw rhetoric as a persuasive tool in discourse and viewed logical reasoning supported by facts as important components of rhetoric (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 375).

Based on his advocacy for pagan thought, Averroes had political motives in his translations and commentaries of Aristotle (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 377). He asserted that the pagan Greek philosophical logic and reasoning of ideas complemented Islamic teachings instead of contradicted them: "Logic, and, thus, rhetoric, was, for Averroes, independent of ideology or religion - a revolutionary, if not subversive, concept at that time and place" (p. 371). For the Muslims, reasoning was based on ideology from the Qur’an and emotional appeal through utilizing language based on that of the Qur’an. But Averroes was viewed as furthering an agenda of collaboration between intellectual reasoning

separate from religion and intellectual reasoning based on Islamic beliefs. He desired Pagan texts to be integrated into religion and contended that knowledge could be reached through logical reasoning based on facts (p. 373), not solely by religion. Averroes begins his commentaries with (Lea Clark citing Averroes from *Averroes, 1977, p. 63*) "In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Help me, God" (p. 375). He then follows that with his own words such as these from one of his commentaries: "A Discourse on Oratorical Statements" (p. 375). This demonstrates a prominent characteristic of Arabic rhetoric - tying the rhetorical prose to Islam and the language of the Qur'an. Averroes did this. He eloquently meshed Aristotelian and Islamic ideologies together.

Borrowman notes that Averroes' views and appreciation for Greek philosophy flourished during the time of tolerance for Judaism and Christianity under Muslim rule. However, his views eventually clashed with an intensification of Islamic orthodoxy during the 12th century. At this time, a fundamentalist group of Muslims known as the *Almohades* moved in to Spain from Morocco. This led to an enforcement of a common nationality and religion – Islam. This group of Muslims believed that Averroes' translations and commentaries were furthering a particular agenda that was contrary to Islam (Borrowman, 2008, p. 344). The Commentator's works were then eventually disregarded in the centers of learning (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 370). Islamic religious orthodoxy clashed with Aristotle (Borrowman, 2008, p. 354).

But Averroes had great influence on Western rhetoric. After the Muslims were driven out of Spain by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain in 1492 CE, the Catholic Christians discovered the Arabic translations and commentaries on Aristotle's works, performed largely by Averroes. The transcripts and commentaries were then translated from Arabic back into Latin and became integrated into Western European society (Borrowman, 2008, p. 357). If the Muslims had not brought Aristotle's works to Andalusia, Spain, the transcripts might have been forever lost, and the world today may not have Aristotle's works. This contribution of the Middle East is of great significance. Averroes' translations and commentaries served as a means by which the rhetorical prose of the West was developed, especially during the Renaissance (Borrowman, 2008, p. 354; Lea Clark, 2007, p. 380).

Today, although Averroes' texts have not been translated into English, Western scholars study them in Arabic in order to further understanding of Aristotle's influence, through Averroes, upon Western rhetoric (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 374). It is clear that Aristotle influenced Western society's rhetoric through Averroes' commentaries, but Averroes' texts were widely disregarded in the Muslim world until the late nineteenth century. Scholars have concluded that the lack of influence of Averroes on Arabic rhetorical tradition is because he advocated for the works of a philosopher whose reasoning was not tied to religion (Lea Clark, p. 381).

However, the Middle East, just like the West and the entire world, utilizes persuasive strategies of building credibility to establish a premise for an argument,

developing an argument through reasoning, and emotional appeal to the audience.

However, in Arabic rhetoric reasoning is based on utilizing verses from the Qur'an and Islamic beliefs, and there is great emphasis on emotional appeal through the use of poetic language, which is based on the Qur'an. Rhetoric is tied to religion, and the rhetoric of Aristotle was disregarded by the Muslims because it is separate from religious beliefs. In modern-day Arabic, the word *rhetoric* has two translations. One is *ilm al-balagha*, and the other is *fann al-khataba*. The first term is referring to the science of eloquence and involves the study of poetic language. This translation is associated with historical Islamic rhetoric and is the rhetoric that is primarily used in the Muslim world today. The second term is used to refer to the foreign tradition of rhetoric, separate from religion that is imported from Aristotle (Halldén, 2005, p. 20).

Although Averroes has historically been rejected by the Muslim world due to his clash with strict Islamic thought, Averroes' translations are now gathering more interest more recently in the Arab world. His Arabic translation of and commentary on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* has recently been published and distributed publicly in the Middle East (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 385). However, Middle Eastern rhetoric is still largely uninfluenced by Averroes and more influenced by Islamic thought and Qur'anic language. It still reflects the ideals of the Islamic world as a whole, and uses Islamic thought and language based on the Qur'an in its rhetorical prose.

### **Arabic's Oral History: Its connection to Arabic rhetoric**

To understand Arabic rhetoric, one must first know that in the Muslim world there is a seamless relationship between religion and culture and therefore, Arabic rhetoric. Islam is the dominant religion in Saudi Arabia, and the people collectively reflect the values of the religion; Islam prescribes the code of ethics and behavior. There is no separation of church and state in Saudi Arabia, and the law is based on the holy book of Islam, the Qur'an. Saudi Arabia is also home to the holy city of Mecca, which is the center of the Islamic world, and Saudis are said to regard themselves as “keepers of the Great Mosque, [and]...[t]hey feel it is their duty to uphold the tenets of Islam” (Flaitz, 2003, p. 170). Because of this, Arabic rhetorical discourse is deeply connected to the poetic prose of the Qur'an (Mohamed & Omer, 2000). Arabic rhetoric is viewed primarily as a way to become closer to God – Allah – and study truths about Him and His word (Lea Clark, 2007). Thus, in the classroom writing is expected to mirror the language of the Qur'an (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207), and students are marked down for not doing so. In contrast, the U.S. has separation of church and state. Western rhetoric is not tied to the language of any one religious book. It is viewed as a set of strategies for relaying information (Lea Clark, 2007, p. 371) and is separate from any religious ideology. In U.S. classrooms, language mirroring that of a religious book like the Bible, for example, is not desired by instructors in essay writing. In fact, in striking contrast to Saudi Arabia, some instructors, especially at public universities, may not allow their students to reference the Bible or other religious texts in essays.

Saudi Arabian culture and written discourse are considered to be heavily influenced by the Arabic language's oral history, which, according to research, influenced the language of the Qur'an (Johnstone Koch, 1990; Johnstone Koch, 1983).<sup>1</sup> Historically, oral poetry has played a prominent role in Saudi culture. Before the foundation of Islam through the Prophet Muhammad, oral poetry was a means of telling stories in the tribal nomadic societies of the Middle East (Borrowman, 2008, p. 348). The storyteller was a man who travelled across tribes, and, through story-telling, the Arabic language became highly poetic. The stories relied heavily on description and repetition. It was in this "nomadic world of sun and sand" (Borrowman, 2008, p. 348) that the Prophet Muhammad relayed the Qur'an orally to his followers through Arabic - a language that was heavily poetic - a reflection of the culture at the time. Through the foundation of Islam, Muhammad united the polytheistic nomadic tribes of the Middle East, and, after the religion was formed through the transmission of the Qur'an, the Arabic language quickly developed a new aim - as a medium for the glorification of God through the Islamic religion (p. 348).

For 43 years, the Qur'an was transmitted orally in Arabic before being written down. Even though the Qur'an exists in written text, there is great concern to preserve the conventions of oral recitation through the written word. In the case of the Bible, however, the primary religious text of the Christian West, the oral testimonies underwent changes as they were put into writing since the books of the Bible were written by several people

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<sup>1</sup> Some scholars may contend the reverse is true – that the language of the Qur'an influenced the Arabic language because God transmitted messages to the Prophet Muhammed utilizing specific rhetorical strategies. This issue needs further research.

over thousands of years and were incorporated into one whole discourse, thus not preserving oral tradition as we see in the Qur'an (Marston Speight, 1989). Middle Eastern culture ties back to oral tradition; thus, Saudi Arabian culture has been classified as "oral" (Mohamed, & Omer, 2000, p. 47; Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 172; Johnstone Koch; 1990, p. 216; Johnstone Koch, 1983, p. 50; Zaharna, 1995, p. 243).

Zaharna discusses Arabic's history in oral communication as a form of art, asserting that "...[t]he major socio-historical forces that influenced the role of Arabic come from the language's association as an art form, a religious phenomenon, and an identity tool" (Zaharna, 1995, p. 245). These factors have shaped the role of the language in a different way than that of English. Linguistically, Arabic lends itself to highly poetic language (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 172). This is important in the Saudi Arabian culture because the written language and written rhetorical strategies used are viewed as a means for retaining the audience's attention as well as making the message agreeable to the audience in order to build rapport (Zaharna, 1995, p. 244). In Arabic "Listener involvement is heightened, and the aesthetics of style and audience relations may supersede the informational aspects of a message" (p. 244). Thus, classical written Arabic is still closely tied to oral poetic prose (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 172), which is emulated in the Qur'an.

In contrast, Western culture is considered to be "literate" as opposed to "oral" (Mohamed, & Omer, 2000, p. 47; Zaharna, 1995, p. 243). This is because historically, in the West, the written word, not oral has been considered to be more valuable. The written

language has been used more as an instrument for directly conveying information than as a means to connect with the audience (Zaharna, 1995, p.243). Although English, like every other language, has roots in oral tradition since oral language develops before written, it does not have close ties to poetic oral tradition.

### **Direct and Indirect Main Idea**

A language and culture's ties to oral tradition are directly connected to how a main idea of a message is expressed. Literature shows that Western and Arabic rhetoric are distinguished in terms of direct and indirect communication styles (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243; Nelson, Al Batal & El Bakary, 2002, p. 42). In many cultures, conveying a direct main idea, evidenced by a clear thesis statement, is not important. Writing is evaluated for what it does *not* express and for what it leaves up to interpretation by the reader. It is not the responsibility of the writer to explicitly state the main idea (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999, p. 48). Direct communication, as evidenced by common expressions like, "Don't beat around the bush" (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243) and "Get to the point" (p. 243) is one of the Western communication styles' defining characteristics (p. 243), and this is demonstrated in writing by conveying a clear thesis statement. **Indirectness**, however, is a defining characteristic of Arabic rhetorical communication (Nelson, Al Batal & El Bakary, 2002, p. 40).

Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996) point out five Western cultural assumptions that students from many cultures often struggle with in understanding and utilizing. One of the cultural assumptions that they address is that the essay must have a clear thesis

statement that the reader does not have to attempt to find. (p. 25). This concept causes problems for many Saudi students. This is because a teacher may automatically assume that the "thesis-driven" (p. 25) model is universal. However, this is not relevant in Arabic rhetoric, and many students have trouble understanding and utilizing the thesis-driven strategy even after being taught it. There is a rhetorical structure designed to foster connection with the audience through a poetic message, not tell the audience a direct message, and instructors may not address the differences to the students.

Zaharna (1995) also specifically points out that in Western rhetoric, the "burden of meaning" (p. 243) falls on the person giving the message to accurately and thoroughly convey it. Arabic rhetoric, though, tends to place more emphasis on the context of the message than the message itself: "The listener must understand contextual clues in order to grasp the full meaning of the message" (p. 242). This requires more involvement on the part of the audience since the audience must decipher what the person giving the message actually wants to convey within the context of the writing. It is unnecessary for the writer to be specific because the details of the message are in the context. The "burden of meaning" (p.243) falls on the reader. There is greater involvement on the part of the receiver, and this, in turn, creates more of an importance on style of language and building emotional rapport with the audience (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 173).

Previous research on Arabic rhetoric involving the context of a message has also specifically been influenced by Hall's (1976) concept of high-context/ low-context cultures. According to Hall, high-context communication is one in which most of the

information is decoded within the context of the message, and little is directly stated (p. 93). What is *not* communicated – the context of a given situation – is as important if not more so than what *is* communicated. Conversely, in low-context communication, most of the information is presented explicitly in the words. Middle Eastern countries have been classified as high-context and Western countries as low-context cultures, but this dichotomous viewpoint has also been criticized since cultures are a complex mixture of the two.

In addition to an implicit main idea, indirectness is also reflected in not directly addressing a topic in question. Thus the person receiving the message is prompted to ask questions of the messenger to understand the full idea of the message, in turn, heightening audience involvement. Johnstone (1989) gives the example of a famous journalist interview conducted in 1979 in which Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci was granted an interview with Ayatollah Khomeini, a political leader of Iran. In the interview, Fallaci used syllogistic reasoning to challenge Khomeini to reexamine and clarify the reasoning on which he based his claims. Khomeini, instead, did not directly address Fallaci's questions and refused to respond to them (p. 141). For example, Fallaci, in an attempt to challenge Khomeini's prohibition of alcohol and music, argued to him that if, "according to Khomeini, drinking and singing are sinful, and if the Pope drinks and sings, then the Pope must be a sinner" (p. 141). Khomeini rejected the argument, saying that the rules of Fallaci's priests did not interest him and that Islam does not allow alcoholic drinks and "that's all" (p. 141).

Towards the end of the interview, Fallaci also attempted, as she did several times, to have Khomeini to clarify his notion of democracy, asking him to define the term. Khomeini did not directly define the term but instead, told a story from the history of Shi'ite Islam and ended with, "Can you give me a better example of democracy?" (p. 141). The interview turned into an argument in which Khomeini accused Fallaci of being a prostitute. Fallaci, in an outrage, stripped off her burka (full-body covering) in Khomeini's presence, and Khomeini ordered her out of the room, refusing to see any more Western journalists (p. 141). This may seem like Khomeini did not understand or was pretending to not understand Fallaci's questions, but it is instead a difference in rhetorical communication styles – directness and indirectness.

In the case of the classroom, a native Arabic-speaking student may not directly address the essay prompt given by the instructor. The following is an excerpt of an essay written by an Egyptian student for an intermediate-level composition class that was part of an intensive ESL program. The essay prompt was "What was the most frightening experience you ever had?"

The thing that makes me frightened to think about is death. I don't like it because it takes one of my best friends and when I begin to think if one of my family died, what would happen to me. I love my father, my mother, and my brother and I can't imagine my situation in this case. Really I don't know what I'd do. And really I worry about my father and mother because they are becoming old. And I can't do anything to save them. I am just studying to keep them happy. And if I knew the way to keep them happy and alive forever, I'd do it and I'd like to give them my life on a gold tray. I feel afraid when I think about this problem. And I don't know how to solve it. I am just praying to God and asking him for a good, long, happy life for my parents (Johnstone, 1989, p. 140).

In this excerpt, the student did not state his or her most frightening experience, like the prompt asked. The student did not use the word “experience” nor wrote about a specific one in his or her life. This is an example of not directly addressing the prompt.

In summary, teachers may find an indirect main idea in an essay written by a native Arabic-speaking student. The student may not utilize the word given in the prompt by the teacher and therefore, the student’s essay may not elicit a clear thesis statement.

Therefore, the teacher may have to attempt to find the main idea, which can lead to confusion on the teacher’s part. In addition, a native Arabic-speaking student may not directly address the prompt, which is also an example of indirectness.

### **Development in Body Paragraphs: Elaboration**

A direct main idea lends itself to what scholars have classified as a “linear” (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243) writing structure, whereas an indirect main idea lends itself to a “non-linear” or “circular” (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243) structure. Western rhetoric employs a linear structure of writing, and Arabic rhetoric, non-linear or circular (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 206). In Western rhetoric, paragraph development is done by first introducing the topic and providing information. This is the premise of the argument. The thought pattern is done by conveying a direct main idea – a thesis statement – after the introduction providing the premise, followed by examples to support the main idea, elaborating on those examples with illustrations in the body paragraphs, and then summarizing the main points in the conclusion. Each idea stems from the argument, which was built off of the premise, and the ideas build off of one another in a “linear” (Kaplan, 1966, p. 17) manner. This gives the reader a sense forward movement.

Arabic rhetoric, however, employs a model of **elaboration** different to that of Western rhetoric – one that stresses the manner in which the words are conveyed. This is done in the paragraph development through restatement of the initial idea or information from the introduction, followed by the use of many adjectives and adverbs relating to the main idea (Zaharna, 1995, p. 244; Flaitz, 2003, p. 168). This is because the Qur'an illustrates ideas in this manner. The goal of developing an argument in the paragraph development in Western rhetoric is to use a "syllogistic demonstrative logic" (Johnstone, 1989, p. 152) whereas Middle Easterners use a "presentational" (p. 152) mode of persuasion. In Arabic rhetoric, ideas do not build off of one another to relate back to a thesis statement.

Presenting different perspectives and examples in paragraph support in a linear manner does not exist in Arabic prose (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207). Instead of using illustrations supporting specific examples that lead back to the thesis statement, one may find an initial idea restated, followed by a string of descriptive words and phrases, and the conclusion must introduce a new idea. Native Arabic-speaking students may introduce an idea, then restate it, and then describe an argument multiple times in their body paragraphs. The body paragraphs may not contain specific examples relating to the main idea with elaboration on those examples and instead, contain adjectives and adverbs relating to the main idea, which is the argument (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 208).

To a Western instructor, the ideas may seem disorganized with no focus (Zaharna, 1995, p. 245; Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212; Flaitz, 2003, p. 168; Thomson- Panos & Thomas-Ruzic, 1983, p. 615). "In the Arabic culture, there is a strong emphasis on the form of poetic expression than upon the content of the message. Arabs pay far more

attention to impressiveness... and they are swayed more by words than by ideas” (Moujtahid, 1996, p. 7). Much of the previous research done on Arabic rhetoric by Western scholars falsely labels it as disorganized, "characterized by a general vagueness of thought which stems from overemphasis on the symbol at the expense of the meaning... [and that] Arabic writers [are] confused, coming to the same point two or three times from different angles" (Hatim, 1997, p. 161).

This has been characterized by Western and Arab scholars alike as “exaggeration” (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207) or “over-assertion” (Johnstone Koch, 1990, p. 216; Thompson-Panos & Thomas- Ruzic, 1983, p. 619; Abu Rass, 2011, p. 208). Westerners may often feel that people from the Middle East exaggerate their ideas. Moujtahid (1996) addresses common expressions in English and compares them to what a Middle Easterner would say. For example, the equivalence to "thank you" in English is, in Arabic, "May Allah increase your well-being" (p. 2). In the West, one might also say to a friend or relative, "Get well," but someone from the Middle East would say, "May there be upon you nothing but health if Allah wills" (p. 2). This is very ordinary to speakers of Arabic but quite exaggerated to speakers of English. Furthermore, as a general rule in Middle Eastern culture, every phrase of courtesy must be returned with a more elaborate phrase than the previous one. For example, someone from the Middle East may say, "May your day be prosperous." To that, another might reply, "May your day be prosperous and blessed" (p. 3).

Abu Rass (2011), however, veers slightly away from the notion that Arabic rhetoric is driven by mainly emotional appeal through elaborate, poetic words. He

discusses Arabic's persuasive strategy with reference to a study that Al-Khatib (1994) conducted. According to Al-Khatib's study, Arabic rhetorical persuasion is based on three major modes: establishing a premise of trustworthiness, argumentation, and finally, appeal to emotions.

First, persuaders try to convince the audience by asserting their trustworthy and reliability. Second, they attempt to persuade others by argument providing opinion and supporting it by giving convincing reasons. Third, persuaders may appeal to the audience emotionally. It is usually used through the use of religion and religious devices and the use of proverbs and wisdoms. Religious devices mean the use of some Qura'nic verses. The use of proverbs and wisdoms refers to the sayings and lines of the verse. Al-Khatib's study reveals that these three modes work together (p. 208).

Johnstone Koch (1983) tells a story that illustrates well the use of Arabic style of elaboration of the main idea in Arabic discourse. She had received a call from someone who had heard about her work on Middle Eastern persuasive discourse. The caller first introduced himself with an Arab name, gave background information, and began by discussing his research that was related to hers. She was about to give him her standard reply: "[H]is work sounded interesting, [she] was glad he had called, and [she] would be glad to..." (p. 47). However, before she was able to do so, he again gave his background information and told her how his work was similar to hers. Before the conversation ended, he has rephrased his initial background story and described his research several times. Thus, elaboration in native Arabic-speaking students' essays may not be shown in examples but by stating an initial idea, followed by elaboration with many descriptive words and phrases, then restating the initial idea again and elaborating again, then introducing a new idea in the conclusion, taking the reader in various directions.

As the written message is intended to mirror the language of the Qur'an, we see that the Qur'an has many examples of elaboration in which the main idea is described many times or restated again. In the following passage, we see that "He is God" is immediately rephrased in a different way: "There is no God but He." In addition, instead of elaborating on specific examples of God demonstrating certain characteristics, we see many different adjectives describing who God is. Finally, a new idea is introduced: "All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him."<sup>2</sup> I have transcribed the passage exactly as it appears in the translated version of the Qur'an.

Qur'an 59:22-24. In this passage, we see that the paragraph development through adjectives:

**He is God. There is no God but He.**

He is the **knower of the unseen and the visible.**

He is the **All-merciful, the All-compassionate.**

**He is God; there is no God but He.**

He is the **King, the All-holy; the All-peacable, the All-faithful, the All-preserver, the All-mighty, the All-compeller, the All-sublime.** Glory be to God, above that they associate!

**He is God; the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper** to Him belong the Names **most beautiful.** All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;

He is the **All-mighty, the All-wise** (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

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<sup>2</sup>Disclaimer: I am unable to read the Qur'an in Arabic, and some believe that the Qur'an, when translated into another language, is not the true Qur'an. This passage is from an English translation of the book in order to illustrate the rhetorical features I am addressing. It is also important to note that many say that God wanted to stress the importance of the message to the Prophet Muhammed; therefore, we see repetition. In each analysis of the Qur'an in this literature review, I bolded certain words. They are not bolded in the Qur'an.

In summary, paragraph development is done through restating an idea in various forms in the body paragraphs and then attributing many different adjectives or adverbs to the idea. This can cause a Western instructor to believe that the main idea is not developed because the student is not providing specific examples and discussing those examples and instead, providing a restated idea at the beginning of the paragraphs, followed by a string of description. Instructors may see this in varying forms.

### **Paragraph Connection: Transition words and phrases vs. parallelism**

As previously stated, in Western writing, a main idea should be conveyed in a direct thesis statement. The thesis is then developed into smaller supporting ideas with examples in the body paragraphs, ending with a concluding paragraph, summarizing the main idea. The paragraph development should relate back to the larger main idea, and each paragraph should lead into the next with transition words and phrases connecting the paragraphs together (Bennett, 1998, p. 12; Kaplan, 1966, p. 4), creating a linear structure in which the reader feels like the ideas are moving forward. Transition words and phrases are typically used to connect the body paragraphs together, and these are markers of what researchers classify as cohesion on the macro level. Many agree that this type of cohesion is related to linking whole ideas and paragraphs, whereas on the micro level, it is connecting sentences and phrases (Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 214).

A macro cohesive strategy used in Western writing “stresses beginnings and ends of events, is object-oriented rather than people-oriented” (Zaharna, 1995, p.244), and stresses importance on the message conveyed. One major point is followed by a second point, a third, and so forth. Ideas are presented sequentially, they build on one another,

and they all relate back to the main idea (Bennett, 1998, p. 12; Kaplan, 1966, p. 4).

Conversely, an essay may have the reverse procedure in which it begins with examples and the examples relate to a thesis statement at the end instead of the beginning (Kaplan, 1966, p. 5). These two types of development are called deductive or “top-down” (p. 6) reasoning and inductive or “bottom-up” (p.6). Narrative writing often takes a bottom up structural approach.

Linking paragraphs together using transition words and phrases is what would be considered a characteristic of a coherent essay by Western instructors’ standards (Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212). In Western school systems, this model has been established as an indication of clear writing and critical thinking; however, it is actually a rare form of discourse associated primarily with Western culture (Bennett, 1998, p. 12). As observed by Hamid Ahmed (2010), “A number of research papers from the Arab world have spotlighted students’ coherence problems in English writing. For example, Arab students’ written texts revealed that repetition, parallelism, sentence length, lack of variation and misuse of certain cohesive devices are major [reasons for] incoherence and textual deviation” (Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212).

This occurs with native Arabic-speaking students because they have learned to connect paragraphs differently. Arabic rhetorical structure is characterized by “repetitive parallels and rhythmic balance” (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 171). The syntax of the language and overall structure of a written message strives for a balanced rhythmic coordination between its parts <sup>3</sup> (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 173; Flaitz, 2003, p. 168).

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<sup>3</sup> Further discussion of parallelism on the syntactic level requires further linguistic analysis beyond the scope of this thesis.

This is called **parallelism** (Kaplan, 1966, p. 7; Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 171). At the sentence level, parallelism is demonstrated in the linking of parts of sentences by sharing the same grammatical structure between those parts, thus creating a balance. An example of this in English is the parallel structure, *not only/ but also*. What comes after *not only* and *but also* are phrases of the same grammatical structure to create balance to the message, for example: *I not only like pizza but also enjoy pasta*. What comes after *not only* and *but also* is a present tensed verb followed by a noun, creating a balance between the parts of the sentence. At the structural level of a message in Arabic rhetoric, parallelism can be demonstrated in a repeated phrase or clause that shares the same grammatical structure. This phrase or clause is within the first sentence of each paragraph – the first paragraph and the body paragraphs alike – to connect the paragraphs together and to create a poetic balance to the entire message.

Again, we will look at the same passage of the Qur'an to see parallelism.<sup>4</sup> What follows is an analysis of passages from the Qur'an containing this rhetorical feature.

Qur'an 59:22-24. In this passage, we see the parallelism with the idea of “He is” being stressed:

**He is** God. There is no God but He.

**He is** the knower of the unseen and the visible.

**He is** the All-merciful, the All-compassionate.

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<sup>4</sup> The Bible also demonstrates parallelism, much of it in the English translation of the Old Testament. In the New Testament, though, the Beatitudes also show parallelism. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the Beatitudes were transmitted by Jesus in Hebrew. Arabic and Hebrew are both Semitic languages deriving from the Middle East. Thus, the Bible and the Qur'an contain language that appears to be very similar, demonstrating parallelism (Kaplan, p. 7).

**He is** God; there is no God but He.

**He is** the King, the All-holy; the All-peacable, the All-faithful, the All-preserver, the All-mighty, the All-compeller, the All-sublime. Glory be to God, above that they associate!

**He is** God; the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper to Him belong the Names most beautiful. All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;

**He is** the All-mighty, the All-wise (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

“He is” is repeated at the beginning of each line. “He is” consists of a noun – “He” – followed by the present tensed verb – “is.” Thus, if this passage were developed into an essay, each paragraph would begin with parallelism.

In summary, parallelism is prevalent in Arabic rhetoric. In a native Arabic-speaking student’s essay, it is demonstrated at the beginning of each paragraph instead of using transition words and phrases to connect the paragraphs. Instructors may see this to varying degrees in essay written by native Arabic-speaking students.

### **Key Word Repetition**

The final rhetorical element I will discuss is repetition of key words. This brings us full circle back to the main idea. In Arabic rhetoric intentional repetition of key words – words relating to the main idea – is considered rhetorically persuasive. This, again, ties back to the language of the Qur’an in which word repetition is prevalent. However, in the Western classroom, repeating the same words over and over again is considered verbose, and instructors heavily stress the importance of *not* repeating words: "Arabs find it necessary to repeat themselves to a degree unacceptable to Americans" (Moujtahid, 1996, p. 3). Key word repetition could imply that the reader did not understand the message or

take it seriously and therefore, the word(s) must be repeated again. Instructors may tend to view it as redundant (Johnstone, 1987, p. 208). Word repetition is used very sparingly in Western rhetoric except in certain specialized forms of discourse like poetry or songs (Johnstone, p. 206; Zaharna, 1995, p. 248).

We may conclude, then, that Arabic rhetoric is no different in that repetition is used in the same manner – in poetry and songs. However, since there is no separation of church and state in Saudi Arabia, the language of the Qur'an is what is emulated in Saudi Arabian culture in written discourse, thus containing word repetition. Referring back to the Qur'anic passage mentioned earlier, we see that "All-" (Ali, 1993, p. 493) is attached to the beginning of each adjective describing God.

He is God. There is no God but He.

He is the knower of the unseen and the visible.

He is the **All**-merciful, the **All**-compassionate.

He is God; there is no God but He.

He is the King, the **All**-holy; the **All**-peacable, the **All**-faithful, the **All**-preserver, the **All**-mighty, the **All**-compeller, the **All**-sublime. Glory be to God, above that they associate!

He is God; the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper to Him belong the Names most beautiful. All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;

He is the **All**-mighty, the **All**-wise (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

"All-" being attributed to God is repeated a total of 11 times in this passage and is attached to each adjective describing God. The adjectives are attributed to the paragraph development and contribute to the main idea. The second most repeated word(s) are the

words that make up the parallelism: “He is.” These words are repeated together seven times.

In summary, Western rhetoric is characterized by a direct main idea, conveyed in an explicit thesis statement. The thesis is developed through examples, which are elaborated on through illustrations in the body paragraphs. No new idea is introduced in the conclusion. The paragraphs are then often connected by transition words and phrases, and there is minimal key word repetition. In contrast, Arabic rhetoric is characterized by an indirect main idea stated within the context of the message and development in the body paragraphs of restatement of the initial idea, followed by strings of adjectives, adverbs, and nouns in the paragraph elaboration. The paragraphs are connected by parallelism, which is seen as repetitive words or phrases expressed in the first sentence of each paragraph, creating a balance between each paragraph.

Finally, key word repetition is prevalent in Arabic rhetoric. This is done to create emotional rapport with the audience, and the manner in which the words are conveyed is more important than the message itself. The more a key word or idea is repeated, the more important it is. Western instructors may find varying degrees of these four Arabic rhetorical traits in essays written by native Arabic-speaking students.

## **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

### **Purpose of this Research**

This action research investigates how Arabic rhetoric is demonstrated in Arabic-speaking students' essays at the college level. The study's goal is to examine if and how Arabic rhetoric may be reflected in the essays written by Saudi students. The essays will be analyzed for main idea, development, parallelism, and word repetition. A mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods will be used. After reviewing the literature, I will analyze a passage of the Qur'an for the rhetorical elements and then analyze and discuss the essay I chose for the rhetorical features I discussed.

### **Objective of this Research**

The objective of this research is to demonstrate how features of Arabic rhetoric are reflected in essays written by native Arabic-speaking Saudi students at the college level. This is to provide ESL and composition instructors with a better understanding of Arabic rhetoric. It is also designed to provide a foundation for further research on Arabic rhetoric. Ultimately, understanding native Arabic-speaking students will better aid instructors and researchers in pedagogical and research practices.

### **Methodology**

During fall quarter 2011, Van De Wege, the primary investigator and instructor of English 112: Composition for Multilingual Students collected essays that the students wrote as usual requirements for the course as indicated in the syllabus. These essays were of a "convenience sample" of students. The subjects were asked to write a

two-page persuasive essay in response to the prompt: “In the book, Mama says, ‘Happiness isn’t something that depends on our surroundings, Corrie. It’s something we make inside ourselves.’ Do you agree with Mama? Does happiness come from the inside or the outside or both?” I chose to use this essay assignment for my student because it is a persuasive assignment, and the research on Arabic rhetoric focuses on persuasive discourse.

In addition, I gave an essay prompt sheet with guidelines in writing the essay. This can be found in the appendix section B. The students wrote the essay outside of class. The students collectively turned in their essays on the due date. At that time, I informed the students of this research project and handed out the signature form to all students, verbally telling them that participation was voluntary and that the information would be published anonymously. This is also stated in the signature form. All students handed back the signature form to me as they turned in their essays, regardless of whether or not they signed the form. The students that signed the form also sent me an electronic version of their essays. This was done before I provided feedback on the students’ essays and before they revised the essays. There were 25 students in the class. It is also important to note that all of the students have had previous English language writing instruction.

I have chosen one essay from the sample to discuss. I have chosen this particular essay because it is the best representative sample that demonstrates the characteristics of Arabic rhetoric I am addressing. This essay can be found in appendix C for reference. The rest of the essays demonstrate traces of these characteristics to varying lesser degrees

and are in this thesis for further research. All of the rest of the essays are in the appendix section D for reference. All of them also show a complex combination of Western and Arabic rhetorical traits to varying degrees. The information published in the thesis will remain confidential. I have also chosen a specific passage of the Qur'an to discuss. This passage is from an English translation of the Qur'an.

### **Research Limitations**

This study was limited to a specific essay prompt. This study also involved a limited number of students from Saudi Arabia. In addition, the students come from a range of writing backgrounds and writing skills. They also come from different parts of Saudi Arabia, which may affect the rhetorical choices used. Moreover, the study was limited to a small number of essay samples and does not reflect all students from Saudi Arabia. This sample should not be used to generalize all students from Saudi Arabia, as the Arabic rhetorical tendencies may differ between regions within the country. This sample should also not be used to generalize all people from Middle Eastern countries because the rhetoric of different countries throughout varies and could impact the essays written by the students.

I chose the one essay to discuss because I wanted to narrow down the data to provide the best possible representative sample of Arabic rhetoric that I had. This is in an effort to promote awareness of Arabic rhetoric in accordance with the research. This essay is one representative sample and should not be used to generalize all forms of Arabic rhetoric. In addition, I chose this particular passage of the Qur'an because it is a simple representative sample of the elements of Arabic rhetoric I am addressing. It is an English translation of the passage and should not be used to generalize all passages of the

Qur'an, whether in Arabic or translated into English.

Moreover, rhetoric is influenced by many factors, and that should be considered when reading the discussion of these essays. As also previously discussed, other factors besides culture affect the rhetoric produced by a student. Language, culture, education, and psychological factors like the emotional state of the student may also factor into the rhetorical influence of the essays. Rhetoric is multifaceted. Nonetheless, the essays are still expected to reflect traits of Arabic rhetoric.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

### **Main Idea, Development, Parallelism, and Word Repetition: The Qur'an**

In order to discuss how main idea, development, parallelism, and word repetition are connected and then demonstrated in the essays written by native Arabic-speaking students, we must first go back to the three rhetorical appeals. Aristotle identified three appeals that exist in rhetoric: ethos, logos, and pathos. He contended that one must establish a premise for the argument in order to gain credibility. Second, one must give logical reasoning to support an argument. And third, one must appeal to the audience's emotions through the use of language. Aristotle's philosophies are the foundation on which Western rhetoric is built. Western rhetoric is not tied to a religious ideology because in the West there is separation of church and state. However, in Saudi Arabia and much of the rest of the Muslim world, there is no separation of church and state. Islam and the holy book, the Qur'an, is a constant presence in the lives of the students. Therefore, the writing that students are expected to produce is designed to mirror the thoughts and language of the Qur'an. However, Arabic rhetoric still utilizes three appeals. Abu Rass (2011) writes:

First, persuaders try to convince the audience by asserting their trustworthy and reliability. Second, they attempt to persuade others by argument providing opinion and supporting it by giving convincing reasons. Third, persuaders may appeal to the audience emotionally. It is usually used through the use of religion and religious devices and the use of proverbs and wisdoms. Religious devices mean the use of some Qura'nic verses. The use of proverbs and wisdoms refers to the sayings and lines of the verse. Al-Khatib's study reveals that these three modes work together (p. 208).

As in Western rhetoric, the rhetor first establishes a premise for an argument to be

made. This builds credibility. Second, the rhetor uses reasoning to develop and support the argument. This is done in the body paragraphs. Third, the rhetor appeals to the audience's emotions through the use of specific language. This is done throughout the message. Employing these strategies in this manner is done in both Western and Arabic rhetoric. Yet because there is no separation of church and state in Saudi Arabia, the reasoning to develop an argument is based on Islamic thought and use of verses from the Qur'an. There is also a stronger emphasis on emotional appeal to the audience than in Western rhetoric. This is done through the use of poetic language like that of the Qur'an. Emotional appeal through language is heavily favored in writings of all kinds.

It is clear that both Western and Arabic rhetoric utilize the three appeals, yet there is a discrepancy I have noted in scholars' discussion of Arabic rhetoric. Before we note the discrepancy, we must review the four rhetorical elements. First, I addressed that in Western rhetoric, a premise is initially made to establish credibility—ethos—but after a premise is made, an argument is directly stated, not indirectly, then followed with reasoning—logos—in a manner in which the ideas build off of one another in a linear manner. Arabic rhetoric, on the other hand is **indirect**. An explicit thesis statement is not expressed, and one must attempt to find the main idea *within the context of the message*. In Arabic rhetoric a premise is also initially made to establish credibility but then the argument is presented within the context of the whole message.

The second element is **elaboration** in the paragraph development. This second rhetorical feature is where the discrepancy begins. According to scholars, an initial idea is first expressed, and according to both Arabic and Western rhetoric, what is first

expressed is the premise for the argument to establish credibility, not the argument itself. In both rhetorical forms of discourse, this is done in the introduction. However, in Western rhetoric, the premise acts as a foundation for building a linear argument. In Arabic rhetoric, an initial idea is stated, and because repetition is important in Arabic rhetoric, that idea is restated in a different manner and then repeated again at the beginning of the body paragraphs. This causes confusion because as previously discussed, like Western rhetoric, Arabic rhetoric begins with establishing a premise for credibility. Yet the initial idea is rephrased and repeated in the development, possibly causing confusion as to what the main idea is: the initial one or another one that is repeated and elaborated on further on in the message. As discussed in the literature review, there is a belief among scholars that Arabic rhetoric is vague because an idea is thought to be expressed in multiple ways (italicizing and bolding were done by me):

Much of the previous research done on Arabic rhetoric by Western scholars falsely labels it as disorganized, "characterized by a general vagueness of thought which stems from overemphasis on the symbol at the expense of the meaning... [and that] Arabic writers [are] confused, *coming to the same point two or three times from different angles*" (Hatim, 1997, p. 161).

Another scholar, Johnstone Koch (1983) says something similar:

She had received a call from someone who had heard about her work on Middle Eastern persuasive discourse. The caller first introduced himself with an Arab name, gave background information, and began by discussing his research that was related to hers. She was about to give him her standard reply: "[H]is work sounded interesting, [she] was glad he had called, and [she] would be glad to..." (p. 47). However, before she was able to do so, he again gave his background information and told her how his work was similar to hers. Before the conversation ended, he has **rephrased his initial background story and described his research several times** (p.47).

As discussed by other scholars, this feature of Arabic rhetoric may cause the audience to believe that the rhetor is attempting to make one point coming from multiple angles or possibly multiple points altogether. However, repetition is used to stress the importance of an idea, and the more an idea is restated, the more important it is. If background information is restated, one may believe that this information is the main idea. Researchers have not explained whether or not Arabic rhetoric is characterized by the rhetor making two separate arguments, coming at one argument from many different angles, or simply making one argument. Researchers simply state that Arabic rhetoric is indirect and may cause the audience to be confused. But we must remember that the first appeal to an argument in both Western and Arabic rhetoric is to first establish a premise in order to attain credibility. The three appeals are demonstrated in Arabic rhetoric as far back as when the Qur'an was transmitted. In the next section, I use a passage of the Qur'an to illustrate this. The following is an analysis of Qur'an 59:22-24:

**He is God. There is no God but He.**

He is the **knower of the unseen and the visible.**

He is the **All-merciful, the All-compassionate.**

**He is God; there is no God but He.**

He is the **King, the All-holy; the All-peacable, the All-faithful, the All-preserver, the All-mighty, the All-compeller, the All-sublime.** Glory be to God, above that they associate!

**He is God; the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper** to Him belong the Names **most beautiful. All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;**

He is the **All-mighty, the All-wise** (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

In this passage, we see that “He is God” is immediately stated and then rephrased: “There is no God but He.” This combination is repeated again as well as “He is God” repeated a third time. For elaboration, we see nouns and many different adjectives describing God. This demonstrates Arabic elaboration on an argument, or in other words, reasoning. Finally, a new idea is introduced: “All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him.” The fact that “He is God” is immediately rephrased and repeated in the message, and “He is God” is repeated a total of three times may cause a reader to believe that is the main idea, and that the idea is then elaborated on through the use of nouns and adjectives, which is the reasoning for the perceived argument that “He is God; there is no God but He.” If this passage were developed into a persuasive essay, then each line would be the beginning of a new paragraph. That means that the paragraph development in the first line may be perceived as “there is no God but He,” repeated twice in the passage, and the paragraph development in other lines would be the nouns and adjectives describing God. However, we will discover later that this is not the main idea.

The next element is parallelism. This is where the connection between the paragraphs is made, creating balance to the message. In this passage parallelism is expressed at the beginning lines to connect them together and create a balanced rhythm to the message. In this passage, we see that parallelism is expressed in the very first line of every stanza.

Qur'an 59:22-24:

**He is God.** There is no God but He.

**He is** the knower of the unseen and the visible.

**He is** the All-merciful, the All-compassionate.

**He is** God; there is no God but He.

**He is** the King, the All-holy; the All-peacable, the All-faithful, the All-preserver, the All-mighty, the All-compeller, the All-sublime. Glory be to God, above that they associate!

**He is** God; the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper to Him belong the Names most beautiful. All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;

**He is** the All-mighty, the All-wise (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

“He is” is repeated at the beginning of each line, which could be compared to the first sentence of a new paragraph if this passage were developed into an essay. “He is” consists of a noun – “He” – followed by the present tensed verb – “is.” Thus, if this passage were developed into an essay, each paragraph would begin with parallelism.

Lastly, word repetition is frequently employed in Arabic rhetoric. Scholars discuss word repetition but not in conjunction with the other three rhetorical elements. I feel that it is important to address this, which is a stylistic element illustrated in the Qur’an in order to create emotional appeal. It is important to demonstrate how it connects the other three elements together. In Arabic rhetoric, word repetition is used to stress the importance of a message. The more a word or idea is repeated, the more important it is. We will examine the same Qur’anic passage again for word repetition.

Qur'an 59:22-24:

**He is God.** There is no **God** but **He**.

**He is** the knower of the unseen and the visible.

**He is** the **All-merciful**, the **All-compassionate**.

**He is God**; there is no **God** but **He**.

**He is** the King, the **All**-holy; the **All**-peacable, the **All**-faithful, the **All**-preserver, the **All**-mighty, the **All**-compeller, the **All**-sublime. Glory be to **God**, above that they associate!

**He is God**; the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper to Him belong the Names most beautiful. **All** that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;

**He is** the **All**-mighty, the **All**-wise (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

In this passage, I have bolded each of the key words relating to *two* ideas expressed in this passage. If we do a quantitative analysis, we find that “He” is repeated 9 times, and within that, the phrase “He is” is repeated 7 times. “God” is repeated 5 times. And finally, “All” being attributed to God is repeated a total of 11 times, making it the key word that is repeated the most.

Word repetition is what connects these four elements together. As previously stated, research concludes that Arabic-speaking writers restate ideas and then elaborate and connect ideas through parallelism, which creates rhythm to the message. The first idea immediately expressed is that “He is God.” The words and phrases that are repeated the most in this passage are “He is” and “All.” In Arabic rhetoric, based on the repetition and the fact that the main idea is found within the context of the message, we can then conclude that the main idea in this passage is not found in the first statement “He is God,” which is repeated two more times. The main idea is found in the word repetition in the passage in the words “He is...all.”

Since Arabic rhetoric is based on first making a premise for an argument, then stating the argument indirectly within a context of emotional appeal, we can then

conclude that “He is God; there is no God but He” is the premise on which the argument is based. This is repeated twice total, and “He is God” by itself is repeated a total of three times out of seven stanzas, creating a suspended balance to the message. The parallelism, “He is” creates further balance to the message through parallelism. “All” being attributed to God is repeated 11 times within the body of the message, and it is the most repeated word in the passage. The next repeated words is the words that make up the parallelism: “He is.” We can then conclude that the main idea is not that “He is God” but that “He is...all.” The main idea is balanced by the repetitive chant “He is,” which creates balance to the message. The entire message is suspended by the premise, “He is God; there is no God but He,” which creates further balance. Thus, there is only one argument from one angle. The argument is “He is...all.”

In summary, the first analysis of this passage from the Qur’an demonstrated development through restatement of an initial idea and then adjectives. This demonstrated that there could be confusion, leading to the belief that there may be two main ideas. The second analysis demonstrated parallelism in that “He is” is repeated at the beginning of each stanza. The third analysis has demonstrated key word repetition. The word “All-” attributed to God is repeated 11 times in the passage, and “He is” is repeated 7 times. These are the most repeated words. Therefore, it stresses the main idea that “He is...all.” This idea is then balanced in parallelism, in which each stanza begins with “He is.” In addition, there is a new idea that is brought into the second to last stanza: “All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him.” “He is God; there is no God but He” is repeated twice, and “He is God” is repeated three times. The fact that this is the first line

of the passage means that this is the premise of the argument, not the argument itself, and it is repeated to stress its importance and create a poetic balance to the actual argument within the message. But it is not repeated as many times as the parallelism, and the parallelism is not repeated as many times as the word to connect to the parallelism “all.” By connecting the most repeated word with the second most repeated word(s), we find that the main idea is “He is...all.” By this analysis, I hypothesize that in Arabic rhetoric, the argument is found in the key word repetition within the body of the writing. It is done so by connecting the most repeated word(s) in the parallelism, which also contributes to the argument’s premise, which is found in the first line of the writing. Thus, the argument is balanced by parallelism and suspended by the repeated premise.

### **Student Essay: Analysis and discussion**

According to the research, native Arabic-speaking students demonstrate a level of Arabic rhetoric in their essays written in English. Before analyzing and discussing the following essay entitled, “Happiness,” I first assume that I will see not only Arabic rhetoric in the following essays but also Western rhetoric, thus demonstrating a complex mix of both. Based on my analysis of the previous passage of the Qur’an, I will demonstrate how this essay mirrors the Qur’anic passage. This first essay was written in response to the prompt: “Does happiness come from the inside or the outside or both?” This essay was written by a native Arabic-speaking student from Saudi Arabia in a writing bridge class that was a prerequisite to the first year composition class.

### *Main idea in key word repetition*

Since key word repetition in Arabic rhetoric stresses the importance of a message, in order to find the main idea, I first looked for key words relating to the prompt: “happiness, inside,” and “outside.” I found that the word “happiness” is repeated a total of 11 times. I then looked for the word(s) “inside” and/ or “outside.” I found that “inside” is repeated 13 times. “Outside” is repeated a total of 8 times. I also found that the word “happy” is repeated a total of 32 times. “Happy” means the same as “happiness,” so I did not consider the fact that “happy” was repeated 32 times to affect the results of the analysis.

### *Paragraph development*

Second, I looked for development in the body paragraphs. I found that the development demonstrated both Western and Arabic rhetoric. The introduction establishes a premise in a discussion about happiness. The first sentence of the essay is: “Happiness is one of the great things that make your life amazing.” This is part of the introduction and the premise of the argument. Then in the middle of the paragraph, the writer gives an illustration about the writer’s friend. This introduction followed by an illustration with a specific example is a characteristic of paragraph development of Western rhetoric. The first paragraph ends with the premise rephrased.

The second paragraph begins with the sentence “First, happiness is about how you feel inside and outside.” This may be perceived as a direct statement, indicating the main idea. This statement is, indeed, direct, and contains words relating to the main idea. However, it is preceded by the word “first,” indicating the development of a smaller idea

leading up the a larger one – a feature of Western rhetoric. Moreover, it is placed in the position as the first sentence of a body paragraph, which is the placement for the premise, and the rest of the sentences in this same position are restatements of the premise. These actors lessen the direct impact of this statement, thus contributing to the indirectness of the overall message. Therefore, I consider this sentence a combination of the premise rephrased because the writer used the word “feel” and the argument. Therefore, it is a combination of Western and Arabic rhetoric.

The third paragraph begins with the premise rephrased a fourth time and then illustrates another example from the writer’s life, an elements of Western rhetoric. The paragraph also ends with the premise rephrased a fifth time. The writer also writes “For example” twice in the essay, a characteristic of Western rhetoric. The final paragraph begins with the premise rephrased a sixth time and then summarizes according to Western rhetoric but then introduces a new idea in the second to last sentence: “There are many things I do to make myself happy, such as party with my friends, hang out everywhere, and play soccer when I have free time.” This is a characteristic of Arabic rhetoric. The last sentence of the essay ends with the premise rephrased a sixth time. Thus, the development of the essay is a combination of Western and Arabic rhetoric. It clearly demonstrates the premise stated in the beginning then rephrased and repeated at the beginning of the body paragraphs and at the end of three out of the four body paragraphs. This is clearly Arabic rhetoric. The examples given are of Western rhetoric, and the new idea in the conclusion is of Arabic rhetoric.

### *Parallelism and transition words/ phrases*

Next, I looked at the transition between paragraphs. This can be expressed in transition words and phrases, characterized by Western rhetoric, or parallelism, characterized by Arabic rhetoric. I first looked for parallelism. Parallelism would be demonstrated in the first sentence of each body paragraph. I saw that parallelism was demonstrated in repetition of the word “happiness,” which was also part of the premise. I also observed that the student used the transition words, “first, second,” and “in conclusion,” words characterized by Western rhetoric. Those words were then followed up with parallelism in repetition of the word “happiness.” I have bolded the parallelism in each sentence:

- 1.) Paragraph 1 first sentence: **Happiness is** one of the great things that make your life amazing.
- 2.) Paragraph 1 last sentence: **Happiness is** necessary to have the perfect life.
- 3.) Paragraph 2 first sentence: First, **happiness is** about how you feel inside and outside.
- 4.) Paragraph 3 first sentence: Second, **happiness gives** you an amazing life.
- 5.) Paragraph 3 last sentence: **Happiness now is** a very important thing in my life.
- 6.) Paragraph 4 first sentence: In conclusion, **happiness is** one of the good things I have in my life.
- 7.) Paragraph 4 last sentence: **Happiness always makes** your life satisfying.

Each paragraph begins with parallel structure, starting with the noun “happiness” followed by the present tense of the verbs: “is, gives,” and “makes.” Three out of the four paragraphs also end with parallelism. Therefore, the student’s essay clearly demonstrates parallelism.

The analysis of this essay supports my hypothesis that in Arabic rhetoric, the main idea is indirectly found in the most repeated word(s) within the body of the essay by connecting them to word(s) from the parallelism, which is within the repeated premise. In addition, this supports my notion that the first statement, which is rephrased and repeated, is not an additional idea nor is it another angle to address the main idea. Like the passage in the Qur’an, there is only one main idea in this essay. The main idea, according to the word repetition, is that “happiness” comes from the “inside” and the “outside.” Therefore, the argument is balanced by the parallelism “happiness is/ gives/ makes” and suspended by the rephrased and repeated premise found in the first sentence of the essay and the first sentence of every paragraph after that as well as the last sentence in three out of the four paragraphs. In this essay every instance of parallelism is found at the beginning of each paragraph and at the end of three out of four of the paragraphs. Like the Qur’anic passage, the parallelism is also found within the repeated premise.<sup>5</sup> This is how the four rhetorical traits connect together, and Arabic rhetoric is clearly reflected in the student essay. The following figures reflect the passage from the Qur’an and the student essay. The figures illustrate the text exactly as it appears on the page.

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<sup>5</sup> In the Qur’anic passage, the parallelism was repeated more than the premise. However, in the essay, the parallelism and premise were repeated equally, and in both the passage and the essay, parallelism was found within the premise. Further research beyond the scope of this thesis needs to be done on the relationship between the balance of the parallelism and the balance of the premise.

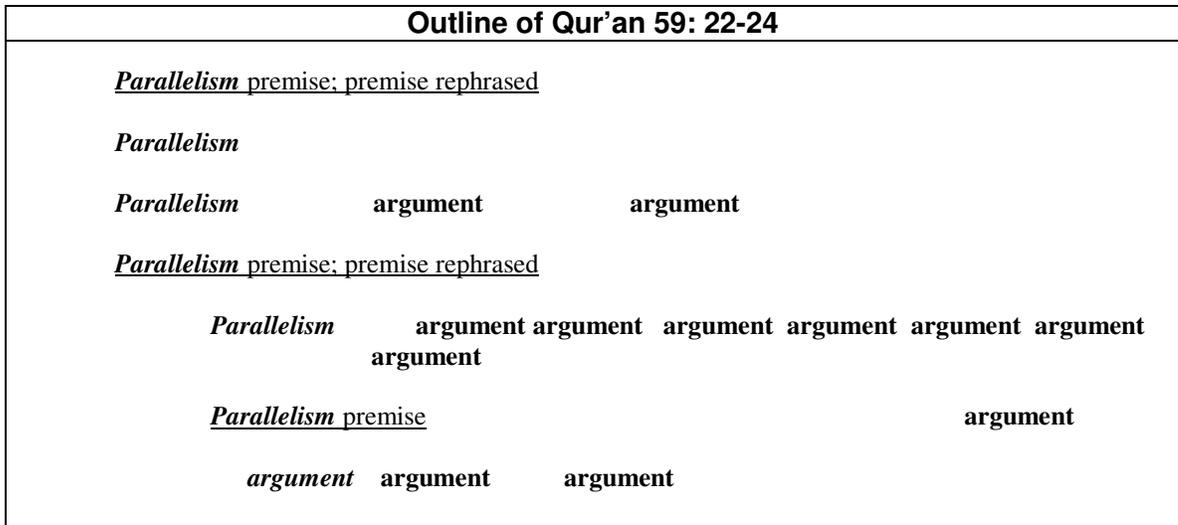


Fig. 1: Outline of Qur'an 59:22-24 (Arberry, 1955, p. 268).

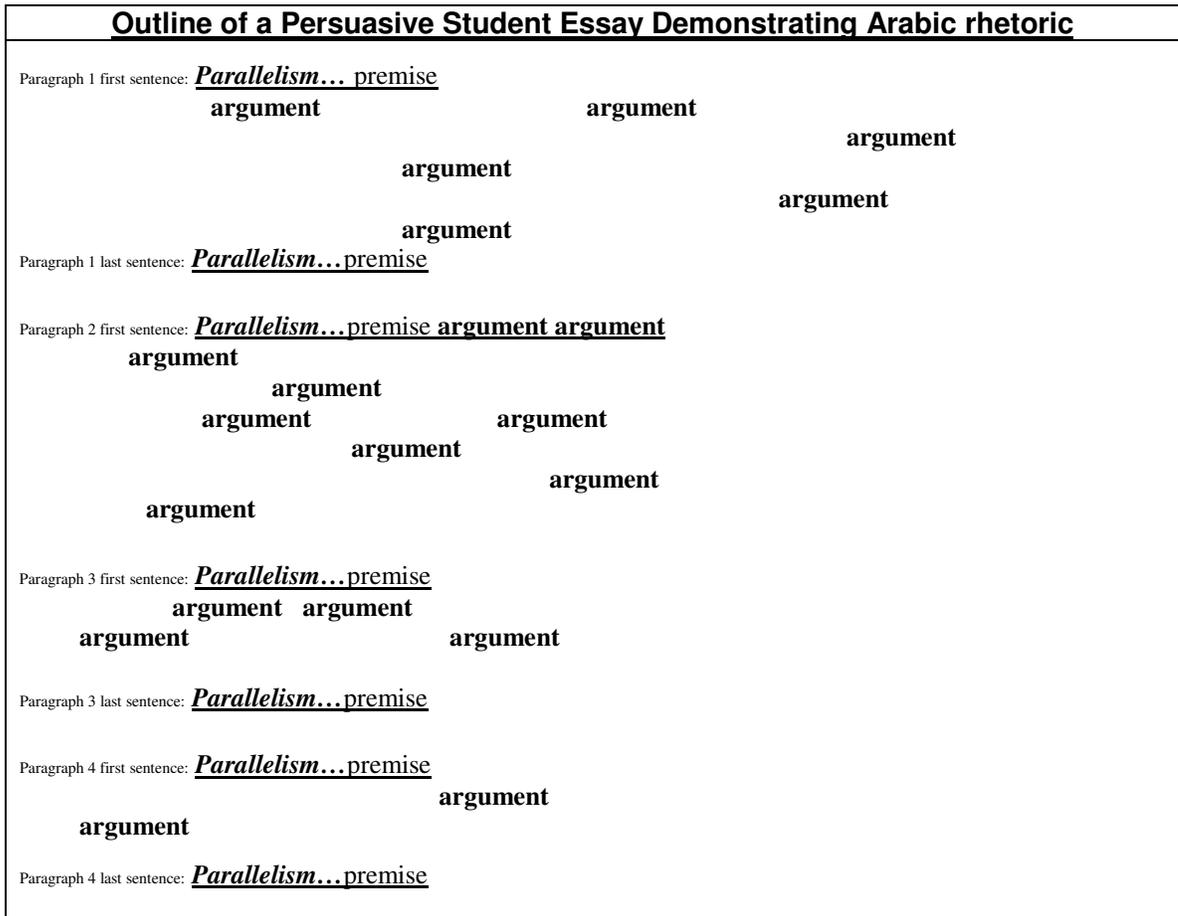


Fig. 2 An outline of a persuasive essay by an Arabic-speaking student demonstrating Arabic rhetoric.

After analyzing and discussing the passage of the Qur'an and the student essay, I hypothesize that Arabic rhetoric is characterized by making only one main argument coming from one angle, not one argument from many angles, or multiple arguments, as some scholars suggest. Arabic rhetoric utilizes three appeals: establishing a premise of trustworthiness, making an argument and elaborating on it with reasoning (usually with verses from the Qur'an and Islamic beliefs), and appealing to the audience's emotions through the use of language. According to research, Arabic rhetoric is indirect; uses lengthy description, metaphors, and verses from the Qur'an in its development; utilizes parallelism to create a balance to the message; and employs word repetition to emphasize the importance of a message. Thus, the first statement is the premise, not the argument, and the argument itself is found in the word repetition in the development.

### **Conclusion**

After discussing this research and my subsequent analysis of the Qur'anic passage and student essays, I hypothesize that one way Arabic rhetorical elements may be demonstrated in an essay is that the argument may be found in the word repetition relating to the main idea – word repetition within the body paragraphs (the elaboration) of the entire message. We can then find that the word repetition of the parallelism not only is designed to create a balance to the message overall, but also is designed to connect to the main idea within the body of the passage. One may find the main idea by connecting the repeated word(s) in the parallelism with the words most often repeated within the body of the essay. The premise is the first sentence in the message and is rephrased and repeated in the first sentence of each body paragraph. The premise also contains the word

or words contributing to the parallelism. The Qur'anic passage illustrates this, and there is one main idea in that passage: "He is...all." Like the passage in the Qur'an, the student essay also clearly demonstrates this and also contains one main idea: Happiness comes from the inside and the outside.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

### **Conclusions**

This research establishes preliminary work for one direction of further research on Arabic rhetoric in English language compositions and the related pedagogical implications for instructors of English. The goal of this study was twofold. My first goal was to illustrate one way the main idea, development, paragraph transition, and word repetition in Arabic rhetoric is demonstrated in essays written by native Arabic-speaking students from Saudi Arabia at the college level. My second goal was to discuss how Arabic rhetoric may be characterized by one main argument coming from one angle instead of one argument from many angles, or multiple arguments.

To understand this, we must first understand parallelism, premise, and argument. “Parallelism” means a word or words that contribute(s) to the argument and is/ are in a phrase or clause that is repeated. Each repetition contains the same grammatical structure as the last, and the parallelism is found at the beginning of each body paragraph so that the repetition of it balances the message. “Premise” means that the first idea was stated and then rephrased multiple times at the beginning of body paragraphs. The parallelism can also be found within the premise. “Argument” is a repeated word in the development of the message. This repeated work contributes to the main idea and is therefore referred to as “argument”. I analyzed how four rhetorical elements together are used in the essay by an Arabic-speaking student. I conclude that in Arabic rhetoric the argument may be found in the word repetition relating to the main idea. We can then find that the word repetition in the parallelism is not only designed to create a balance in the writing overall, but also is designed to connect to the main idea within the rest of the essay. One may find

the main idea by connecting the repeated word(s) in the parallelism with the words most often repeated within the body of the essay. The repeated words in the parallelism are also part of the premise.

The first idea stated in the essay also contributes to the parallelism. This first idea, to a Western instructor, may seem like a second main idea because it may immediately be rephrased and then repeated/rephrased in the first line of each body paragraph. But this is not a second idea nor is it another angle for the main idea. It is the **premise** for the argument. Arabic rhetoric is based on first establishing credibility for the argument, which is called a premise. In the passage from the Qur'an and the essay I discuss in my thesis, the first idea is stated directly. If this idea, one that is repeated, rephrased and then restated, is a second main argument, that contradicts the foundation on which Arabic rhetoric is built – a main idea found within the context of the message – indirectness. In other words, this first idea should not be seen as an “exaggeration” or a “unrelated idea”: it is the premise for the argument in order to establish credibility.

Because Arabic rhetoric emphasizes repetition, the premise is repeated but it is *not* repeated as frequently as the argument itself. To find the main idea, in the Qur'anic passage and the essay, one must take repeated words from the premise and parallelism and connect them to the words repeated most within the rest of the paper. The following illustration from the Qur'an demonstrates this. I have:

- italicized the *parallelism*;
- bolded the **most repeated words**, which make up the whole main idea;

- and underlined the premise of the argument, of which words from the parallelism and the argument are also a part.

I have amplified the font of the premise, parallelism, and argument, and shrunk the elaboration of the argument in order to clearly see my point.

<b>Qur'an 59: 22-24</b>
<u><b>He is</b> God. There is no God but He.</u>
<b>He is</b> the knower of the unseen and the visible.
<b>He is</b> the <b>All-</b> merciful, the <b>All-</b> compassionate.
<u><b>He is</b> God; there is no God but He.</u>
<b>He is</b> the King, the <b>All-</b> holy; the <b>All-</b> peacable, the <b>All-</b> faithful, the <b>All-</b> preserver, the <b>All-</b> mighty, the <b>All-</b> compeller, the <b>All-</b> sublime. Glory be to God, above that they associate!
<u><b>He is God;</b></u> the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper to Him belong the Names most beautiful. <b>All</b> that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him;
<b>He is</b> the <b>All-</b> mighty, the <b>All-</b> wise (Ali, 1993, p. 493).

Fig. 3: Qur'an 59:22-24.

The entire main idea is found by piecing together the parallelism, which is also stated within the premise, with the most repeated word in the body development of the essay. The main idea is “He is...all,” balanced by the parallelism “He is,” and suspended by the premise of the argument, “He is God.” Here is the same passage illustrating that.

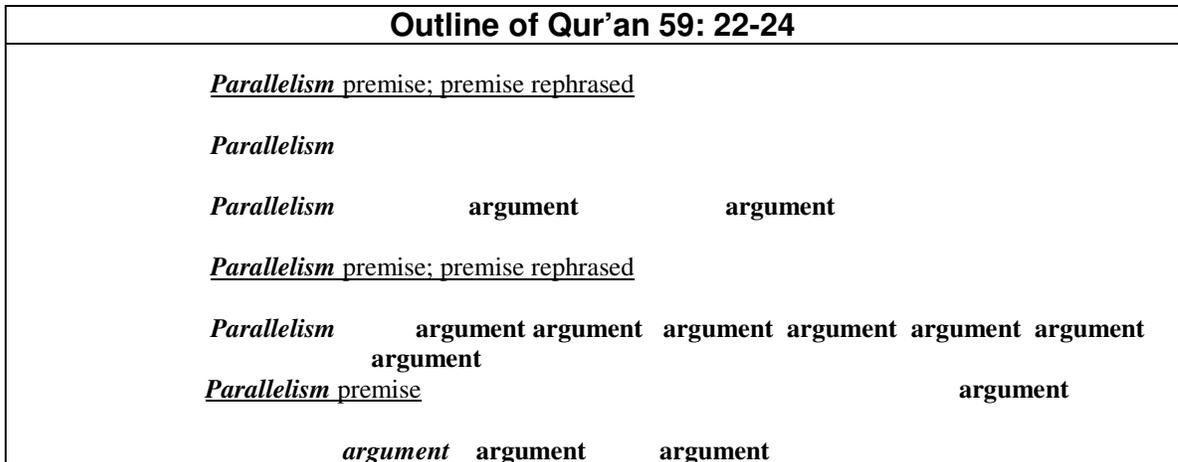


Fig. 4: Outline of Qur'an 59:22-24

The following diagram illustrates how Arabic rhetoric may be reflected in the writings of Arabic speakers.

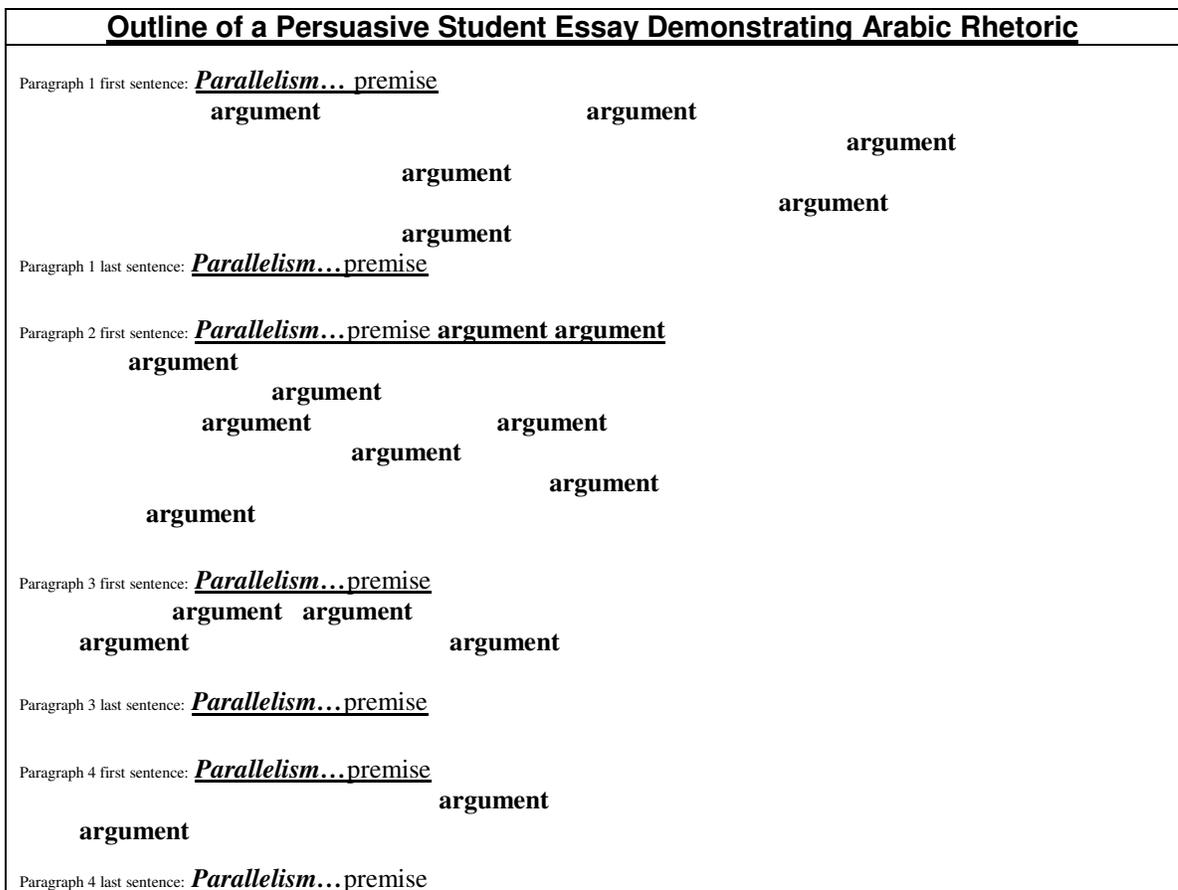


Fig. 5: An outline of a persuasive essay by an Arabic-speaking student demonstrating Arabic rhetoric.

This figure visually illustrates how a persuasive essay written by an Arabic-speaking student can reflect Arabic rhetoric. These figures demonstrate one way the rhetorical elements of main idea, development, parallelism, and word repetition relate to one another. This also supports my hypothesis that Arabic rhetoric may not be characterized by making multiple arguments or one argument coming from many angles. I hypothesize that in Arabic rhetoric there is one argument – one main idea. Demonstrated in the same manner as the previous figures, in Arabic rhetoric the main idea can be found in the word repetition in the parallelism, repeated at the beginning of each paragraph, and within the body paragraphs. The parallelism also contributes to the premise of the argument, which is stated, rephrased, and then repeated at the beginning of each passage/ paragraph. The parallelism then balances the argument, which is suspended by the premise. This is how these rhetorical elements connect together.

### **Implications for Instructors**

As an ESL and writing composition instructor myself, I have a vested interest in this research, as the conclusions of this study have implications for me as well as other instructors. The Saudi government sends thousands of students to Western countries every year to earn their degree and understand Western culture. They also come to learn Western rhetoric in ESL and composition classrooms. Therefore, instructors' knowledge of Arabic rhetoric can help them to guide their students in achieving a level of expertise in Western rhetorical discourse.

## **Recommendations for Further Research**

I have not found other research that demonstrates how these four rhetorical traits are demonstrated in essays written by Arabic speakers. This thesis establishes one direction for further research. With the increase of Saudi students in U.S. classrooms and the increased focus on multiculturalism, further research on these four rhetorical patterns in Arabic rhetoric are important first steps in understanding Arabic-speaking students. In addition, I suggest further study on the differences and similarities of Arabic rhetorical tendencies between people of different parts of Saudi Arabia as well as between people of other countries in the Middle East. Since this study did not address linguistic analysis, I also suggest further syntactic and semantic analysis of Arabic so that one may see how the language influences the overall rhetorical structure in Arabic rhetoric. Linguistic analysis of the language will also aid one in further analysis of content. Lastly, further study is necessary regarding the level of influence of Western rhetoric in Saudi culture and whether or not people of Saudi Arabia accept that influence and if so, to what degree is it accepted.

The culture of Saudi Arabia is strongly influenced by a poetic oral tradition and the religion of Islam. However, English language writing is generally accepted and respected by people all over the world (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 211), and the people of Saudi Arabia clearly demonstrate a desire to learn Western rhetorical tradition. But in order for that to happen successfully, I believe it is beneficial for Western composition instructors to learn the Arabic rhetorical tradition as well. This study contributes to that cross cultural understanding. It also provides a foundation for further research of Arabic

rhetoric. My hope is that students, scholars, and teachers from Saudi Arabia and the United States and the Middle East and West as a whole can benefit from this research in order to ultimately promote mutual understanding between people of different countries so that the students can know the world and the world can know them.

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## Appendix A



Department of English  
158A Reid School  
Cheney, WA 99004

Attn: Gail Potter  
original #AS3842  
NOV 8 2011

**EASTERN**

**Appendix A: Consent Form**  
Developing Voice in Multilingual College Writers

OFFICE OF GRANT AND  
RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by:

<b>Principal Investigator</b> Melissa Van De Wege, M.A. English candidate/TESL 240 South Cheney Spangle Rd., Apt. 311 Cheney, WA 99004 509-342-8069 belle61406@hotmail.com	<b>Responsible Project Investigator</b> Dr. LaVona Reeves, MA-TESL Program Director, English Department 158A Reid School Tel: (509) 359-7060 E-mail: lreeves@mail.ewu.edu
--	---

**Purpose and Benefits:** The purpose of this study is to examine how multilingual college writers develop a voice in the foreign language in their essays and journals. Part of the purpose is to fulfill the requirements of my master's degree in TESL. The research element of this project is action research, so the findings will be used to renew the curriculum in English 112. This means that your needs and interests will be considered the next time English 112 is taught.

**Procedures:** I am asking you to allow me to include your essays and journals in my master's thesis. I will assign you a number, and your name will not appear in the thesis. You will be writing journals in class Monday through Thursday and an essay every Friday in English 112. If you are unable to write on this subject, you may choose a related subject or a different subject altogether and write on that.

**Risk, Stress or Discomfort:** The risks of participating in this study are not expected to exceed those encountered in daily life. You will receive clear instruction regarding the in-class journals & essays. This activity will be part of the class that all students will participate in, but your own writing will appear in the thesis only with your permission. Though completion of the assignments is required as they are part of the usual classroom activities, you will not be required to submit your work to me (Van De Wege) for the thesis if you choose not to participate in my thesis project. It is totally voluntary. Your decision not to participate in this study will in no way affect your grade in English 112 or your standing at Eastern Washington University.

**Other Information:** Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time without penalty. The essays and journals collected will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in the thesis, but your writings will be referenced by a designated number. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as participants, you may contact Ruth Galm, EWU'S Human Protections Administrator, at (509) 359-7971 or [rgalm@mail.ewu.edu](mailto:rgalm@mail.ewu.edu).

Melissa Van De Wege  
Primary Investigator's name

*Melissa Van De Wege*  
Primary Investigator's signature

11/15/2011  
Date

If you do not want to participate, do not sign the form and do not return it to me.

**Yes, I will participate.**

The study described above has been explained to me, and I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I have had an opportunity to ask questions. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's name printed in English      Student's signature      Date



Eastern Washington University  
at Cheney and Spokane

MEMORANDUM

To: Melissa VanDeWege, Department of English, 250 PAT  
From: Sarah Skeller, Chair, Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research  
Date: October 19, 2011  
Subject: Review of HS-3842 *Developing Voice in Multilingual College Writers*

Human subjects protocol HS-3842 *Developing Voice in Multilingual College Writers* has been reviewed and determined to be exempt from further review according to federal regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects under CFR Title 45, Part 46.101(b)(1-6), conditional upon the changes listed below being made and approved. Research qualifying for an exemption is valid for a period of one year, to October 19, 2012. If you wish to continue gathering data for the study after that date, you must file a Renewal of Approval application *prior to its expiration*, otherwise the project will be closed and you would need to submit a new application for IRB review if you wish to continue the research.

A signed, approved copy of your application is enclosed.

**Before you begin:**

1. In your consent form, at the end where you ask them to return the form whether or not they want to participate, would you please add the sentence: If you don't want to participate *do not sign the form*, just return it back to me blank. [It would actually be preferable if you didn't have them return it to you unless they want to participate but you may have them all turn it back to you either signed or unsigned if you think you really need to do so.]
2. Would you please send us a copy of the revised consent form for our files.

If subsequent to initial approval the research protocol requires minor changes, the Office of Grant and Research Development should be notified of those changes. Any major departures from the original proposal must be approved by the appropriate IRB review process before the protocol may be altered. A Change of Protocol application must be submitted to the IRB for any substantial change in protocol.

If you have additional questions please contact me at 359-7039; fax 509-359-2474; email skeller@ewu.edu. It would be helpful if you would refer to HS-3842 if there were further correspondence as we file everything under this number. Thank you.

cc: T.Carnegie  
R.Galm  
L.Reeves  
Graduate Office

Department of Geography and Anthropology  
MS-52, 103 Isle Hall • Cheney, Washington 99004 • (509) 359-2433 • Spokane - (509) 458-6213  
Eastern Washington University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution.

**Institutional Review Board  
for Human Subjects Research**

HS 3842  
OFFICE OF GRANT AND  
RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Application for Exemption Appendix A: Consent Form  
Return original and two copies to: Grants Office, 210 Showalter

OCT 14 2011

<b>Principal Investigator/Title/Department /Address/Phone</b> Melissa Van De Wege, M.A. English candidate/TESL 240 South Cheney Spangle Rd., Apt. 311 Cheney, WA 99004 509-342-8069 belle61406@hotmail.com	<b>Responsible Project Investigator/Department/Phone/email</b> Dr. LaVona Reeves, Director of MA-TESL Department of English, 158A Reid School (509) 359-7060 lreeves@mail.ewu.edu
<b>Title of Project</b> Developing Voice in Multilingual College Writers	
<b>For students only: Is this research being done to meet a course, thesis or other academic requirement? (please specify)</b> Thesis	
<b>Project anticipated starting date</b> October 15, 2011 <b>Anticipated termination date</b> March, 2013	
<b>Funding:</b> Non-funded <input type="checkbox"/> Internal funding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External funding <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Funding status:</b> proposal in preparation <input type="checkbox"/> pending agency decision <input type="checkbox"/> funded <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Funding Agency (if applicable):</b> _____ <b>Grant or Contract Number:</b> _____	

Check the type of exemption applicable to the project  
1. student essays \_\_\_ 2. in-class journals \_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_ None \_\_\_  
Why should this project be considered exempt?  
This study will be conducted in the English 112 class, which includes journaling, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. The requirements remain the same—daily 5-minute journals and weekly in-class essays. Data collected from in-class journals and essays will be analyzed for the study and are valuable to the supervisor (Reeves) and thesis writer (Van De Wege). The project is similar to the projects of Ray (2011), Ubaldo (2010), Lohpaisankrit (2008), Okabe (2008), Parker (2008), Wolfe (2004) (2005), and Browne (2005), whose studies all incorporated journaling of this kind.

**Please state the purpose and methodology of the research:**  
This action research will investigate the benefits of journals and expressive writing in English 112, Composition for Multilingual Writers  
Quotes from students' expressive writing will be analyzed for voice, self-representation, and inter-textuality. Journals and expressive writing of this nature are commonly included in the English 101 curriculum.

Describe the procedures: what specifically will subjects do? If data are anonymous, describe the data gathering procedure for insuring anonymity.  
Van De Wege, the instructor and primary investigator, will collect in-class journals and essays that students have written as usual requirements for the course as indicated in the standard department syllabus. Some of these will be included in the thesis and will be analyzed and/or coded and qualitatively discussed. The journals and essays will not be collected anonymously, but the information will remain confidential. Students will not be mentioned by name in the thesis, but by number. The students will be assigned a unique number to ensure the students' anonymity. Van De Wege & Reeves will know the identity, but files w secured so that no else knows who wrote the journals and essays.  
Attach all surveys, questionnaires, cover letters, information sheets, etc. (including required IRB contact information (see instructions))

The information provided above is accurate and the project will be conducted in accordance with applicable Federal, State and University regulations and ethical standards.

Signature, Principal Investigator(s) Melissa Van De Wege Date 10/12/2011

<b>Recommendations and Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approve/Disapprove</b>
Faculty Sponsor (for student) <u>LaVona Reeves</u>	<u>10/13/2011</u>	<u>approve</u>
Dept IRB Representative or Dept Chair <u>Laney</u>	<u>14/10/2011</u>	<u>approve</u>
Institutional Review Board <u>Sarah A. Feller</u>	<u>10/19/11</u>	<u>approve</u>

Conditions: as noted Approved from 10-19-11 To 10-19-12

Exemption Decision Aid

Research Qualifying for Exemption from Federal Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects  
(Quoted from the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46.101(b)(1-6))

- (1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or on the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that the human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.
- (3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, if: (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) federal statute(s) requires without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
- (4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.
- (5) Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of the department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
- (6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level of and for a use found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Based on both federal policy and/or University policy, exempt status may not be granted for research in the preceding six categories if any of the following conditions applies (except for certain exemptions for children):

- | Yes                      | No  |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If any of the subjects are confined in a correctional or detention facility.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If pregnancy is a prerequisite for serving as a subject.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If fetuses <i>in utero</i> are subjects in this research.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If any subjects are presumed not to be legally competent.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If personal records (medical, academic, etc.) are used without written consent.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If data from subjects (responses, information, specimens, etc.) are directly or indirectly identifiable.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If data are damaging to subjects' financial standing, employability or reputation                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If material obtained at autopsy is to be used in the research.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If subjects are to be asked sensitive questions about personal feelings, behavior, interactions, or sexual experiences. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If alcohol or any other drugs will be ingested.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If blood or body fluids will be drawn.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If any of the subjects are children as defined by state law.*   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Will the child participate in a survey?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Will the child be interviewed?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Will the investigator manipulate the environment or interact with the child as part of the data gathering?              |

\* Children are persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures involved in the research, under the applicable law of the jurisdiction in which the research will be conducted. If subjects have the legal status of emancipated minors, or are mature minors, i.e., they may legally be treated as adult for certain purposes, they may be exempt from the restrictions applicable to children.



Department of English  
158A Reid School  
Cheney, WA 99004

**EASTERN**

**Appendix A: Consent Form**

**Developing Voice in Multilingual College Writers**

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by:

<b>Principal Investigator</b> Melissa Van De Wege, M.A. English candidate/TESL 240 South Cheney Spangle Rd., Apt. 311 Cheney, WA 99004 509-342-8069 <a href="mailto:belle61406@hotmail.com">belle61406@hotmail.com</a>	<b>Responsible Project Investigator</b> Dr. LaVona Reeves, MA-TESL Program Director, English Department 158A Reid School Tel: (509) 359-7060 E-mail: <a href="mailto:lreeves@mail.ewu.edu">lreeves@mail.ewu.edu</a>
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**Purpose and Benefits:** The purpose of this study is to examine how multilingual college writers develop a voice in the foreign language in their essays and journals. Part of the purpose is to fulfill the requirements of my master's degree in TESL. The research element of this project is action research, so the findings will be used to renew the curriculum in English 112. This means that your needs and interests will be considered the next time English 112 is taught.

**Procedures:** I am asking you to allow me to include your essays and journals in my master's thesis. I will assign you a number, and your name will not appear in the thesis. You will be writing journals in class Monday through Thursday and an essay every Friday in English 112. If you are unable to write on this subject, you may choose a related subject or a different subject altogether and write on that. *- These are my journal class activities only please follow them*

**Risk, Stress or Discomfort:** The risks of participating in this study are not expected to exceed those encountered in daily life. You will receive clear instruction regarding the in-class journals & essays. This activity will be part of the class that all students will participate in, but your own writing will appear in the thesis only with your permission. Though completion of the assignments is required as they are part of the usual classroom activities, you will not be required to submit your work to me (Van De Wege) for the thesis if you choose not to participate in my thesis project. It is totally voluntary. Your decision not to participate in this study will in no way affect your grade in English 112 or your standing at Eastern Washington University.

**Other Information:** Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time without penalty. The essays and journals collected will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in the thesis, but your writings will be referenced by a designated number. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as participants, you may contact Ruth Galm, EWU'S Human Protections Administrator, at (509) 359-7971 or [rgalm@mail.ewu.edu](mailto:rgalm@mail.ewu.edu).

Please return the form whether you are participating or not.

*If you don't want to participate don't sign the form, just return it to me or to me, thank.*

Melissa Van De Wege

Primary Investigator's name

Primary Investigator's signature

Date

**Yes, I will participate.**

The study described above has been explained to me, and I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I have had an opportunity to ask questions. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Student's name printed in English

Student's signature

Date

## APPENDIX B

English 112 Essay 2  
Essay prompt and rubric  
Friday essay 2- Happiness

Purpose: To write about one's opinion on what makes a person happy in life  
Genre: Opinion  
Length: 2 pages, typed

Directions: Write a 2-page essay following the prompt.

From chapter 3 of the book: "Happiness isn't something that depends on our surroundings, Corrie. It's something we make inside ourselves."

Prompt: Do you agree with Mama? Why or why not? Give me illustrations and examples to support your opinion.

*Paragraph 1: Introduction*

- in this chapter, Mama tells Corrie that happiness is something we make inside ourselves. Do you agree with Mama? Does happiness come from the inside, outside, or both?
- **Why** do you have the opinion that you do? Give your reasons.

*Paragraphs 2 & 3: Examples and illustrations to support your opinion*

*Paragraph 4: Conclusion*

- Summarize

**Evaluation:** Your revised draft will be graded on content, organization, and grammar. Make sure you please do the following:

- 1.) I gave my opinion and reason(s) for my opinion
- 3.) I supported my opinion with (a) real-life example(s)
- 5.) I have eliminated grammar errors to the best of my ability

## APPENDIX C

### Happiness

Happiness is one of the great things that make your life amazing. People who have happiness have the perfect life with a happy face. For other people when you look at them, you can know they are happy or not even if they don't say it. Many people don't believe happiness is everything in life but this is wrong because when you are happy inside, you will for sure be happy outside. Some people say more work and being busy make you feel happy. But this is not the most important parts of life. But when these people finish their work and are alone they will remember inside they are not happy, and they will feel lonely. For example, I know one of my friends his name is Abdullah. Before when you sat with him, he only talked about how his life was not good because inside he was not feeling happy. He also was telling me and other friends that. I never felt that I had a good time when I sat with him because he was talking about his problems and never become happy. My friends and I told him to change his situation and for sure he will be happy in his life. After that, I hadn't saw him for one month. Then I saw him after a long time. He was laughing and make jokes, so he told me now that he was changing and he felt happy inside and that made me feel happy inside. Happiness is necessary to have the perfect life.

First, happiness is about how you feel inside and outside. You can't feel it in just one way. For some people when you see them, you think they are constantly happy, but when he/she has a bad life because these people aren't happy outside. Other people are happy inside, but they have many problems in their live and in their work, so they can't feel happy outside because of this. For example, another one of my friends was happy outside but he wasn't happy inside. He was feeling he had a bad life because he

wasn't happy inside. When he was sitting with himself and he thought inside that he was the worst guy. Later, he watched a movie about a guy who wasn't happy in his life and the guy tried to change his life for be happy inside and outside. He was guy able to change his life to be happy. Then my friend tried to do like the guy in the movie. The first time was hard but when he tried many times, he was successful. Now I call him "Mr. happy person".

Second, happiness gives you an amazing life. Before I wasn't thinking that happiness was important to think about. Even though I was feeling great in my life, I sometimes had bad moments. I was reading about many stories of the people who didn't feel happy inside and outside. These stories was making me be happy every time. If these didn't affect me, I will not be a happy person because when you are happy inside, you are going to be happy outside. Happiness now is a very important thing in my life

In conclusion, happiness is one of the good things I have in my life. If I wasn't happy now, I would a have miserable life. When you feel happy inside you will absolutely be happy outside. I always do whatever I want to make me feel happy even if it's hard to do. When I become happy I do many things to make my life great and to get happiness in my life. There are many things I do to make myself happy such as party with my friends, hang out everywhere and play soccer when I have free time. Happiness always makes your life satisfying.

## APPENDIX D

### How Can We find The Happiness

Our life is full of adventures and changes. Every day people face many events that can change their life to be either sad or happy. Actually, everyone has their own opinion of what entails happiness. Even though some people think that happiness comes from different sources such as money, marriage, or a new car there still are many people who believe that happiness comes from inside ourselves. For instance, according to the book for class, which talked about World War II, there was a character who fascinated me by her opinion. She was Mama. She said to her daughter that the happiness is something we make inside ourselves. Through my experience, I believe that happiness is something comes to us by both sides, which are external factors and inside ourselves.

The first side of obtaining happiness is external factors. I think the best example of external factors is the marriage because you will be able to take care of someone, and you know he/she cares about you. It is a wonderful equation in life. In fact, there are a studies which prove that people who are married live longer than others for many reasons. In Islam, there is a lot of evidence from our Holly Book -AlQuran- which encourages people to get married if they can to find the happiness and to improve their life. The best thing is when you spend your day eating and discussing with whom someone you know everything about. We not only can find happiness by marriage, but also can discover it

through meeting friends. This can also be a factor to gain happiness in our life. Actually, I have so many friends who make my life happy and exciting so far. When I meet with my friends, there many activities do together such as talking, playing, or traveling. I love all my friends because they accept me as I'm\_ without judgment. Moreover, I would like to have their support forever and share with them all the happiness and grief of life.

The second side of attaining happiness is through inside ourselves. In fact, the human's ability to transform our mind is the strongest power in the world to change the moments from sorrow to happiness. There is a maxim that Muslim people say "don't think about what you don't have, but thank Allah for what you do have". It is an awesome philosophy. When we believe that everything comes from Allah, we will be sure of His justice. Actually, there are many people around the who have very much money but they can not be happy because they have diseases on their bodies or they can not be parents. And there are many poor people who do not have something to eat, but they enjoy their health and their children. Therefor, happiness does not depend on what we do have or what we do not have, but it depends on what we believe inside ourselves and how we can change the sad moments by ability to change our attitude our mind.

In conclusion, happiness is something that people are looking for in their life. However, there are many different opinions on how people can attain happiness. Some people believe happiness is something that comes from outside by one's circumstances; on the

other hand, others believe happiness is something can create inside ourselves. Therefore, this topic can go various directions. It merely depends on what the person has learned from his/her religion, culture, and family.

## Happiness

In chapter 3, Mama says, Happiness. I do not agree with Mama. In my opinion a person can be happy or become happy from both inside and outside sour cues. One also needs to lighten up that there is the chance of taking tablets which also can make someone happy. Those tablets can certainly be drugs or anti-depressants prescribed by a psychologist.

To point out my opinion, a few examples will be given.

So First let us think of person who just got accidentally arrested for murder. Surely this is a strange case, but just imagine this to be true. Figure that arrested person is a woman who is going to get married the following week. One could assume her to be happy. She will marry the man she loves the most, she probably will get her hair done professionally, and she will wear the most expensive and most beautiful dress on earth. Certainly she will be a happy woman, even a week before that date. The question which crosses my mind now is, what if she were able to be happy even though she just got arrested for murder? And it was not really even for her! The bad surroundings around her probably will reduce her inner happiness.

A second example could be a depressed person. He or she might have everything that people are longing for. To Loving parents, friends, a good education, the possibility to achieve almost everything's in life. But still the person is not happy at all. When surrounded by other people, he or she might be happy, but as soon as he or she is alone at home he or she feels just sad. So as we see, the person is just happy with the surrounding

circumstances.

The solution is to leave this situation and change the life to the better ways. Do not sitting and say there are now way to change my life. Many people realize what they need so the idea is just do it. Do not stay alone and feel disappointed about the past. you have to look for the future to be really proud of what you do in your life. Do not keep any feel inside you. Tell a close friend about your problem and he or she will help you if you want it.

In conclusion, I always keep myself happy. For this reason if I have a problem and I don't find a solution, I will be sad all my life though. I always like to hang out with my friends around me and make myself happy to forget problems. I like to party sometimes and talk to my parents. They also make me feel happy, especially my mother. When I talk to my mother I feel excited and she gives me hope before I come to her and tell her what happened to me, she already knows what I am going to say to her. I like also traveling and going to different countries to relax and enjoy my life and have fun over there. Traveling makes me happy because when I travel, runaway of my problems I have. I need to forget problem and leave them behind. Without love, my life would be sad and boring.

## Happiness

One time my father told me “Happiness comes from both inside and outside our selves”. I really agree with my father’s opinion because I believe that there are many people can make you happy and you also can make yourself happy. Love people and they will love you and your life will be prettier.

From my perspective, there are many people can make you happy. For example, your father, your mother, your sisters, your brothers, your wife, and your children can always make you happy by being in your life only. I believe that we all need people around us to make our life beautiful. As an example, when you see all of those people around you, you feel safe and happy because you have all of those people in your life. I have an example from my life which is my father. He always makes me happy. Even when I’m away from him, I get happy by only remembering him. So, I can say that happiness can be come from outside us.

Happiness comes from inside us too. We all can make ourselves happy when we have a strong faith. We also can make ourselves by working on what we believe in. I think that by loving others, respecting them, and throwing the hatred away, we will be much happier and make our life beautiful. Doing a good things for people and helping others all of that can make your life happier. Every person when he does a volunteer work will get happy and will have a great feeling. When keep your face smiling even when your life is not going the way you like, you

will say “the life is great”. Always look at the ting that you have inside yourself and you will be happy. I’m sure that every person has the power inside him that can make his life amazing.

In a word, I can say that happiness comes from both inside and outside the person. It comes from people around you and from inside yourself. Look inside yourself and see how much love you have in your heart and how many people you love in your life. Look around you and see how many people love you only because of you and see how much they love.

## Happiness

In chapter three, Mama tells Corrie that happiness is something we make inside ourselves. What Mama said to Corrie about happiness is right. It is, indeed, something we make ourselves. Sadly, few people know the fact that happiness does not depend on our surrounding regardless of what most people say about it. Happiness is when you have good people surrounding you and when you appreciate what you have. It is also when you see the smile on people's faces, especially those who are close to you. There are two popular saying that I like: "The best way to be happy is to make someone happy," "The aim of life is appreciation; there is no sense in not appreciating things; and there is no sense in having more of them if you have less appreciation of them" (Chesterton). This is accurate. However, unfortunately some people are not aware of that.

Several months ago, I was trying to park my car in front of my uncle's building. I was preoccupied, absent from real life and thinking about my family's problems. I suddenly was fiercely shocked seeing an old man through my car's window. He was picking up the trash from the road and putting it into his cart that was full of trash. What made me paying attention to the old man was that it was at noon in the summer. The weather temperature was around 107 degrees. In my car the AC was turned on a high level to avoid the heat. No one knows how hot Saudi Arabia is at this tome except its citizens. My eyes could not stop surprisingly at the old man. I asked myself, "Does he work like this every day? How much does he earn from his work? Is what he earns enough to make a living? Does he have a house?"

My thoughts interrupted when I eventually noticed that he walked away, so I drove my car toward him. I noticed some money in my car's glove compartment while I was driving. I stopped the car close to him and then I called to him to give him the money. I was actually puzzled as to whether I should give him merely this money or more. I decided quickly to not give him more. It was extremely obvious when I saw the old man's eyes that he had been suffering much in this life. When I gave him the money, suddenly he pulled my hand to his and against his chest and started praying for me.

After that, I drove to the park, again and I parked my car. In the car, there was a force inside me that made me want to go back again and give the old man more money, but I did not, and I still I do not know why. That day, I was filled with utter happiness regardless of feeling regret about not giving the old man more money. In addition, I started appreciating for what I do have from graces. I was extremely happy and fulfilled for what I did and even happier for the old man's prayers.

Everyone has their way to feel happy. However, you must choose where to find your happiness within yourself because happiness never comes from the outside. I am happy because I found where my happiness is – making people happy, especially those who are close to me and the people around me who love me. Plus, I appreciate every grace I have.

## Happiness

Happiness is experienced inside us, nowhere else just like any feeling or emotion. Something on the outside can sometimes trigger the inner feeling, but the feeling itself will always come from somewhere inside us. Although, the experience of happiness, joy, and contentment takes place inside us, we can express happiness outwards in many different ways. It could be expressed by simply smiling or by bursting out in song or shouting “yippee” or by literally jumping up and down with joy. Happiness can even be expressed in tears. But the feeling, the actual experience of happiness, always happens inside us.

Another part of happiness is that it is not necessary for something outside ourselves to trigger the happy feeling inside us. In my opinion, one day we can wake up feeling slightly depressed, and on another day we can wake up full of joy. Happiness is enjoyable and it feels well that is a worthwhile reason why happiness is important in itself. Yet we are not aware of any outside factors that make us feel happy on a given day. We merely feel marvelous inside or outside, and it depends on the reason that makes happiness.

First of all, there was a situation that I was facing years ago a hard time. It was of reading a book or story, and it made my life miserable. I was also using the Internet more than any activities else, and that made my mother mad at me. One day, my mother came to me while I was using the Internet, and she told me that I had to read a book or something better than using the Internet every single day without purpose. After that, I suffered many of sleeplessness when I wanted to sleep, and I was thinking of what my mother said to me. In contrast, I had to recover and I told myself I had to be keenly conscious of what I was doing, so I was determined to go to the library and find a book or story to read. After that time, I vowed to my mother that I would read a story in my free time, and that made me happy on the inside because I relied on myself.

Then, I realized that I was using the Internet too much, so at that time, I learned to read any book or story and finish it. For example, since I came to the U.S. I have been reading a story called “Whirligig,” and it’s the one that has confused me the most since I have read many stories. Now I feel I have done something incredible by reading many books, and that made me happy from the inside.

Second of all, a difficult experience in the U.S. was playing soccer here. In 2010, it was the worst year that I have ever lived. In that time I was playing soccer in the summer every day. Suddenly, while playing soccer, I wanted to kick the ball hard, and I missed it. Therefore, I injured my knee, and I had to go to the knee specialist. I did the MRI, which is similar to the X-ray, but much more accurate, and my doctor found out there was a fracture in my knee. He told me to stop playing soccer for three months, and that was the worst experience of my life. After that, I went three months without playing soccer or going to the gym and I was using crutches. Eventually, I went back to my doctor, and I did the MRI again. He told me something that made me so happy the fracture was gone. I couldn’t believe that, and that was a source of outer happiness.

In conclusion, one day we can wake up feeling sad, and on another day we can wake up feeling happy. Happiness is fun, and it feels marvelous. That is a worthwhile reason why happiness is important all by itself.

# Melissa Van De Wege

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## Language Learning Profile

My own second language acquisition experience began when I was in eighth grade. As I walked into the classroom of my Introduction to Foreign Languages class, I eagerly grazed the room with my eyes, looking for my friend. Together in one semester, we would embark on a journey around Europe, learning French, German and lastly, Spanish. As Aristotle says in his book, “Rhetoric,” the last point in a message is what people often remember the most. The message that was transmitted to me that semester was in three languages. The last part of it was learning Spanish, and that language was what stayed with me. That semester was the beginning of what has become and will continue to be a life-long journey of language learning.

That summer, I traveled to Europe for the first time. One of the countries I visited was Spain where I was able to utilize my Spanish. It is said that one must be immersed in a language in order to become fluent. Naturally, one week in Spain did not make me fluent, but it did make me realize how difficult learning another language would really be. Nonetheless, that first trip to Europe ignited an active desire in me to pursue greater involvement with the vibrantly diverse community of Spanish speakers. As a freshman and all throughout high school, I continued to study the language, furthering my passion for the study of language and interaction with people of different cultures.

After my high school graduation, I traveled to Italy. That summer, I lived there and studied Italian. As the fourth language I had studied in school, Italian proved to be easier to learn since my mind had become accustomed to learning a foreign language. However, challenges arose, and frustration ensued at my initial lack of ability to communicate. Hand gestures and facial expressions became a reliable source of communication as I navigated through the first month of living in Italy. Unfortunately, it is said that “if you don’t use it, you lose it,” and after a couple months of being home from Italy, I sadly “lost” my Italian. Nonetheless, the experience showed me that after having acquired a second language, acquiring a third often comes more easily.

My third trip to Europe and second encounter being immersed in Spanish was during college in which I backpacked through Spain for two months with my mom. I arrived in Spain, fully expecting to have no problem with the ability to communicate. I was, after all, earning my bachelor’s degree in Spanish. How could a woman who had been studying the language for nearly six years have much difficulty communicating? But I quickly realized that I was mistaken. My confidence was nearly shot the first few days as I navigated my mom and I from the Madrid airport throughout the city, frequently chanting, “Más despacio, por favor,” (*More slowly, please*) and “Perdón? Repítalo, por favor” (*I’m sorry, will you repeat it, please?*).

During that backpacking trip, my mom and I traveled through many regions all throughout the country, and I learned to communicate in various dialects of Castilian Spanish. But the place I remember the most was the region of *Al- Andalus*, or Andalusia. It was primarily in that region that the Moores, who ruled Spain from 711 to 1492, built elaborate palaces and mosques. Walking through Granada’s grand Moorish palace, the *Alhambra*, my initial enchantment for the architecture and culture of the Muslims was

born. I touched the walls of the palace, ornately chiseled with detailed designs. I looked up in wonder at the marvelous ceilings and heard the peaceful trickling of the fountains. It was there that my love for Spanish and my fascination of Arabic began.

After I graduated from college, I traveled to México City to take an English language teaching position. Based on my previous experiences being immersed in a foreign language, I knew the first couple months would prove difficult. I was right. Fortunately, though, for only one month, it was difficult for me to communicate even after having earned a degree in Spanish. I needed to become accustomed to hearing the language all around me. The input of language that was coming in was much faster than what I was able to produce in output. Eventually, though, something in my mind “clicked.” It was then that my mind seemed to open up to hearing and producing language, and I was able to communicate with ease.

After spending a year in México, I came back to the States, directionless, not knowing what I was going to do with my language skills and professional certifications. Fortunately, fate had its way with me, and the decision to pursue a connection again with non-native English speakers came in November 2008 in which, at the dentist’s office, I translated for the dentist and a Spanish-speaking patient. I did not know that the appointment that day would be a turning point for me, changing my course of direction from then on. That decision to translate for the doctor and the patient eventually led me to pursuing my master’s degree in teaching ESL and ultimately led me back to my heart’s desire – language and culture.

The fall 2011 teaching at EWU proved to be another turning point for me in exploring other languages and cultures. That fall, I taught a composition class in which I had thirteen students from Saudi Arabia. That experience reignited my fascination with the Arab culture and Arabic language. Now as a master’s degree candidate, I am on the verge of potentially traveling to the Middle East, about to be immersed in the culture I once was introduced to in Granada, Spain. For six months now, I have been studying Arabic and am acquiring it as my third language. This experience has been like no other, as in learning this new language I am learning a new writing script, a new grammatical structure, a new rhetoric, and a new culture. I am beginning the process of foreign language acquisition again, and it is all that more enjoyable the fifth time around. By now, I have studied five languages and am in the process of acquiring my third. In learning Arabic, though, I have come full circle. The Arabic and Spanish languages were united in Spain, and I discovered that in Granada’s Moorish palace. Now they are united in me.

Learning multiple foreign languages has allowed me to have empathy for my students, which has created mutual understanding between them and me. In collaborating with my students, who speak multiple languages, I have learned that acquiring a foreign language to fluency for them, too, is difficult. But it reaps great rewards. As a teacher who has gone through the process of foreign language acquisition, my goal is that my students are motivated like I am to utilize language to reach out to others across cultural boundaries. In that, I, like many others, have become truly multicultural. And in that, I, like many others, hope to use these skills to ultimately further a greater good.

# Melissa Van De Wege

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## Statement of Teaching Philosophy

As an English as a Second Language and writing composition instructor, I have a true passion for language instruction that emphasizes multicultural appreciation and global awareness. My pedagogical approach is a balanced one, incorporating a combination of student-centered and direct instruction strategies for the purpose of learning functional language skills. In order that my students produce whole, meaningful communication, I provide them with in-class opportunities that simulate “real world” environments in which they will utilize their learned language skills. I provide instruction that includes not only a strong emphasis on language proficiency, but also a distinctive importance on building students’ critical thinking and writing skills, intercultural competence, and ability to engage in sustained independent learning. My students employ qualitative reasoning in analyzing texts, addressing opposing viewpoints and different situational contexts, and using language as a rhetorical tool. This creates extraordinary opportunities for their individual exploration and growth.

In addition, I successfully create a positive and respectful atmosphere in the classroom. I adapt well and connect with students of different nationalities. These are assets I bring to the classroom that enrich their learning experience. Using content-based, task-based curricula, I create activities that encourage student interaction with one another and with me. In teaching a composition class for multilingual students last fall at Eastern Washington University, I had my students identify, appreciate, and share with one another and me what was valuable about their individual cultures. I created pair and small group-work activities focusing on similarities among the students. These activities were in-line with student-centered pedagogy. Also incorporating some direct instruction, based on pedagogical tradition from which many of my students came, I created a balanced teaching approach. Students found my multi-method instruction based on proven techniques beneficial. They consistently reported increased confidence in their language and critical thinking skills and the ability to identify both their areas that needed improvement and areas that were successful. In turn, they were thoroughly engaged in the learning process. This created mutual cooperation between them and furthered their understanding of what united us.

I also believe that one of the most important roles of the teacher is to distinguish students’ different learning styles. I do this by exercising an intuitive nature in responding to the needs of my students through open dialog that furthers collaboration, purpose, and education. This helps them develop linguistic and communicative competence for full, productive participation in society. Through my pedagogical approach, my goal is that my students are energized by a dynamic classroom environment, fueled by my strong energy and evident passion for teaching. I ultimately desire that they develop an internal motivation to utilize language so they can be leaders who actively reach out to others across cultural boundaries. In that, we become truly diverse, and in that, we strengthen the ties that unite the teacher and student to advance the international dimension of education.

# Melissa Van De Wege

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## Curriculum Vitae

Mvdw0626@gmail.com

001-509-342-8069

## Education

**M.A. English, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2013**

*Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

**Certificate in the Teaching of Writing, 2013**

*Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

**B.A. Spanish, 2005**

*Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA*

**Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Certificate, 2005**

*Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA*

## Professional Experience

**Writer's Center Responder, February 2013- Present**

*The Writer's Center, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

Respond to students' writing pieces in private sessions in order to engage them in critical thinking and writing skills.

**Private Spanish Instructor, January 2013 - Present**

*Precise Group, LLC, Spokane, WA*

*Welk Security and Trust, Spokane, WA*

Design and implement student-centered, communicative curricula from minimal input in the instruction of vocational Spanish.

**Adjunct Faculty Member, September 2012- December 2012**

*Eastern Washington University Department of English, Cheney, WA*

English 201: College Composition: Analysis, Research, and Documentation

Designed and implemented an original curriculum. Taught domestic and international students. Assessed progress in formal grading and tailored the course according to students' needs.

**Private Spanish Instructor, Summer 2012**

*San Diego, CA, for the children of Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Carter, President of Global Solutions and Development, Sprint Nextel*

Designed stimulating activities incorporating reading, writing, listening, speaking and grammar. Created formal exams to assess pupils' progress. Utilized a student-centered communicative approach. Also taught about Latino culture.

**Graduate Student Instructor, March 2011-June 2012**  
*Eastern Washington University Department of English, Cheney, WA*

English 112: Composition for International Students  
Designed and implemented an original self-created student-centered curriculum from minimal input that integrated EAP language skills incorporating reading, writing, listening, speaking and grammar. Taught exposition, narration, analysis, and argument. Assessed students' progress in formal grading.

English 101: College Composition: Exposition and Argumentation  
Taught analytical, argumentative, and reflective writing skills to domestic and international students. Assessed students' progress in formal grading and tailored the course according to students' needs.

English 201: College Composition: Analysis, Research, and Documentation

**English as a Second Language Teacher's Assistant, September 2009- August 2010**  
*Community Colleges of Spokane, Intensive English Language Department, Spokane, WA*  
Taught ESL to students of beginning through advanced levels. Taught three levels simultaneously, utilizing a communicative approach.

**Outside Sales Representative, August 2006-June 2009**  
*Ganz, LLC., Spokane, WA*  
Managed Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho territory. Grew territory's volume by 86 percent in three years. Developed and presented sales presentations for the increased profit of my clients. Analyzed the needs of my clients and executed plans to increase revenue.

**English Language Instructor – Vocational ESL, September 2005-February 2006**  
*Grupo Educativo Angloamericano, Mexico City, Mexico*  
Taught intermediate and advanced-level ESL courses for the business and technical world to corporate executives. Courses emphasized reading, writing, listening, speaking, and grammar. Tailored curricula to students' needs and assessed progress in formal grading.

## **Publications**

Van De Wege, M. "Arabic Rhetoric: Main Idea, Development, Parallelism, and Word Repetition."  
March, 2013  
Chair: Dr. Tracey McHenry, Committee: Dr. Justin Young

## **Invited Guest Presentations**

Van De Wege, M. "Arabic Rhetoric: Main Idea, Paragraph Development, Parallelism, and Word Repetition."  
*University of Washington International and English Language Programs, Seattle, WA, April 22, 2013*

Van De Wege, M. "Contrastive Rhetoric Between Arabic and English: Structure and Style."  
*Gonzaga University Center for Global Engagement, Spokane, WA, November 2, 2012*

## **Conference Presentations**

Van De Wege, M. "The Intercultural Rhetoric of Arabic and English: Structure and Style." *Spokane Regional ESL Conference, Spokane, WA, February 2013*

Van De Wege, M. "Arabic Rhetoric: Finding solutions in grading student essays" *WAESOL Conference, Des Moines, WA, October 2012*

Van De Wege, M. "Arabic and US English: Taxis, reasoning, and poetic elements" *Eastern Washington University Creative Works Symposium, Cheney, WA, May 2012*

Van De Wege, M. "Developing a Curriculum Using an Autobiography" *Spokane Regional ESL Conference, Spokane, WA, February 2012*

Van De Wege, M. "Holocaust Stories: Corrie Ten Boom: Reading and Writing in the ESL Curriculum" *Tri-TESOL Conference, Des Moines, WA, October 2011*

Van De Wege, M. "Using an Autobiography in an Academic ESL Curriculum" *Eastern Washington University Creative Works Symposium, Cheney, WA, May 2011*

## **Honors/ Awards**

**Finalist, Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship**, 2013-2014 academic year  
*The Kingdom of Bahrain*

**Recipient, Graduate Service Appointment Award**, March 2011-June 2012  
*Eastern Washington University Department of English*

**Recipient, Travel Grant**, Fall 2011, Fall 2012  
*Eastern Washington University Department of English*

## **Professional Development**

**Arabic Language Classes**, October 2012- Present  
*Spokane, WA Islamic Center*

**First Friday Forum**, November 2012 – February 2013  
*Gonzaga University Center for Global Engagement, Spokane, WA*  
Participated in a discussion forum about second language acquisition and ESL composition pedagogy.

**Fourth Annual Inland Information Literacy Retreat**, October 19, 2012  
*Spokane, WA*  
Participated in group workshops discussing topics about incorporating information technology in the composition classroom.

**Graduate Student Instructor Mentor**, September 2011 – June 2012  
*Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

## **Service**

**Conversation Club Group Leader**, Spring 2012, Fall 2012  
*Spokane College of English Language*

**Evaluator, English 101 Collaborative Portfolio Assessment Session**, June 2011, December 2011,  
March 2012, June 2012  
*Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

**NWCCU Accreditation Forum**, April 26, 2012  
*Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

**Presenter, English 101 New Instructor Workshop**, August 2011  
*Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA*

## **Organization Memberships**

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages International Association (TESOL)

Washington State Affiliate of teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (WAESOL)

United States Servas Organization

## **Professional References**

**Dr. Tracey McHenry**  
*Associate Professor of English*  
Eastern Washington University  
[tmchenry@ewu.edu](mailto:tmchenry@ewu.edu)  
509-359-2829

**Dr. Justin Young**  
*Assistant Professor and Director of Composition Department and Writer's Center*  
Eastern Washington University  
[jayoung@ewu.edu](mailto:jayoung@ewu.edu)  
509-359-7062

**Dr. Dana Elder**  
*Professor and Director of University Honors*  
Eastern Washington University  
[delder@ewu.edu](mailto:delder@ewu.edu)  
509-359-6305