Mapping multidimensional aspects of research: Reaching to
intercultural rhetoric

Ulla Connor
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

Abstract

This chapter traces the history of contrastive rhetoric and offers an agenda for expansion. Postmodern mapping methods are introduced to examine the effects of three major developments in discourse on the theory and methods of contrastive rhetoric research. The first map considers writing as a socially constructed activity and suggests that the study of writing should not be limited to texts but should consider the social practices surrounding it. The second map considers “small” cultures and draws attention to the important roles of disciplinary and other such small cultures. The third map introduces the study of writing as an intercultural encounter where writers are interacting in the production and comprehension of texts. Contrastive rhetoric needs to study writing as it is taking place in today’s instant and global message making environment, in addition to studying written products cross-culturally. The chapter argues for the expansion of the contrastive rhetoric research agenda and ends by proposing a name change to “intercultural rhetoric.”

Introduction
Contrastive rhetoric research began nearly 40 years ago with Robert Kaplan’s seminal article on writing by learners of English as a second language. Since Kaplan’s (1966) article, many changes have taken place in contrastive rhetoric studies, as reviewed by Kaplan (2000, 2005) and Connor (1996, 2002, 2004). Kaplan himself has continued as a writer and powerful theorist for contrastive rhetoric to this day. In 2005, he provides an insightful discussion of the development of contrastive rhetoric, issues it has addressed, and its value to the field of second language writing. He describes the complexity of second language writing situations using a “model of concerns in contrastive rhetoric.” The model depicts a generator (L2 writer) – text (L2) – receiver (L1 reader) communication situation, in which cultural preferences or tendencies can cause interference at multiple levels. These levels include text and genre but also pragmatic considerations in any given culture about who has authority to write, who may be addressed, what may be discussed, and what form writing may take. Kaplan’s model provides an excellent depiction of the complexities of contrastive rhetoric study today.

It is fair to say that two major constructs have guided contrastive rhetoric inquiries throughout the decades. The first has been its focus on multilingual writers. The second guiding construct has dealt with persuasion and the effect on the audience. Thus, international or intercultural, and rhetoric as persuasion, characterize the two major
Kaplan’s (2005) model of concerns in contrastive rhetoric presents a call for research that tackles the complexities of second language writing. Contrastive rhetoric has always been multidimensional in its research. From the very beginning, it drew on not only linguistics but also rhetoric and composition theories. Throughout the decades, the multidisciplinarity of the contrastive rhetoric approach has increased. Contrastive rhetoric draws on theories and methodologies of many closely related disciplines such as anthropology and translation studies. In this chapter, I discuss the expansion of contrastive rhetoric in light of new understandings in discourse, text analysis, cultural studies, and intercultural communication about how the contexts of writing can be studied, how new, dynamic definitions of culture need to be included, and how interactions in today’s globalized world affect contrastive rhetoric. First, however, a brief history of contrastive rhetoric is in order, interspersed with personal reflections on the development of contrastive rhetoric. The chapter will end with a position about a name change from “contrastive rhetoric” to “intercultural rhetoric.”

History of Contrastive Rhetoric
The contrastive rhetoric field is usually thought of as the single invention of one man – Robert Kaplan. Working in an isolated situation – with a doctoral education in rhetoric and as a professor of linguistics and a director of a university ESL program – Robert Kaplan (1966) came up with the idea that the reason his ESL students’ writing looked different from native English speakers’ writings was because their cultural thought styles were different, and accordingly, these thought styles were expressed in their cultures’ rhetorical styles.

To us, forty years later, this may seem obvious. Yet, when Kaplan wrote this, it was novel for three major reasons. First, few ESL instructors thought much about writing. The predominant methodology – the Audiolingual Method – concentrated on oral skills. Second, the focus of both linguistics and language teaching was on the “clausal” level, rather than the discourse level. Third, people did not consider that writing could be taught. You were either born with the gift or you lacked it. Programs in rhetoric and composition at U.S. colleges were just starting.

In sum, Kaplan’s idea was innovative and was taken up by many other teachers and researchers. The idea of contrastive rhetoric for Kaplan had its inspirations in four areas: (1) contrastive analysis, (2) the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and more generally the doctrine of cultural relativism, (3) rhetoric, and (4) pedagogy.
1. Contrastive analysis. The early applied linguists and second language learning methodologists in the U.S. were structural linguists, such as Charles Fries (1945) and Robert Lado (1957). In designing a methodology for ESL, they reached for a tool that they already had – the structural analysis of grammar. They compared the grammars of the learners’ L1s and L2s to be learned – English in most cases – and then used these differences to predict the specific point of difficulty for students. This is especially important because these linguists had adopted a theory of learning – behaviorism – in which learning equaled the reinforcement of correct responses. Errors were to be avoided. The early applied linguists attempted to predict, based in the learners’ L1s, where the errors might appear in L2 and how to prevent them from happening.

The main principle of contrastive analysis was that “difference equals difficulty.” In other words, where one found a difference in the grammatical structure of the languages, one could expect a learning problem. This was the basic assumption for Kaplan in contrastive rhetoric as well: If English rhetorical style differed from the rhetorical style of the learner’s native language, then there would be a potential learning problem.

2. Sapir-Whorf. The second inspiration for Kaplan’s original idea of contrastive rhetoric was the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, although there have been some disputes in print about the strength of that influence (as
reported in Casanave, 2004). Benjamin Whorf (1956) had hypothesized that language was determinative of the world view – that is, the structure of a language shaped how its speakers perceived the world. This hypothesis fit U.S. anthropological theory in the first half of the 20th century – cultural anthropologists, including Edward Sapir (1921), held to the doctrine of cultural relativism. They believed that each cultural group had its own unique world view, based partly on a long-term connection to the physical environment, but mostly on the long-term connections of group members to each other. Thus, each culture was unique in itself.

3. Rhetoric. The third concept influencing Kaplan’s idea was rhetoric, which Kaplan had specialized in as a doctoral student. Aristotle’s rhetoric included five elements: invention, memory, arrangement, style, and delivery. The element of arrangement or organization was the focus of Kaplan’s paper.

4. Pedagogy. The fourth and final influence on Kaplan’s notion was language teaching pedagogy. He was concerned that although the Audiolingual Method gave no emphasis on writing, international students at U.S. universities were asked to write papers in English in their regular university classes.

While these four theoretical orientations had influenced Kaplan, other components were introduced in the growth period of contrastive
rhetoric in the 1980s. The work of the linguist John Hinds (1983, 1987, 1990) was a major contribution in establishing the field. Hinds was an American linguist of East Asian languages who specialized in Japanese. His early work was on grammatical elements in Japanese discourse. Stimulated by Kaplan’s call in his 1966 article for serious research into native structures, Hinds set out to study original, non-learner texts in their own language. Like Kaplan, Hinds, in addition to teaching linguistics, served as director of an ESL program in the 1980s. He provided several important studies in contrastive rhetoric, focusing on the four-part conventionalized discourse structure in Japanese called *ki-sho-ten-ketsu*.

My own journey into contrastive rhetoric began as a 23-year-old master’s level student of English language and literature at the University of Helsinki, Finland, when I received an opportunity to write a master’s thesis on the nature of Milton’s adjectives with the guidance of a world-renowned scholar, Dr. Ants Oras. I was simultaneously completing another master’s degree in English literature at the University of Florida. As I described in my literacy autobiography (1999a),

A hardworking and eager student, I found myself completely unprepared for the expectations of graduate study in English in the United States. During the four years in Finland toward my bachelor’s and master’s degrees, I had written only two term
papers in English – one on Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan,” the other on a novel by Willa Cather. The rest of the course work had been tested through short examination questions, many of them in Finnish, the native language of the students. Not only were my writing skills in English academic contexts almost nonexistent, but my spoken language ability in English for classroom and seminar settings was lacking. A reserved, “silent Finn” (Lehtonen & Sajavaara, 1985) unaccustomed to the active participation style of U.S. graduate students, I was poorly prepared to take part in the active social construction of meaning of many courses in the United States. (p. 30)

Experiences as an international student most probably affected my research topics. In my doctoral studies in English linguistics and education at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in the late 1970s, I was drawn to write papers with a cross-cultural focus. For my doctoral dissertation, I used Lado’s (1957) *Linguistics across Cultures* to provide a design for a psycholinguistic reading study of ESL learners. My dissertation was a contrastive reading study of Spanish and Vietnamese school children learning to read in ESL. According to the hypotheses based on contrastive analysis, Vietnamese readers would have more difficulty in reading ESL than Spanish readers whose language structures more closely resembled
that of English. The results of my study did not, however, support this hypothesis. Instead, factors such as parents’ level of education, the family’s socioeconomic status, and other sociological and education factors were better predictors of ESL reading performance as measured by standardized test scores. I continued my research on L2 reading while teaching at Georgetown University in the early 1980s, when I became interested in the effect of cross-cultural schemas on reading comprehension. After hearing Kaplan speak at a TESOL conference and after reading his 1966 article, my research interest switched to writing, especially textual analysis of written products (Connor, 1984).

In the early 1980s, Kaplan and I organized five annual colloquia at the international TESOL Conference, drawing presenters such as John Hinds; several of Kaplan’s former students, such as Bill Eggington, Shirley Ostler, and Bill Grabe; speakers from overseas such as Nils Enkvist, Lars Evensen, and others from the Nordtext Group; and Sauli Takala from Alan Purves’s IEA international study of writing achievement. Then, in 1987, Kaplan and I co-edited *Writing across Languages: Analysis of L2 Text*, the first-ever edited volume of empirical and text-analytic contrastive rhetoric studies, most of which had been originally reported at the annual contrastive rhetoric colloquia.

Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, I have been identified as an active promoter and researcher of contrastive rhetoric. The following are
some areas to which I have tried, with others, to move contrastive rhetoric in the last 15 years. First, we have made links between American traditions of written discourse analysis and rhetoric and European traditions of text and contrastive linguistics. Involvement in international text projects has helped reform the field. Where early contrastive rhetoric was based on rather loose, notional analysis of “rhetorical styles,” there is now a literature of rigorous text-analytic studies. Second, we have tried to connect contrastive rhetoric with rhetoric. Today, there are a number of rhetoricians working on issues directly or indirectly related to contrastive rhetoric. Third, we have brought major innovations in the study of language and writing – such as genre analysis and corpus linguistics – into contrastive rhetoric. Fourth, we have made much-needed connections between contrastive rhetoric and the new field of English for Specific Purposes teaching. In combination with the notion of genre, contrastive rhetoric has substantially refocused on writing for specific purposes. My own studies on grant proposals and fundraising letters are studies in this cross-over. Finally, we have raised consciousness on the importance of research methods in contrastive rhetoric.

Where Should Contrastive Rhetoric Go?
In the introduction to the 2004 special issue on contrastive rhetoric in the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, I wrote how unfortunate it is that writers such as Pennycook (1998) and Kubota and Lehner (2004) refer to contrastive rhetoric as if it has been frozen at the stage of Kaplan’s (1966) article. Not only are Kaplan’s writings often misinterpreted, but contrastive rhetoric is also frequently characterized as static, as if no developments have taken place in theory, methods, and paradigms. Kaplan’s own writings (2000, 2005) are clear examples of how contrastive rhetoric has advanced continuously. Unfortunately, opponents of contrastive rhetoric tend to ignore these recent publications in their fixation on the 1966 article.

Contrastive rhetoric has been useful and explanatory. Yet, to stay alive and continue developing, contrastive rhetoric needs to move far beyond such binary distinctions as linear versus nonlinear discourse, Japanese prose versus Finnish prose, inductive versus deductive logic, and collectivist versus individualist norms. Instead, it needs to describe the vast complexities of cultural, social, and educational factors affecting a writing situation. It must attempt to understand why and how individuals behave rather than simply study cultural artifacts and products. We need to understand the speakers, writers, and readers. We need to know what went into the processes of writing as well as the historical background and context that affected the writing and the writer.
The definition of *rhetoric*, text organization and style, in contrastive rhetoric needs to be reviewed. Many current rhetoricians define *rhetoric* in an expanded manner. To illustrate, Kennedy (1998) and Sullivan and Porter (1997) see rhetoric as an act of communication, not in its classical definition of style, argument, and persuasion, but as utterances made for a purpose. George Kennedy in *Comparative Rhetoric: An Historical and Cross-Cultural Introduction* (1998) defines rhetoric as “a form of mental and emotional energy” (p. 3). Emotional reaction (e.g., fear, lust, hunger, curiosity) produces utterances. According to Kennedy, “rhetoric is a natural phenomenon: the potential for it exists in all life forms that can give signals, it is practiced in limited forms by nonhuman animals” (p. 4). Rhetoric has evolved throughout times, but still today, “in the most general sense, [it] may thus be identified with the energy inherent in an utterance (or an artistic representation): the mental or emotional energy that impels the speaker to expression, the energy level coded in the message, and the energy received by the recipient who then uses mental energy in decoding and perhaps acting on the message” (p. 5).

Sullivan and Porter, in *Opening Spaces: Writing Technologies and Critical Research Practices* (1997), believe that rhetoric is “defined by its focus on ‘situation’ and by its concerns about how rhetorical situation guides production” (p. 25). This definition of rhetoric as communication, shaped by a situation, the impact of which can be studied on its consumer,
is appropriate for current contrastive rhetoric. In order to theorize contrastive rhetoric and set agendas for research and practical applications, a postmodern mapping methodology will be explained in the next section.

**Postmodern Mapping Helps Conceptualize Contrastive Rhetoric**

The postmodern mapping methods used here come from Sullivan and Porter’s (1997) adoption of Bourdieu’s (1988) mappings of the French academic world and Soja’s (1989) postmodern mappings of the geography of Los Angeles. Mappings like these are a postmodern tactic for conducting positionings of research that are reflexive and show relationships visually and spatially. They allow for reflexivity – researcher and researchee roles – as well as encourage critical approaches to interpreting results.

In postmodern mappings, frames become powerful as they represent common belief systems and should be treated critically. Sullivan’s and Porter’s example is Carol Gilligan’s (1982) critique of previously published ethical studies that neglected the gender frame (p. 79).

Sullivan and Porter used maps to reflect on three research experiences involving computers and writing in the workplace. They first
drew research scene maps (e.g., text, user, computer, researcher, subject of study). Later, they drew maps to depict various methodological positions in the realm of computers and writing studies, such as the theory-practice continuum and the theory-empirical continuum. These maps helped them to examine trends in the study of composition but also allowed them to map out their own positions as researchers.

Thus, maps are useful in thinking about overlapping theories and methods. They do not generate all topics of research. Neither do they describe the ideal research. They are messy, not a picture of harmony. Yet, for the purpose of developing the umbrella concept for intercultural rhetoric, I used three postmodern maps that can be considered laying over each other. The three maps depict the following frameworks: the text in context theory (Fairclough, 1992), the intertwining of “large” and “small” cultures in discourse (Holliday, 1994, 1999; Atkinson, 2004), and interaction (Sarangi, 1995) and accommodation (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991; Coupland & Jaworski, 1997; Connor, 1999b) in intercultural communication. Finally, Giddens’ structuration theory helps us understand that genres, models, and social practices are ever-changing.

*Writing as social construction of knowledge*

The first map considers writing as a socially constructed activity
and process. The study of writing should not be limited to texts but should consider the discursive and social practices surrounding it. Fairclough’s (1992) three-dimensional conception of discourse provides the first map and is shown in Figure 14.1.

According to Fairclough,

Drawing together language analysis and social theory centres upon a combination of this more social-theoretical sense of “discourse” with the “text-and-interaction” sense in linguistically-oriented discourse analysis. This concept of discourse and discourse analysis is three-dimensional. Any discursive “event” (i.e. any instance of discourse) is seen as being simultaneously a piece of text, an instance of discursive practice, and an instance of social practice. The “text” dimension attends to language analysis of texts. The “discursive practice” dimension, like “interaction” in “text-and-interaction” view of discourse, specifies the nature of the process of text production and interpretation, for example which types of discourse (including “discourses” in the more social-theoretical sense) are drawn upon and how they are combined. The
“social practice” dimension attends to issues of concern in social analysis such as the institutional and organizational circumstances of the discursive event and how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice, and the constitutive/constructive effects of discourse referred to above. (p. 4)

This important development of discourse as socially constructed has gained acceptance in written discourse analysis, as recent publications show (Barton & Stygall, 2002; Gee, 2005; Hyland, 2000, 2003). Furthermore, methods of text analysis have been developed to examine the social and political context surrounding texts. In Connor (2004), I discussed the need for contrastive rhetoric to go beyond texts and reviewed research methods that do so, such as interviews with writers and readers and focus groups.

Another important development in discourse analysis has been the increasing focus on the multimodal aspects of texts. A growing number of researchers of texts and discourse in the last decade have pointed out that the analysis of language alone is not enough in the pursuit of understanding communications patterns and their use (Ventola, Charles, & Kaltenbacher, 2004). Information in texts is presented in forms such as photographs, diagrams, graphics, icons, and so on in textbooks and other documents. The research of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) suggests that
illustrated documents of a variety of kinds can be meaningfully analyzed in terms of several signifying systems such as given and new information on a page; typically information (e.g., a picture) on the left of the page is given or old, while the information on the right is new information.

Bateman, Delin, and Henschel (2004) provide a detailed model for the preparation of a corpus-based approach to study multimodal communication. This model includes annotation for pictures, font sizes, spacing, and layout. It is important that researchers in intercultural rhetoric begin considering the multimodality of texts as they study the production and consumption of texts across languages and cultures. It is very likely that the use of visuals is culture or discipline specific. For example, Ventola (2007) shows different uses of textual space, color, and shape in communicating power relationships in oral academic presentations across cultures and disciplines.

Small and large cultures

model is his adoption of Holliday’s (1994) diagram of the complexly interacting cultures in an educational setting, as shown in Figure 14.2.

This model is a valuable tool for intercultural rhetoric. It posits that there are various overlapping social institutions and practices in a classroom, such as national culture, professional-academic culture, student culture, etc. that need to be considered when we study and teach writing in a second language.

In other words, in contrastive rhetoric research, it is not enough to isolate national and cultural features of writing. We need to understand other interacting social and educational influences that could be overlapping with national cultural norms and bear on the writing process and products. The Holliday model, as adopted by Atkinson, helps to emphasize the complexity of culture and underscores the importance of considering interlocking cultures in the writing and communication situation. Laid over the first map of the three-dimensional discourse from Fairclough, it forces us to examine the cultural assumptions of a variety of interlocking cultures that may affect text production, distribution, and consumption.

Let us use this map together with the first map to review a case
study of a Finnish economics graduate student writing his first term paper in English at a U.S. university’s doctoral program (Connor & Mayberry, 1996). Conducted more than ten years ago, that study sought to identify contrastive rhetorical problems in the graduate student’s writing. A few textual transfer errors in written products were identified. Yet, the most interesting findings dealt with the conflicting expectations the student had about the classroom culture, especially student-professor interactions. Coming from an educational system that did not encourage university students to confer with professors about their paper topics or problems with data analysis, etc., the student failed to establish a relationship with the professor, and come up with a successful topic as well as seek the professor’s help in revisions. Another finding was the student’s unfamiliarity with the processes of writing. Instead of using resources available to him from professors, peers, or the writing center, the student tended to treat writing the paper as an individual activity. At the time of publication, this case study appeared to fail in its contrastive rhetorical goals. Yet, when oriented by the two overlapping maps, the 1996 study discovered useful and relevant intercultural information.

The map depicts a classroom scenario and is useful for considering intercultural rhetoric in educational settings. Similar maps, which consider both national and small cultures, can be drawn for other situations such as international business communication. A business setting also has several
interlocking cultures: national culture and specific cultures of the business in question. In addition, business settings often include buyer’s culture and seller’s culture and old and new acquaintance cultures. The national culture plays a role, but the small cultures also contribute to understanding of the communication.

*Intercultural vs. cross-cultural communication*

The third map, “intercultural vs. cross-cultural communication,” is laid over the two other maps in Figure 14.3.

For the third map, Srikant Sarangi’s research is vital. Sarangi (1995) provides a comprehensive discussion of culture and language in intercultural pragmatics research. He identifies two dominant trends in research that are concerned with the culture-specific character of language and communication: the cross-cultural and intercultural dimensions. Citing Knapp, Enninger & Knapp-Potthoff (1987), Sarangi (1995, p. 22) states that “‘cross-cultural’ attends to abstract entities across cultural borders, while the ‘intercultural’ deals with the analysis of an actual encounter
between two participants who represent different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.” Sarangi gives examples of numerous types of cross-cultural research in pragmatics: Brown and Levinson’s (1987) comparative accounts of how politeness strategies are realized differently in different languages, Tannen’s (1984) research on rhetoric patterns for structuring interpersonal conduct, and Blum-Kulka and Ohlstein’s (1984) study of speech acts in a second language by learners with different first-language backgrounds. Cross-cultural research has been valuable for the understanding of language universals as well as for the enhancement of interethnic communication. Sarangi cautions researchers, however, from over-emphasizing consistency within a cultural group.

Studies carrying the label intercultural communication fall under two categories. First is research that is mainly concerned with face-to-face encounters between individuals from different cultural backgrounds; second is research that is rooted in the tradition of interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz, 1982a, 1982b), which analyzes principles of underlying communicative style differences in interethnic communication. In the former type, culture becomes the explanation for intercultural matches as the value systems are considered fixed. In the latter type, according to Sarangi, interactants can be studied as diverging from their first language culture and language norms as they try to communicate.

It is the latter type of intercultural communication that the third
map displays. As I will explain in the next section, instead of being seen as having fixed cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the writers are seen as accommodating to their interactants’ language and style.

**Accommodation and Structuration: Factors to Consider**

I published an ethnographic study about a Finnish fish broker, fluent in English (1999b), who adjusted his style of fax writing to the level of his interlocutors. For Estonians, from whom he bought fish, he simplified his language and used words he knew they would recognize. For Japanese, his buyers, although he used simplified English, he used many more formal politeness features which he thought the Japanese would understand. Varying sorts of accommodation strategies were used with other clients and suppliers from Norway, Germany, and the U.S. For contrastive rhetoric, it is important to note that the cultural knowledge the broker had was an impetus for his accommodation. He knew about the Estonian language and culture, which enabled him to accommodate. He also believed that he knew about Japanese language behaviors, which again led to perceived accommodation.

The theory of accommodation began as a Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT), which explained variation among interlocutors based on
“convergence” and “divergence.” According to Giles et al., 1991, convergence is a strategy whereby individuals adapt to each other’s linguistic, prosodic, and nonverbal features. Divergence refers to the accentuation of spoken and nonverbal differences among interlocutors.

More recent Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) (Coupland & Jaworski, 1997; Shepard, Giles, & Le Poire, 2001) is not merely concerned about accent shifts and vocal patterns in conversations. Instead, it adopts a macro-level theory of communication process that explains language behaviors in interpersonal and intergroup interactions across situations and contexts. Despite the changes from SAT, “the primary thesis of CAT remains that individuals use language to achieve a desired social distance between self and interacting partners” (Shepard et al., 2001, p. 34). This is achieved primarily through convergence or divergence. Stereotypes about characteristics of out-group members guide the interlocutor and may lead to linguistic overcompensation. Other factors that guide speakers are norms about appropriate or inappropriate behavior.

A new direction of CAT researchers has been its application in intercultural encounters (Gallois, Giles, Jones, Cargile, & Ota, 1995) and intergenerational interactions (Fox & Giles, 1993). These investigations have provided predictive models of accommodation in specific situations. Focusing on specific situations has also allowed the study to attend to the
sociohistorical contexts that cause interactional patterns, such as the study of English and Welsh. Such studies have also shown the complexities of accommodation involving interpersonal and intergroup considerations.

One could argue that CAT is not applicable for understanding written communication. After all, SAT and CAT were developed for the study of spoken language interactions. But a great deal of business communication today uses e-mail, which comes close to approximating spoken language features. As far as I know, my “fish” study was the first to use accommodation theory in the study of international business communication. The study validated the theory’s powerful explanatory impact.

Structuration theory, a theory introduced to me by Dwight Atkinson, is the structuration theory of Giddens (1979). It helps us understand relations between preexisting cultural phenomena and actual, individual behaviors. Giddens argued that to understand social structure and individual action, we need to see them as co-constitutive and continuously interacting. Individual social activity is influenced by social structures such as laws, rules, norms, values, roles, and folk wisdom. These structures serve as resources and constraints on social behavior but do not determine it. Human beings do not act as programmed computers. They err, ignore, resist, and subvert. Giddens added that what humans do in everyday actions feeds back into social structures, changing them
maybe slowly, maybe dramatically. Thus, society and culture changes are
due to individual behavior. Granted, Giddens’s theory of structuration is
abstract. Yet, it is helpful to consider as intercultural rhetoric meets
changing norms of genres, models, and writing behaviors across cultures.

The three maps – Fairclough’s theory of discourse, changing
definitions of small and large cultures, and the inclusion of intercultural
studies of interaction in addition to cross-cultural studies – are meant to
explain the key concepts in the expanding contrastive rhetoric. True to the
two main constructs in contrastive rhetoric – intercultural (from another
language and culture) and persuasion – these new models advance the
study of international written persuasion and communication. These new
models consider the complexities of production and consumption of
writing, complexities of multiple intergroup and intragroup behaviors, and
the face-to-face interaction of much of today’s writing. Finally, these
models underscore the dynamic nature of genres, models, and other
written structures when theories of accommodation and structuration are
allowed to enter into the analyses.

**From Contrastive to Intercultural Rhetoric**

In 2004, I proposed a new umbrella term “intercultural rhetoric” to
describe the current scope of cultural influences in writing and to connote the direction the field needs to go. I intended this umbrella term to include cross-cultural studies (comparison of the same concept in culture one and culture two) and also the interactive situations in which writers with a variety of linguistic and cultural/social backgrounds negotiate L2 writing in a great variety of situations for varied purposes. In that sense, rhetoric helps examine the accommodation readers, writers, and speakers exhibit in communication. Furthermore, the term intercultural rhetoric was expected to suggest that no rhetorical tradition is pure but that everything exists between cultures. As Dwight Atkinson mentions in the “Conversation” in this volume, Western languages and rhetorics and Japanese have had a 150-year history of interaction. According to Atkinson, Japanese is very much an inter-culture. All cultures and social practices are deeply infused and penetrated by other cultural practices. In this sense, the “inter” of intercultural stresses the connections rather than the cultural and rhetorical differences.

Therefore, my current thinking is that it may be better to use the term “intercultural rhetoric” with the understanding that its agenda continues to expand. In other words, intercultural rhetoric studies may include both cross-cultural and intercultural studies. In addition, intercultural studies are sensitive to context and consider influences both due to inter-person and inter-culture influences. I encourage the
continuation of polemics about the appropriate approaches in intercultural rhetoric at conferences and in venues such as this book.

Acknowledgments: I wish to thank Dwight Atkinson for his advice and inspiration in the writing of this chapter. The comments of Julie Belz on an earlier version of this paper were also greatly appreciated.

References


Linguistics, 5, 196-213.


of L2 text (pp. 141-152). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.


of research in second language teaching and learning (pp. 375-392).

Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.


accommodation theory. In W. P. Robinson & H. Giles (Eds.), *The new handbook of language and social psychology* (pp. 33-56).

Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.


Figure 14.1. Fairclough’s three-dimensional conception of discourse.
Figure 14.2. Interacting cultures in an educational setting [adapted from Holliday (1999) and Atkinson (2004)].
Figure 14.3: Multilayered model of contrastive rhetoric.