World Englishes and contrastive rhetoric

JIANG YAJUN AND ZHOU CHENGGANG

Bridging the paradigm gap between the 'WEs' and 'CR'

WE ARGUE here that a 'paradigm gap' has prevented recent research into *world Englishes* (WEs) and *contrastive rhetoric* (CR) from being mutually useful, and suggest particular areas in which insights from CR may benefit in particular the study of WEs. English in its standard 'native' form(s) is fast becoming the world's lingua franca of science, commerce, the mass media, and entertainment. As a result, its non-native uses and users have become significant in at least the following eleven fields: applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, critical linguistics, contrastive rhetoric, second language acquisition, traditional English studies, lexicography, mass communication studies, cultural studies, pragmatics, and text linguistics (cf. Bolton, 2003a). We hope that the present study will contribute to the debate.

Introduction

Schneider (2003:234) has noted that *world Englishes* ('a new subdiscipline of English linguistics') has made the study of new varieties of English 'a serious topic of linguistics' at large. This is without doubt a valuable development, in that diverse perspectives allow researchers to gain a better understanding of both the nature of the global spread of English and the issues (linguistic, sociocultural, pedagogical, ethical, and ideological) that it has aroused. However, at the same time, the proliferation of diverse perspectives necessitates careful reflection on the current state of the 'art', so as to evaluate both what has been done and what remains to be done, bringing in insights from neighbouring fields.

Such fields share (from different perspectives and with different purposes in mind) both the task of describing and explaining aspects of world Englishes and the situation which the use of English as an international language has brought about. This commonality makes them complementary (and helpful to one another) in treating varieties of English in terms of assumptions adopted, insights gained, methodologies used, and problems faced. This is because each field approaches shared prob-

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lems from an angle with which the others tend to be unfamiliar, due to their different traditions. Each distinctive focus is likely to enable students of the other to see what they have perhaps overlooked in their own research and hence to be innovative and creative.

Cross-disciplinary studies can however be difficult, because academic disciplines tend to fragment into separate specialist fields, across which researchers seldom talk to one another.

The discipline of contrastive rhetoric was initiated by Robert Kaplan (1966), in a 20-page article which has been called 'without a doubt, one of the most widely known and criticized articles in the history of applied linguistics' (Matsuda, 2001:257). Indeed, Kaplan's work has been so seminal that, when it is mentioned, one expects to meet the word *seminal* and is not disappointed (cf. Connor, 1996; Brown, 1998; Scollon, Scollon & Kirkpatrick, 2000; Myers, 2000). We may also note here Connor's observation: 'For thirty years, contrastive rhetoric has been practiced within a ruling paradigm suggested by Kaplan's first research' (1996:6). Kaplan's original claims and diagram have been reprinted in articles or books dealing with writing (cf. Taylor, 1997), business correspondence (cf. Campbell, 1998) and cultural studies (cf. Jones, 1999). Three basic assumptions were made in Kaplan's work:

- that speech and writing are cultural phenomena
- that each language has a set of writing conventions unique to it
- and that linguistic and rhetorical conventions of a first language interfere with writing in a second language.

Considered separately, none of these points were 'seminal' at that time. The first was simply a weaker version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, while the latter two came from insights in contrastive analysis, originated by Fries (1945) and expanded by Lado (1957), which maintained that mistakes made by second-language learners were caused by interference from the first language and therefore the main difficulties in language learning could be predicted by systematic comparison of the linguistic systems of the two languages. What made his comments 'seminal', however, was that Kaplan was the first in a new field of ESL to focus on the rhetoric of writing – extending contrastive analysis beyond the sentence level. Previously, the then popular topic of *contrastive analysis* (as an application of structural linguistics to language teaching) and the then prominent *audio-lingual method* (which made use of contrastive analysis) were unable to go beyond phonological, syntactic, and lexical levels to help international students write rhetorically appropriate essays.

Over the years, Kaplan's assumptions and his approach to ESL writing have gathered both proponents and detractors – although it seems that Kaplan has generally invited more criticism than applause. It is the debates between the two sides that have sustained and developed CR as a discipline. As a result, '[i]n the 1990s, significant changes have taken place in contrastive rhetorical research. Contrastive rhetoric seems almost to have experienced a revolution in the Kuhnian sense, a paradigm shift' (Connor, 1996:18). The significant changes in the discipline have been documented in Connor (1987, 1996, 2002), Leki (1991), Enkvist (1997), Matsuda & Silva (2001) and Matsuda (2003). The developments over the years and the resultant findings have much to offer to researchers into world Englishes.

First, the concerns of CR research are no longer purely pedagogical. That is to say, researchers no longer restrict their focus to 'a fairly rigid form, student essay writing, … contribut[ing] to knowledge about preferred patterns of writing in many English for specific purposes situations' (Connor, 2002:493). Many genre-specific texts have been examined as 'professional writing,' rather than simply learners' error-laden work which is expected to be improved. Such texts include: newspaper editorials (cf. Sugiura, 1996; Riazi & Assar, 2000); research articles (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993); and grand proposals (Connor, 2000; Connor & Mauranen, 1999) in both native and non-native contexts.

It should also be noted that much work has been done in analysing the macro- and microstructures of research articles, including title, abstract, introduction, conclusion, and literature review (cf. Swales, 1990), while Anthony (2001), for example, discovered that, out of twenty-two authors who started their article titles with 'On…', twenty were non-native English speakers. Being ignorant of such findings, WEs researchers have often made less than responsible statements without empirical support. For instance, Jenkins (2003:17), when summarizing criticisms of Kachru's Three Cir-

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cles model of world Englishes (the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles), has claimed:

> The model cannot account for *English for Special Purposes* (e.g. English for science and technology). Within such domains, English proficiency may be similar regardless of which particular circle speakers come from.

Perhaps it goes without saying that non-native *professional* writing should also have been examined within the province of WEs. As we will explain later, CR findings in this area provide sound evidence in confirming the existence of a distinct variety of English.

CR literature has also displayed significant textual similarities and differences between major languages and cultures in the world. Understandably, however, the comparison has been made, more often than not, between English and one other language, rather than between language pairs excluding English. As a result, the findings are of particular importance to studies relating to WEs in terms of the linguistic description and explanation of varieties in the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle. Leki (1991:125) is no doubt right when she says:

> If different discourse communities employ different rhetorics, and if there is transfer of skills and strategies from L1 to L2, then contrastive rhetoric studies might reveal the shape of those rhetorical skills and strategies in [non-native] writers from different cultures.

In addition, CR studies have moved beyond texts to an explanation of the rhetorical context in which they are embedded. Such studies concern themselves with the ways in which information flows within different texts. One approach often employed is Swales' move theory in analysing academic writing. Using this theory, for example, Taylor and Chen (1991) examine discourse structure and disciplinary conventions in the introductions to research articles produced by three groups of physicists: Anglo-Americans writing in English; Chinese writing in English; and Chinese writing in Chinese.

The results show that, while all of four 'moves' appeared in all the articles, differences were detected between the Anglo-American group on the one hand and the two Chinese groups on the other: the Chinese writers were less likely to elaborate on the moves, wrote at less length, and cited fewer references. This suggests that rhetorical differences (in addition to phonological, lexical, syntactic and textual deviations) feature in the Chinese variety of English.

The gap between WEs and CR

Until recently, researchers into World Englishes and contrastive rhetoric have been going their own ways, although, as we have indicated earlier, the two share the task of describing and analysing nonnative uses and users of English and should have benefited from each other. The lack of communication between the two fields can be easily seen from the practice of cross-referencing in literature, the focus of the study, and the methodology used.

Research in the one field has been carried out without serious references to basic notions agreed upon, issues concerned with, and insights drawn in the other. This is evident in three state-of-the-art articles, by Görlach (1988), Kachru (1992) and McArthur (2001), the leading figures concerned with *world English(es)*, none of which have made appropriate reference to CR studies. The only place in which Kachru quotes from CR literature, as far as we know, is Kachru (1992c), in which Kaplan (1966) is cited as 'a convenience of departure' (p. 303). Kachru considers that 'one point which still remains valid is the culturality or linguistically determined 'preferred order in discourse bloc' (p. 302). CR researchers, too, seem to be quite ignorant of what scholars of WEs are doing. In *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing*, in which the two editors 'made a conscious effort to represent a wide variety of perspectives, contributions, and issues in the field' (Silva & Matsuda, 2001:xiv), Kachru is only cited parenthetically once, by Reid as a 'most extreme' case of appropriation (2001:211). This indifference to the literature of WEs has recently been criticized. In a review of the recently published *Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (2002), a 672-page reference book with 39 chapters, edited by Robert Kaplan, the initiator of CR, McHenry (2002) observes:

> The second chapter in the Introduction section, Duff's 'Research Approaches in Applied Linguistics' refers (on p. 19) to the Inner and Outer Circles of World Englishes. However, this theoretical framework and sub-field is never mentioned by name again, nor is it defined, and there is no chapter focusing on World Englishes nor is there even a large sub-section of a chapter discussing this important and timely sub-area of applied linguistics.

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McHenry has also noticed that:

> In his preface, Kaplan lists several journals that have expanded the scope of applied linguistics in the past forty years, and while he does not claim that his list is exhaustive, he does not mention the journal *World Englishes* (nor, for that matter, does he mention the *Journal of Second Language Writing*). While several works by World Englishes pioneer Braj Kachru appear in the references, they are cited parenthetically in Ofelia Garcia's chapter on language spread.

In regard to method of research, WEs studies, especially those on non-native varieties (the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle varieties of English), have been impressionistic and intuitive, and seldom engage theoretical concerns or employ empirical methods (Sridhar & Sridhar, 1986; Cheshire, 1991; Bolton, 2003a), while CR, '[f]ollowing the lead of L1 writing research and pedagogy,' has already stepped out of 'the decade of social construction' of the 1980s and into the decade of 'empirical research on L2 writing in the 1990s' (Connor, 2002:497). The absence of quantitative or empirical evidence in research often encourages scholars to jump to less responsible or contradictory conclusions. For example, Yano (2001:127) claims that '[t]here will not be a distinctly local model of English, established and recognizable as Japanese English, reflecting the Japanese culture and language,' while Kachru (1992a:5) argues that '[i]n Japan, even though English continues to be a performance variety, it has penetrated deep into the Japanese language and culture. In its local form, English has acquired a stable status in the commutative strategies of Japanese people.'

Researchers will continue to make such mutually contradictory statements until 'hard', quantitative evidence is provided to demonstrate that something called 'Japanese English' *does* exist.

The gap between WEs and CR is also present in the different focuses of the two disciplines. WEs research almost exclusively limits its subject to the sentence level and seldom moves on to the rhetoric of text, which has been the focus of CR since its early days. This limitation is clear in Kachru and Nelson (1996), in which the authors present excerpts from *The Nation*, an English-language daily newspaper published in Lahore, Pakistan, and from Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine*, in order to show the distinct 'characteristics of world Englishes' and 'bilinguals' creativity'. Here is their explanation of an example from *The Nation*:

> This passage contains the Indian currency abbreviation *Rs*, for rupees; the Hindi-Urdu number-word *crore*, a unit of 10 million; and *godown*, common in Asian contexts for 'warehouse'. In grammar and usage, the term *gutted* does not have its American meaning (structures, not goods, are destroyed, specifically from the inside out); and the positive-sounding *controlled the raging fire* does not, from the writers' point of view, accord very well with the negative *in more than seven hours*; American usage would probably be something like *it took over seven hours to control the blaze*. These features of national lexis and usage do not interfere substantially with transmission of message; they do mark the text as something other than American or British, or Australian or Canadian. There may, of course, be deeper linguistic and cultural differences; these details will not be explored here (see B. Kachru, 1992b, for an examination of such consideration). (p. 76)

Clearly, the focus of the analysis has been limited to variety-specific lexical items and syntactic deviations in the text before they finally direct the reader to one of Kachru's 1992 articles for 'deeper linguistic and cultural differences'. This gives the reader the impression that it is mainly these sentence-level linguistic and cultural elements that have made the passage appear un-British or un-American and creative.

The text to which 'B. Kachru, 1992b' refers appears in the second edition of *The Other Tongue: English Across Cultures* (1992), titled 'Meaning in deviation: Towards understanding of non-native text.' In this article, Kachru lists quite a number of examples in the section entitled 'Contextualizing Text Types', which includes newspaper headlines, reports, reviews, matrimonial advertisements, obituaries, invitations, letters, and acknowledgements in published books. In analysing these samples, Kachru restricts himself, by and large, to the realm of lexical items: 'mixing' and 'nativized lexicalization' (p. 310) in newspaper headlines and reports, 'profuse lexicalization from register-specific items from Sanskrit' (p. 310) in reviews, and 'Sanskrit lexical items' (p. 311) in matrimonial advertisements. He does move his focus to 'style' when discussing his examples of invitations, letters, and acknowledgements, but only argues, for example:

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1 that '[t]he unit of interaction is the family, not the individual' (p. 312), in his invitation sample
2 that 'an extremely deferential lexical spread based on the politeness hierarchy of the L1, and abundant use of blessings in the opening and concluding paragraphs' (p. 313) feature in a typical letter from South Asia, the Far East, or Africa
3 and that the 'ornateness and transfer of the deferential style from L1 to L2' (p. 314) are characteristic of acknowledgments in published books.

Such conclusions seem quite superficial when compared with similar work in CR (Conner, 1996), and especially in EAP (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993; Taylor & Chen, 1991; Sugiura, 1996, Helt, 2001). However, Kachru (1992a, p.10) himself admits, in his introduction to *The Other Tongue*, that the material in his article and the two accompanying pieces, which constitute Part V of the collection, 'only scratches the surface' and 'many related theoretical issues have yet to be fully addressed'.

Recent years have seen signs that the situation is changing, but, it seems, only on the CR side. In responding to criticism from scholars such as Sridhar and Sridhar (1986) and Y. Kachru (1995), some CR researchers have begun to realise that the influence of the global presence of the English language and the 'Englishes' is seen in more and more CR studies and SLA work generally, including H. D. Brown (1994), Kubota (2001a & b), A. Matsuda (2003), Lowenberg (2002), Davies (2002), Hamp-Lyons & Zhang (2001), and K. Brown (2002). Connor (1996:12), for example, has noted in her CR study the need to incorporate the insights of studies in the world Englishes: 'In applied linguistics, contrastive rhetoric has been influenced by such major movements as contrastive analysis and research on international Englishes.' Several pages further, she elaborates on the influence of what she calls 'international Englishes' upon CR study:

> Another shift of emphasis may be seen in the Englishes that constitute the basis of contrastive rhetoric research. Typically, contrastive rhetoric considers Anglo-American English rhetorical patterns as the norm. Linguistic research, however, points to numerous differences between spoken and written modes of American and British English (Biber 1988, for example). Hence, contrastive rhetoric is beginning to consider the variation in American, British, and other 'native' Englishes (Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand English) as well as non-native varieties of English as norms. (p.16)

It is interesting that the topic 'international Englishes', which she considers to be 'the basis of contrastive rhetoric research', gets no mention in her 2002 work, 'New Directions in Contrastive Rhetoric', which is expected to predict the future of the field, as the title indicates.

In 2000, at the annual meeting of the CCCC (the Conference of College Composition and Communication) in the US, '[t]he idea of an additional panel focusing on the changing nature of the English language from the perspective of world Englishes was raised' in a Special Interest Group meeting (reported in *Second Language Writing at CCCC*, 2003).

At the same time, a symposium on 'World Englishes and Teaching English as a Foreign Language,' at the annual meeting of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, was held at Salt Lake City, Utah, in April, 2002. The participants realized not only that '[w]hile the spread of English, its resultant function in new contexts, and nativization have been discussed and documented in the last twenty years, relatively little research has addressed the pedagogical functions of a world Englishes approach', but also that 'EFL pedagogy can be complicated and enriched by a world Englishes approach' (McHenry, 2002a: 452). It is even more encouraging that A. Matsuda (2002) at the meeting urged researchers to think of how world Englishes can enhance TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) as well as of what TEFL can contribute to world Englishes research.

This is, of course, good news for CR researchers as well as SLA scholars and practitioners in general. The bad news is from the WEs side. While as early as in 1986, Sridhar & Sridhar argued that there was a 'paradigm gap' between SLA and the study of IVEs, no other efforts have been made to further the discussion and fill the gap on the WEs side. The same article was reproduced in Kachru (1992c) as Chapter 5, but it seems that this was done only for the reason that it 'discusses, with illustration, how the dominant approaches to second-language acquisition have failed to account for various underlying processes and for the pragmatic contexts of World Englishes' (Kachru, 1992:7). As a matter of fact, in the article, the

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authors also criticize the study of IVEs:

> Studies of IVEs, on the other hand, have remained descriptive and atheoretical, rather than based on rigorous and systematic empirical research. Thus, their distinctiveness from the prototypes assumed in SLA theories has not been convincingly demonstrated. (Sridhar & Sridhar, 1986:12)

The significance of the rich CR literature (which will prove to be meaningful and beneficial to research in WEs, especially on expanding circle varieties) has been seriously neglected. In the next section, we will try to explain what implications and challenges CR findings hold for WEs study.

Implications and challenges from CR

Going beyond the sentence to discourse

As we have seen earlier, WEs studies, by and large, have been limiting their scope to the sentence level. While Kachru (1992c) has a section entitled 'Discoursal strategies: Text in context,' such a study 'only scratches the surface' (p. 10). What is even more important is that in most cases the involvement of discoursal and rhetorical analyses are exceptions rather than regular practice. Almost always, articles attempting to prove that a variety of English is distinct include a list of local words, deviated pronunciations and, sometimes, special syntactic structures. This is not only the case in comparative studies in the Inner Circle varieties, but is especially true of those dealing with Outer and Expanding Circle varieties.

Because different Englishes share many more similarities than different languages such as English and Chinese, these lesser deviations (in lexicon, pronunciation and syntax) are often exaggerated to the degree that the researcher seems to be making something out of nothing. For example, in a newspaper article seeking to convince us that English is an Asian langauge, Bolton (2003b) claims that the creativity of Asian Englishes 'is perhaps best seen in the creation of new words and the expansion of the word stock of the English language to take in new words and phrases from the Asian region'. Yes, Asian people, when using English, do use some local words, but the question is: Do these words alone make the English spoken by Asians 'Asian English'? And is English written by an Asian writer but without a single local word necessarily American/British English?

The first of these questions has been convincingly answered by Krishnaswamy and Burde (1998), when they note that 'a few Indian loan words and fossilized expressions found in [an] Indian's use of English do not constitute a valid base to claim "Indianization" of English' (p. 150). Even in India, where English is used as one of the official languages, local words are marginal both in importance and frequency, compared with the common core of English vocabulary.

This kind of sentential limitation also makes Lilles (2000:3/4) claim that 'Canadian English' belongs to a 'category of nonsense' because lexicographers have been trying to justify the label by exaggerating the words unique to Canada, which are 'specific technical words or proper names, very limited regional words, or words that are either rare, obsolete or obsolescent'. He criticizes Scargill (1977), writer of *A Short history of Canadian English*, for the idea that the unique vocabulary is 'the most obvious and major item to answer the question "What is Canadian English?"' (p. 13). Lilles' conclusion is that the term *Canadianism* is an assertion of political rather than linguistic existence.

However, systematic empirical discoursal and rhetorical differences between Canadian and American English will probably make linguists like Lilles change their mind. While such work on Canadian English still needs to done, Biber and his colleagues have demonstrated important textual contrasts between British and American English in both written and spoken modes, using what they call 'multi-dimensional (MD) analysis' (Biber, 1987, 1995; Conrad & Biber, 2001; Helt, 2001). Biber (1988) has analysed sixty-seven different linguistic features that co-occur in 481 texts, in empirical/quantitative terms, then interpreted these findings as seven functional dimensions of variation (Conrad & Biber, 2001), as follows:

1. involved *vs* informational production
2. narrative *vs* non-narrative discourse
3. elaborated *vs* situation-dependent reference
4. overt expression of argumentation
5. abstract *vs* non-abstract style
6. on-line informational elaboration-making stance
7. academic hedging.

Biber's work is unique not only because it seeks to identify salient linguistic co-occurrence patterns in language, but because he and his followers use large text corpora such as the

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Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen Corpus, the London-Lund Corpus, and the Brown Corpus, the former two British-based and the latter American. This makes it possible to detect textual differences, say, between British and American English. Helt (2001:172) notes:

> The use of MD analysis goes beyond the phonological and isolated syntactic differences focused on in most previous studies, investigating dialectical differences at a register level in terms of a much wider array of linguistic features.

While MD analysis still lacks a rhetorical dimension, contrastive rhetoric researchers have found it helpful in their work. Grabe (1987), for example, states that the multi-dimensional analysis is a necessary beginning for any contrastive research because of its accuracy in description and computerized nature. Connor (1995) also used MD method to compare the Inner Circle varieties of English beyond the sentence. As for the second question, Bamgbose (1995:303) has discovered more essential contrast between the Outer Circle varieties and the Inner Circle varieties, which differ 'even to the extent that a non-native English is often immediately recognizable as such'. Taking as an example a passage in Nigerian English from Achebe's *Arrow of God*, Bamgbose says:

> All the words in the passage can be found in the English lexicon. The syntax is English syntax; but it is clear that the rhetoric is not that of any native variety of English. Rather, it is that of the genre of Igbo proverbs, and its interpretation depends on a knowledge of the Igbo cultural background. This example explains why a mere structural approach to the distinction between native and non-native varieties of English is neither enlightening nor productive. In fact, it is sociolinguistically and functionally misleading. (p. 304)

Discoursal and rhetorical deviations in nonnative Englishes, therefore, are more important, though less obvious, than a few loan words and fossilized expressions. This is especially true of English used in what Cole (1991) calls 'arhetoric societies' in Asia and Africa. This can be illustrated by the following English letter written by a Chinese scientist, which makes Campbell (1998) wonder whether Chinese rhetoric can survive translation:

> [Name], Director
> The Industrial Explosives Society, Japan
> [Address]
> [City], Japan
> Dear Dr. [Director's name]:
>
> The development of gunpowder was certainly one of the greatest achievements of the medieval world. European historians have recognized in the first salvoes of the fourteenth century bombards the death-knell of the castle, and hence of Western military aristocratic feudalism. The development of modern powder and high explosive technology pushes the society ahead further, but at the mean time, it helped several strong countries to invade the weak countries and hence caused enormous sad result between the peoples.
>
> Evidences show that there was exchange of knowledge of gunpowder and blasting bombs between Japan and China not later than the thirteenth century. The relationship between scientists in the field of explosives of these two countries is improved and becoming better and better since the beginning of this decade. Professor [A], Professor [B] and many other Japanese scholars visited China: and at the same time many Chinese colleagues visited Japan. I enjoyed very much the kind invitation of Professor [A] to give a guest lecture on the Academic Conference of The Industrial Explosives Society, Japan in the May of 1987. Very kind arrangement by Professor [B] made it possible for me to visit the University of Tokyo, the University of Kyoto, and many other institutions. I am very much indebted to the generosity of my hosts for their warm reception.
>
> In these years of close relationship with Japanese colleagues, I am deeply impressed on two points. The first point is that they always put the safety problem on the first place. According to the statistics, the frequency rate of injury (FRI) of industries is keeping going down from almost 40 in the early fifties to as low as 2.22 in 1987. In 1985, the FRI of the U.S.A. is 9.90 in compared with 2.52 of Japan. The second point is that the four main islands, Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu, have been linked by bridges and tunnels completely in 1988 and reliable transportation routes interconnecting these islands have been provided. The explosive scientists and engineers played a big role in the underwater blasting and construction work.
>
> On the occasion of the fifty years anniversary of the Industrial Explosives Society, Japan, I would like to send my sincere congratulations for your past achievements and my best wishes for your future success. I am also looking forward to a more intimate cooperation between scientists and engineers in the field of explosive science and technology for our two great neibouring countries.

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Yours very sincerely,

[Chinese scientist's signature]

Campbell claims that this letter has 'a strange structure,' and a version preferred by most respondents in his survey is as follows:

> On the fiftieth anniversary of the Industrial Explosives Society, Japan, I send my sincere congratulations for your past achievements and my best wishes for your future success. I am also looking forward to even more intimate cooperation in explosive science and technology between scientists and engineers of our two great neighboring countries.
>
> In the field of explosives, the relationship between Japanese and Chinese scientists has improved steadily since the beginning of this decade. Professor [A], Professor [B], and many other Japanese scholars visited China; many of my Chinese colleagues have visited Japan. I enjoyed very much the kind invitation of Professor [A] to give a guest lecture at the Academic Conference of The Industrial Explosives Society, Japan, in May 1987. Very kind arrangements by Professor [B] made it possible for me to visit the University of Tokyo, the University of Kyoto, and many other institutions. I am very much indebted to the generosity of my hosts for their warm reception.
>
> In these years of close relationship with Japanese colleagues, I am deeply impressed on two points. First, they always give high priority to the problem of safety. The frequency rate of injury (FRI) of industries has continued to decrease, from almost 40 in the early 1950s to as low as 2.22 in 1987. In 1985, the FRI of the United States of America was 9.90, compared with Japan's 2.52. Second, explosive scientists and engineers played a big role in the underwater blasting and construction work in linking the four main islands by bridges and tunnels. Completed in 1988, this work has provided reliable transportation routes connecting these islands.
>
> Again, congratulations on these achievements to the Industrial Explosives Society, Japan, with best wishes for continuing future success.

It can be seen that it is mainly the 'strange' discoursal and rhetorical features, rather than local Chinese words and syntactic features, that make the original English letter Chinese in nature. Obviously, the rich CR literature has much to offer in these two aspects to colleagues interested in WEs.

The Expanding Circle and the term *norm-dependent*

According to Kachru's (1985) tripartite model of world Englishes, the expanding circle is 'norm-dependent,' or 'essentially exonormative,' while the inner circle is 'norm-providing' and the outer circle 'norm-developing' (p.17). Svartvik (1985), in a comment to Kachru (1985), further explains Kachru's idea with regard to the expanding circle:

> There can be no question of an English-speaking community or fellowship among Swedish speakers of English. Their norm is that native-speaker norm, and this is true whether their interests are literary, linguistic or narrowly ESP-oriented. They are not 'norm-providing groups'. Their norms may be that of British or American English, but it is solidly native-speaker based, in spite of the fact that very few EFL users will ever get close to, let alone internalize, the rules of such a norm. (p. 33)

Once again, this is a sentential, rather than a discoursal, perspective. As we have seen above, the letter written by the Chinese scientist is *in* English, using English words and English syntax. But going beyond the sentential level, we find that the letter, though in English, is rather Chinese in nature. It has 'a strange structure' and the information flows in a very un-Anglo-American way. So we are led to the conclusion that, rhetorically and discoursally, English written by Chinese speakers is more Chinese-norm dependent than English-norm dependent, while on the sentential level it is much more English than Chinese.

This is even more obvious if we make a distinction between 'influenced English' and 'translated English' (Jiang, 2004). The former refers to English COMPOSED by non-native speakers but influenced, to various degrees, by local languages and local cultures. This is what we generally mean by 'non-native English.' The latter, however, is a translated English version of a text in a local language. This type of English is specially common in the expanding circle, where English does not have an official status. For example, some government documents (announcements, white papers, etc.) need to be translated into another language (in most cases, English) for international purposes.

At the levels of both sentence and discourse, the influenced English is more English than the translated English, because those who are able to write in English have a greater or lesser

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knowledge of English writing conventions and try to meet the expectations of the native speaker. Translated English, on the other hand, is inevitably and necessarily different. For one thing, 'the basic unit of translating' is the sentence (Newmark 1991:66). This means that translators seldom change the rhetoric of the original text or the way information flows in it, even though most of them know what the native speakers expect. Empirical research with videotaping has shown that professional translators:

> read and comprehend a typographical sentence before they start, and that they continue translating either until they encounter a problem or their memory fails. The sentence also seems to be a factor in determining where a translator will go back to make changes […]. Further, there does not seem to be evidence that translators operate consistently on units other than the word and the sentence. (Séguinot, 1999:91)

As a result, in a translated English text, it is words and sentences rather than rhetoric that is 'translated' from one language into another. The original discoursal and rhetorical arrangement remains intact in most cases. The result is that a translation is target-language-like in form, but more localized in discourse and rhetoric.

In addition, it seems that translators from different cultural contexts have different views on translation, and this bears upon the result of their work. For example, recent studies show that Chinese translators hold different views on translation from their counterparts elsewhere (Bassnett, 1998). Adler (1980) also found, during his work in editing the translation *Mao's Volume V*, that:

> [n]aturally the translators want it to read as smoothly as possible. I suggest that this temptation is greater for foreign comrades than for Chinese comrades. They will sometimes sacrifice precise meaning for the sake of neatness. This, in my opinion, Chinese comrades rightly fight against. They insist on accuracy of meaning first even if the result is a little clumsier than an alternative which reads rather easily. (p. 6)

Does this mean that, at both the sentential level and beyond, translated Chinese English is more Chinese than, say, translated German English is German? The answer is probably 'Yes,' though further evidence is needed.

The empirical research method

CR research has been using 'diversified' methods from applied linguistics, education, anthropology, text linguistics, and psychology in the last decade, in addition to its earliest empirical methodology (Connor, 1996:155). According to Connor (pp. 155–162) these include quantitative approaches as well as qualitative ones: reflective inquiry, quantitative descriptive research, prediction and classification studies, sampling surveys, case studies and ethnographies, and experiment (quasi and true). In contrast, WEs research remains, by and large, intuitive and impressionistic, although exceptional empirical research has been seen in the pages of the journals *English Today* and *World Englishes*, employing the format INTRODUCTION-METHOD-RESULTS-DISCUSSION. Some scholars have realized the methodological weakness in WEs activities, and it seems that the situation has changed much.

In the 1980s, Sridhar & Sridhar (1986:4) called for more empirical work in the study of indigenous varieties of English (IVEs):

> While the field of SLA, over the last decade or so, has moved rapidly and decisively to embrace empirical methods, research on the acquisition of IVEs has remained descriptive and intuitive […]. Most studies in the area analyse random examples from student speech (or more commonly writing) without giving a systematic account of such crucial details as the source of the data, the elicitation procedure employed, the regularity and representiveness of the phenomenon in question, *et al.* […]. There is an urgent need for detailed studies of the acquisition of IVEs using systematic data collection procedures, rigorous analytical methods, and explicit reporting conventions.

Several years later, when editing *English Around the World: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, Cheshire (1991:7), found the same problem:

> In the absence of systematic empirical research, descriptions of different varieties of World English have often been based either on the writer's personal observations or on the recorded speech of a single person, so that there is no way of seeing how the linguistic features that are said to be characteristic of a given variety of English are governed by social and situational factors. It is impossible, from such descriptions, to distinguish reliably between features that are performance errors and features that are recurrent, 'legitimate' features of a local variety.

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Cheshire's (1991:2) collection of case studies is firmly grounded in empirical research. The first seventeen chapters deal with the inner circle varieties and the other twenty-seven discuss Englishes in the outer circle. In her introduction, she tries to draw 'attention to the specific contribution that empirical research into English around the world can make to our understanding of language in its social context' (1991:2). Unfortunately, the past decade has not witnessed much response to her suggestion.

WEs research needs to diversify its method so as to better describe and explain the profiles of varieties of English in different cultural contexts. One of the immediate needs is to retrieve and analyse data from a larger corpus of a particular variety of English and a comparable corpus (such as the British National Corpus), rather than randomly chosen materials. Such contrastive analyses will lead to the identification of consistent differences between two varieties of English at both the sentential and the discoursal/rhetorical level. It should be noted that, while the latter, as we have been arguing, is more important than the former in describing both native and non-native varieties, the former should move beyond identifying local lexical and syntactic deviations to distribution patterns of common English words, collocations, clauses, and even kinds of punctuation.

Conclusion

We have argued here that there is a paradigm gap between WEs and CR. To narrow the gap, WEs researchers are invited to reconsider their subject matter, methodology and hypotheses by communicating with their CR colleagues. An important step is to go beyond the sentence to discoursal and rhetorical level and to employ quantitative (and other) approaches. Of course, attention to literature in related fields is also needed to help in the study of WEs, a very young field, to establish its status as a legitimate field of inquiry. For example, corpus-based study of 'translationese' may offer valuable insights into what we call 'translated English' (cf. Laviosa, 1998; Olohan, 2003; Reynolds, 2003). In addition, of course, further contrastive analyses that involve, on the one hand, 'translated English' and 'influenced English' (that is, non-native varieties of English) and, on the other, native varieties of English would help us get a much clearer picture of any non-native variety of English at both the sentential and discoursal levels. ■

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