A Comparative Genre Study of Spoken English Produced by Chinese EFL Learners and Native English Speakers

Lijuan Ye

Previous research within the field of argumentation has established that argumentation plays an important role in a variety of professions. Written argumentation has been extensively explored and investigated to examine its various aspects, including argument structures and schemes, argumentative strength, the role of audience, the evaluation of argument, argumentative persuasiveness and force, and so on. It appears, however, that few studies have been carried out to address the issues of spoken argumentation. To fill the gap, this article attempts to compare elements of the spoken argumentative genre produced by Chinese EFL learners to those in their native English-speaking counterparts. Findings from the study show that the former group generally produced an exposition genre focusing on one side of the argument, whereas the latter group noted two or more sides of the argument in order to balance the issue. In addition, Chinese EFL learners tended to use a formulaic argument structure, whereas native English speakers used a more discursive pattern. Pedagogical implications and potential directions for future studies on spoken English argumentation are suggested in the conclusion.

Des recherches antérieures dans le domaine de l'argumentation ont établi que cette capacité joue un rôle important dans diverses professions. L'argumentation par écrit a été intensément explorée et ses divers aspects bien étudiés, y compris la structure et les schémas, la force des arguments, le rôle du public, l'évaluation du raisonnement, le pouvoir de persuasion, et ainsi de suite. Toutefois, il semble que peu de recherches ont porté sur l'argumentation orale. Afin de combler cette lacune, cet article a comme objectif de comparer des éléments de l'argumentation orale d'apprenants chinois d'ALE à ceux de leurs homologues anglophones. Les résultats de l'étude indiquent que les premiers produisaient, de façon générale, un exposé traitant d'un côté de l'argument alors que les deuxièmes en évoquaient deux aspects ou plus de sorte à équilibrer la question. De plus, les apprenants chinois tendaient à employer une structure argumentative basée sur des formules tandis que les anglophones avaient recours à une structure plus discursive. La conclusion de l'article offre des incidences pédagogiques et des orientations possibles pour la recherche portant sur l'argumentation orale en anglais.

An increasing number of Chinese students have come to study at the undergraduate level in English-speaking countries (Leedham & Cai, 2013). The number of international students seeking undergraduate study in Canada

has been increasing at an especially accelerated speed, and since 2005 China has been listed at the top of the list of the countries from which these students come (Project Atlas Canada, 2013). Research on Chinese speakers' English discourse in the academic context indicates that Chinese learners of English often fail to use appropriate discourse-structuring devices to convey important ideas in their spoken English discourses (Tyler, 1992; Tyler & Bro, 1992, 1993; Tyler, Jefferies, & Davies, 1988). The lack of native-like discourse-structuring cues, referred to as "miscues" by Tyler and Bro (1992), often makes the native English speakers perceive the discourse as incoherent because they cannot comprehend the intended meaning with their set of interpretive cues. How to help students triumph in their study of a new language seems to be even more important at the present.

Genre, according to Swales (1990), is "a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken or written, with or without literary aspirations" (p. 33). Specifically with respect to the interrelationship between texts and contexts, genre is "the staged, structured way in which people go about achieving goals using language" (Eggins, 1994, p. 10). Spoken genres that have been studied in the area of academic English include lectures, graduate seminars, plenary lectures, and poster session discussions at academic conferences and college laboratory sessions. Theorists within systemic functional linguistics (SFL) also employ internal linguistic criteria to define genre as what "represents groupings of texts that are similar in terms of their discourse patterns" (Hyland, 2004, p. 28). Under many labels that categorize genre of various rhetorical patterns, such as recounts, narratives, reports, explanations, and expositions, argumentation has always been considered important because "it is common in academic disciplines, the vocations, and the professions; it is sensitive to task, audience, and community, and it is particularly difficult for non-native speakers" (Johns, 1991, as cited in Johns, 1993, p. 76).

Notwithstanding argumentation studies that have been the focus of much discussion in literature, relatively little work has analyzed the discourse structure of oral English argumentation (Paltridge, 2001). To fill the gap, this article reports on an exploratory analysis of argumentation genre in spoken English by Chinese EFL learners and native English speakers. It begins with a review of the literature on spoken genre and argumentation in English as a second or foreign language (L2), followed by a methodological section. Findings from this study are then presented and discussed from three different perspectives. In the last section, some tentative pedagogical implications and potential directions for future studies on L2 spoken argumentation are suggested.

A Review of the Literature on Argumentation and Spoken Genre

This section provides an overview of literature in both argumentation studies and spoken genre analysis. Studies on argumentation have examined various aspects such as argument structures and schemes, argumentative strength,

the role of audience, the evaluation of argument, argumentative persuasiveness and force, and so on (Coffin, 2004; Goddu, 2002; Hoeken & Hustinx, 2002; Maneli, 1993; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; van Eemeren, 2001; van Eemeren et al., 1996; Voss & Van Dyke, 2002). There has also been an established interest in the field of SFL to describe written argumentation (Coffin, 2000; Martin, 1989; Thompson, 2001). A study of particular interest for this article has been conducted by Coffin (2004). The purpose of that study was to analyze the structure of short argument essays written by the International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) test takers. The hypothesis was that the candidates would use discussion rather than exposition genres, but Coffin (2004) found that they produced more exposition arguments. The framework that Coffin (2004) used for her argument genre analysis is explained in detail in the "Framework and Methods" section.

Another area of research literature relevant to the study presented here is genre in spoken discourse, which was defined by Nunan (1991) as "a purposeful, socially-constructed, communicative event" (p. 44). Argumentation in spoken discourse, as a special spoken genre, can be seen as one type of speech event; however, it is also independent of speech events, as indicated by Hymes (1972): Genres often conclude with speech events, but must be treated as analytically independent of them. They may occur in (or as) different events. The sermon as a genre is typically identified with a certain place in a church service, but its properties may be invoked, for serious or humorous effect, in other situations. (p. 61)

A few studies have explored spoken genres in the area of academic English, including lectures, graduate seminars, plenary lectures, and poster session discussions at academic conferences and college laboratory sessions (Flowerdew, 1994; Flowerdew & Miller, 1996; Thompson, 1994). Because the oral argumentation genre discussed in this article is also situated in the academic English context, these studies should be able to shed light on the current investigation. General findings from these studies suggest a noticeable gap between native speakers' expectations and second language students' actual performance. For example, a study of graduate seminars in the United States by Weisberg (1993) demonstrated that many of the non-native students gave an oral version of written genre in their oral presentation, which sounded unfriendly toward their professors. Their spoken argumentation genre contained metadiscourse markers, such as *first of all*, *for the second point*, *firstly*, and *secondly*, which are also widely used in written argumentation to help guide readers through the argument (Johns, 1997). In the same vein, Flowerdew and Miller (1996) found, through their investigation into second language lectures, that lecturers and their students perceived various aspects of classroom behaviours differently, such as styles of lecturing, listener behaviour, and the use of humour in lectures. The purpose of the current study is to explore elements of spoken argumentative genre produced by Chinese

EFL learners in comparison with that produced by native English-speaking counterparts.

In agreement with Coffin's (2004) observation that people are highly influenced by their social and cultural content, Strauss (2004) states that speakers bring cultural models to their conversation. Brought up in a collectivist culture that places greater value on conformity in an attempt to avoid conflict, students from Chinese-speaking backgrounds are not used to analyzing an issue and expressing ideas in a critical manner, which would naturally affect their expressions in English. In contrast, as indicated by the individualist culture, schools in North America highly value critical thinking in genres such as the two-sided discussion. Chandrasegaran (2008) emphasized that "[for non-native English speakers] the teaching of argumentative writing for academic functions should prioritize the socialization of students into the discourse behaviors valued by teachers and professors" (p. 240). One of these efforts can be seen in O'Sullivan and Guo (2010), which uses an east-west dialogue to explore why international students from China seem to be unprepared in terms of critical thinking for secondary and postsecondary studies in Canada and discusses how this could possibly be resolved pedagogically. The authors pointed out that

> Canadian society favors the individual perspective and independent thinking, while Chinese culture favors a holistic perspective and the collective good which places a great emphasis on harmony … Good writing in Chinese is not the same as good writing in English, and this constitutes a challenge for your students who just started academic writing in English. (p. 55)

Framework and Methods for Analysis of Spoken Argument Genre

Central to the conceptual framework of the current analysis is the genre theory of SFL. Within SFL, language is viewed as a meaning-making mechanism that is realized through strategic stages, and thus most SFL scholars make an effort to understand how language is used by people to accomplish activities in society (Eggins, 1994). With respect to the structures of texts, SFL theory defines the notion of genre as "staged, goal-oriented social processes" (Martin, Christie, & Rothery, 1994, p. 233). The analytical framework developed within SFL was drawn on for this article, as it not only addresses argumentation elements such as thesis and evidence but also "distinguishes between one-sided arguments (exposition) and two or more-sided arguments (discussion)" (Coffin, 2004, p. 235).

Exposition genre and *discussion genre* are the two terms used within SFL to describe written argumentation (Coffin, 2000; Martin, 1989; Thompson, 2001). Discussion genre refers to the type of texts that "appear to weigh up evidence in a rational balanced way before passing a judgment," whereas those that

"do not balance arguments for and against an issue, no matter how controversial the proposition," constitute exposition genre (Coffin, 2004, p. 232). Sometimes, we also call exposition genre *one-sided argument* and discussion genre *two- (or more) sided argument*. In this article, the term *balanced argument* is used to categorize one-sided argument as nonbalanced and two- (or more) sided argument as balanced, regardless of the number of pro and con points.

Furthermore, situated within SFL theory, this framework also addresses the systemic functional relationships between language and context, namely, "language use both reflects the social and cultural content which people inhabit and helps to shape it" and "text structures and lexico-grammatical systems evolve within a particular culture to enable humans to achieve their social purposes" (Coffin, 2004, p. 235). Therefore, this analytical framework fits well into the current needs of analysis and enables us to examine lexico-grammatical features to answer the question explored in this article:

> What elements of spoken argumentative genre do Chinese EFL learners and native English speakers use in response to an argumentative question?

Method

Participants

The data for the study were from a longitudinal project called the Longitudinal Spoken English Corpus of Chinese Learners (LSECCL) by a key university in China. The LSECCL corpus was constructed to gather empirical spoken data from Chinese English majors, in the hope of charting and characterizing the developmental paths of the Chinese EFL learners' English learning for a period of four years. The data in the LSECCL corpus were contributed by 56 students enrolled in the English major of the university in China over a period of four years from 2001 to 2004. Because these students were English majors, their English level was higher than non-English majors in general. English majors in China were required to pass the Test for English Major 4 (TEM4). For a typical English major curriculum, there was a writing course taught by a non-native English teacher. As well as the Chinese EFL participants, 43 native speakers of English in the United States were invited to participate in the monologue tasks only. The 43 students were all full-time university students in different years and from varied departments, including English, anthropology, history, music, religion, economics, biology, international development, and others. Informed consent was obtained for both groups of participants. In light of the focus of the present genre study, this article uses only 15 argumentative monologues produced by fourth-year English major students and 15 monologues by the native English-speaking counterparts.

Tasks

To build the LSECCL corpus, all Chinese students were asked to make two recordings each year. The first recording in each year included a read-aloud task, a monologue, and a short conversation between two students, and the second recording included a story-retelling, a monologue, and a short conversation between two students. The monologue in the first recording was narrative, while the monologue in the second recording was argumentative and was used for the current analysis. The topic for the argumentative monologue task in Year 4 was the same as that for native English speakers: "Do you think it is appropriate for college students to rent apartments outside the campus and live there?" Two stages were involved in the argumentative monologue task: monologue preparation and task performance. The students were first given the topic, which was read twice by two native speakers on an audio-tape, and they were then given three minutes for preparation. During the preparation time, the students were allowed to take notes, which they could use later on as reminders while performing the task. After preparing, they were required to present a three-minute monologue. The students in both China and the United States were asked to all be present at the same time in a computer lab where each student was instructed to complete the recording task in a cubicle. The same procedures were administered while eliciting the spoken data from the American students. Chinese students were told that the purpose of the research was to build the corpus in order to chart and characterize the developmental paths of the Chinese EFL learners' English learning for a period of four years. American students were told that the purpose of the research was to collect comparable data of native English-speaker monologues.

Data Generation and Analysis

The digital audio files produced by the 56 students were prepared by converting the original tapes into digital format and saving them on the computer. To supplement the LSECCL corpus and make it more accessible, a large number of undergraduate students and some MA students of the Chinese university transcribed all the tapes. The transcribers were requested to faithfully take down whatever utterances the students produced on the tapes, including pauses, repetitions, self-repairs, false starts, and unfinished sentences. The transcripts were all cross-checked against the original tapes for accuracy among the transcribers by English language teachers at the Chinese institution. One point worthy of special note is that although there were 43 native English-speaking participants, only 15 monologues were transcribed due to certain transcribing difficulties. The transcribed arguments were read and analyzed by the author according to Coffin's (2004) categories, and the results were checked by a professor from the English department in which the corpus was built. This professor was involved in the project of building

the entire corpus, so he was familiar with the data. The results were agreed upon for the most part, and the few disagreements were discussed further and resolved between us.

In order to examine the spoken arguments produced by Chinese EFL learners and native English speakers, two approaches were taken: genre analysis following the SFL argumentative genre framework and text analysis. With the former approach, all spoken texts were collected and compared with one another in terms of argument schemes and structures. The second approach used the text analysis to examine lexico-grammatical features that constituted each type.

Results and Discussion

There are clear patterns of various kinds in the two sets of spoken English arguments by Chinese EFL learners and native English speakers. The following sections describe those patterns from three perspectives: argument scheme, macro move structures, and linguistic features of the elements in each type of spoken argument. Macro move structures refer to the idea that an argument includes three big moves: thesis, argument, and conclusion (Hyland, 1990). The difference between a one-sided argument and a two- (or much more) sided argument also influences the way speakers organize their argument texts.

Exposition Genre Versus Discussion Genre

A clear dichotomy of schematic patterns exists between the two sets of spoken arguments in terms of exposition genre and discussion genre. Similar to Coffin's (2004) results, Chinese EFL learners in this study employed exposition genre, while almost all native English participants exclusively used discussion genre. Table 1 shows the overall framework for spoken English genres in terms of the purpose and the generic structures that participants used to complete the argumentative task. Although participants from both groups were given the same prompt to respond to, the two resultant types of genres not only display distinct purposes but are also made up of different stages. Thirteen of 15 Chinese EFL learners argued for only one side of the issue, while 2 students argued for both sides. In contrast, all 15 native English speakers seemed to be able to create a balance by mentioning both sides of the issue.

Macro Structures

The staging of Chinese EFL learners' exposition genre demonstrates a straightforward, and even formulaic, structure of macro moves. Table 2 shows the macro move structure of a typical argumentation genre by non-native English speakers (see Appendix A for the complete spoken text of the

example). After the thesis was put forward, four arguments were given in a clear order signalled by numerations: *firstly*, *secondly*, *thirdly*, and *fourthly*. After speakers finished listing all arguments, they came to a simple conclusion by reinforcing their thesis.

Table 1

Spoken English Genres by Chinese EFL Learners
and Native English Speakers

Spoken English genre	Exposition genre by non-native English speakers	Discussion genre by native English speakers
Purpose	To argue for a point of view	To put forward a case from two or more perspectives and state a position
Staging	Thesis	Issue
	Arguments + evidences	Argument + evidence
		Counter argument + evidence
		Argument + evidence OR Counter argument + evidence
		…
	Reinforce thesis	Restate position

Table 2

The Macro Structure of the Spoken Exposition Genre
by Chinese EFL Learners

Stage	Move	Example
1. Thesis	State proposition	I think it is appropriate for a college student to rent an apartment outside the campus and live there
2. Argument	Present argument 1 + evidence	Firstly college students are mostly adults, and adults should be responsible for their own … activities …
	Present argument 2 + evidence	Secondly, the dorm, the dorm on campus is too shabby, and the sanitary conditions are usually bad …
	Present argument 3 + evidence	Thirdly, er, if a college student rents an apartment outside campus, er, he can enjoy much more freedom …
	(Present argument 4 + evidence)	Fourthly, he's … it is more convenient for his friends or parents to visit him …
3. Reinforce thesis	Signal conclusion boundary	So
	Restate position	I guess it is very good for a college student to rent an apartment outside the campus.

On the other hand, the macro structure of the discussion genre was much more discursive in terms of all three big moves. Table 3 shows the macro structure of the discussion genre of a typical spoken text by native English speakers (see Appendix B for the complete spoken text of the example). First, the starting point of the discussion genre was a controversial issue, for which speakers provided background and which they explored from two or more perspectives before reaching a final position. In this case, the native English speaker initiated the background information to situate the issue in "Davidson College" (a pseudonym) and also pointed out the benefits of renting apartments off-campus for students of different school years. Thus the speaker proposed a two-sided thesis: "I think there are many advantages of living on campus, but there are also many advantages of living off campus."

Second, while both groups of participants provided arguments, only native English speakers used counter-arguments, allowing them to not sound overly simplistic or polemical (Crammond, 1998). As shown in Table 3, the speaker first put forward an argument, used two counter-arguments, and made another argument at the end. Although the counter-argument stage is not obligatory, "good argumentation should include arguments both for the statement and against it before the final opinion is given" (Hopkins & Nettle, 1994, p. 48).

Linguistic Features of Spoken Genres by Chinese EFL Learners and Native English Speakers

Previous sections have established the distinct patterns of spoken genres in Chinese EFL learners and in native English speakers from the perspectives of scheme and macro move structure. This section focuses on the lexico-grammatical patterns of the spoken argumentation produced by native and non-native English speakers. As a whole, the spoken argumentations by Chinese EFL learners used many more formal words and phrases, as well as more complicated sentence structures, than native English speakers did. This finding is consistent with Weisberg (1993), whose study demonstrated that many non-native students gave an oral version of written genre in their oral presentation. Interestingly, none of the 15 native English speakers in this study used this kind of metadiscourse marker. Instead, they frequently employed connection words such as *also*, *other than this*, *another thing*. In addition, non-native English speakers also employed phrases that were often used in formal writing genre: *for the most part*, *take myself for example*, *as far as I am concerned*, *from my own point of view*; whereas the native English speakers frequently employed phrases such as *but I guess*, *but for me*, *but I think*, and *but at the same time*, to indicate a change of meaning. Moreover, Chinese EFL speakers often put the linking adverbials at the beginning of the sentence, whereas English-speaking counterparts tended to put them in the middle of the sentence. This result is also consistent with Hoey (2005), who noted that Chinese students

are "primed" to favour particular linking adverbials, to disregard issues of informality, and to prefer sentence-initial positioning.

Table 3
The Macro Structure of the Spoken Discussion Genre
by Native English Speakers

Stage	Move	Examples
1. Issue	Present background information on the topic	I 'm assuming we are talking about Davidson College. It's a good thing. I think that the campus experience is something that should be required at least for all freshmen and possibly for sophomores. But once you get to be a junior or kind of an upperclassman, I think the choice is on the student, on whether or not he wants to live off campus or not.
	State proposition	I think there are many advantages of living on campus, but there are also many advantages of living off campus.
2. Argument and counter argument	Present argument + evidence	If you live on campus, your personality has to fit the kind of ultra-social environment that living on a hall brings.
	Present counter-argument + evidence	Once you get to be junior, a lot of times you don't need that social dependency,
	Present counter-argument + evidence	… They can invite friends over,
	Present argument + evidence	… that would be a kind of extreme.
3. Restate position	Signals conclusion boundary	So
	Restate proposition	my take on college students renting an apartment outside campus is that it should be mandatory for all the freshmen to live on campus and perhaps sophomores, but once you get to be a junior or senior, the choice should be the students'

The results from the above three perspectives generally reveal that, unlike the native English speakers whose spoken arguments mostly discussed an issue with balanced argumentation, Chinese EFL learners tended to give an exposition argument in a formulaic macro structure. Interestingly, the result of the difference in argument scheme is consistent with the findings from Coffin's (2004) study, in which EFL candidates in IELTS tests were found to use analytical style and produce more exposition arguments than discussion arguments. One possible explanation for the dichotomy in argument schemes might lie with the influence on Chinese EFL students' English argumentation of their educational experiences and prior knowledge of argument structure

in their home language and culture. The English writing course is usually offered to students majoring in English language and literature. An informal interview with an English professor at the university where the corpus was built revealed that students are generally encouraged and even explicitly taught to use one-sided argument, the exposition genre, in English argument writing tasks, especially when students take an English language test with short time restrictions. At the end of their study, Leedham and Cai (2013) argued that EFL teachers and textbook writers should pay more attention to the genre-based pedagogies.

Another competing explanation may be that the English language input to which the Chinese students were exposed was mainly of the written genre (Heng, 2006). As well, it is usually in the writing course that they have an opportunity to practice argumentation in English, and, more often than not, the purpose for most students is to pass the English writing test (e.g., the nation-wide college English exam, CET). Thus, their spoken arguments are probably heavily influenced by academic English writing. In addition, because speaking in English already puts a heavy cognitive load on them, the use of the formulaic move structure, especially with the help of numeration, can possibly ease the burden of the online spoken English test.

Before we arrive at the conclusion, it should be noted that the prompt under discussion might also have been more familiar to Chinese EFL learners than to native English speakers. In China, university students are usually required to live on campus; on the other hand, in the American culture, students are free to make their own choice whether to live on or off campus. Some of the native English speakers in this study seemed not to consider allowing students to live off campus to be an important issue. Therefore, the findings yielded in this study should be regarded as exploratory, and further investigation is required. For a better understanding of whether there is transfer from Chinese rhetorical structure in argument to Chinese students' rhetorical argument structure in English, future studies could compare spoken argument genres by Chinese students in both Chinese and English to see if there is a difference in terms of the three perspectives investigated in this article: scheme, macro move structure, and linguistic features.

Conclusion

Analysis of spoken arguments shows large differences between the generic patterns of Chinese EFL learners and native English speakers. The former group generally produced exposition genre that focused on one side of the argument, whereas the latter group tended to present two or more sides of the argument in order to balance the thesis. Furthermore, the staging of Chinese EFL learners' exposition demonstrated a much more straightforward and even formulaic structure of macro moves, whereas the macro structure of the native speakers' discussion was much more discursive. Finally, the

spoken argumentation by Chinese EFL learners employed many more formal words and phrases, as well as more complicated sentence structures than those of the native English speakers.

Results of this study can enable ESL instructors to gain a better understanding of Chinese students' needs in terms of (a) oral spoken genre in English specifically and (b) English language learning in general. One specific teaching method could entail going over sample videos of native English-speaking counterparts' oral presentations with Chinese students and bringing their attention to specific macro structures and linguistic features used by native speakers. This could help raise Chinese EFL students' awareness of what target genres look like, as well as facilitate their expressions in English. Although macro structures and linguistic features may be handled well by any trained ESL instructor, raising students' awareness of the genre in English-mediated academic context can be more challenging. In the same way, genre-based teaching has been proposed and supported by some scholars (Beaufort, 2004; Cheng, 2006, 2007; Hyland, 2007; Yayli, 2011). Beaufort (2004) argued that, through genre-based teaching, students can learn "the specific audience for and purpose of a particular text, and how best to communicate rhetorically in that instance" (p. 140). Hyland (2007) also pointed out that EFL learners should be offered "an explicit understanding of how target texts are structured and why they are written in the ways they are" (p. 151).

As the current study is explorative in nature, it has some limitations. First, the size of the participant group is very small. A corpus study that compares genre similarities and differences between eastern and western argumentatives would benefit this area of research. Second, since this is a comparative study, the profiles of the two student samples selected for the study did not completely match. The Chinese students were all English majors, but the American students were from a wide range of majors, only some of which might be expected to have expressing argumentation as a feature of their studies. Third, a follow-up interview could have been conducted for the participants' perceptions on their English argumentation experiences. Fourth, the spoken data were collected in a nonauthentic situation without the physical presence of a real audience. This might have led the Chinese learners to speak from their memory of the written text, based on their curriculum and cultural experience. It would be useful to investigate possible variants in rhetorical structure or audience interaction in response to the contextual characteristics of possible variants between the two groups in rhetorical structure. Last, future studies are encouraged to explore whether a lack of critical thinking interferes with Chinese students' argumentative genres.

Overall, results of the differences in spoken argumentation genres between Chinese EFL learners and native English speakers draw our attention to the cultural underpinnings that influence Chinese EFL learners. ESL instructors are advised to assist Chinese students to develop a thorough understanding of the English argumentation genre in academic settings, native

interpretive cues, and linguistic skills, to prepare them well for academic success in North America.

Acknowledgement

The Author

Lijuan Ye, PhD (lye@messiah.edu), is an assistant professor in the Department of Modern Languages at Messiah College, Pennsylvania, USA. She received her doctorate in applied linguistics from Georgia State University (USA) and her MA in TESOL from the University of Alabama (USA).

References

Beaufort, A. (2004). Developmental gains of a history major: A case for building a theory of disciplinary writing expertise. *Research in the Teaching of English, 39*(2), 136–185.

Chandrasegaran, A. (2008). NNS students' arguments in English: Observations in formal and informal contexts. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*(4), 237–254.

Cheng, A. (2006). Understanding learners and learning in ESP genre-based writing instruction. *English for Specific Purposes, 25*(1), 76–89.

Cheng, A. (2007). Transferring generic features and recontextualizing genre awareness: Understanding writing performance in the ESP genre-based literacy framework. *English for Specific Purposes, 26*(3), 287–307.

Coffin, C. (2000). Defending and challenging interpretations of the past: The role of argument in school history. *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses, 40,* 135–153.

Coffin, C. (2004). Arguing about how the world is or how the world should be: The role of argument in IELTS tests. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 3*(3), 229–246.

Crammond, J. G. (1998). The uses and complexity of argument structures in expert and student persuasive writing. *Written Communication, 15*(2), 230–268.

Eggins, S. (1994). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics*. London, UK: Pinter.

Flowerdew, J. (Ed.). (1994). *Academic listening: Research perspectives*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (1996). Lectures in a second language: Notes towards a cultural grammar. *English for Specific Purposes, 15*(2), 121–140.

Goddu, G. (2002, June). *Context and argument evaluation*. Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Argumentation, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Heng, R. (2006). *The use of verb patterns by Chinese English majors in argumentative monologues: A longitudinal perspective* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Nanjing University, Nanjing, China.

Hoeken, H., & Hustinx, L. (2002, June). *The relative persuasiveness of different types of evidence*. Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Argumentation, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Hoey, M. (2005). *Lexical priming*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hopkins, D., & Nettle, M. (1994). *Passport to IELTS*. Hemel Hempstead, UK: Prentice Hall ELT.

Hyland, K. (1990). A genre description of the argumentative essay. *RELC Journal, 21*(1), 66–78.

Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 16*(3), 148–164.

Hymes, D. (1972). Models of the interaction of language and social life. In J. J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication* (pp. 35–71). New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Johns, A. M. (1993). Written argumentation for real audiences: Suggestions for teacher research and classroom practice. *TESOL Quarterly, 27*(1), 75–90.

Johns, A. M. (1997). *Text, role, and context: Developing academic literacies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Leedham, M., & Cai, G. (2013). Besides … on the other hand: Using a corpus approach to explore the influence of teaching materials on Chinese students' use of linking adverbials. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(4), 374–389.

Maneli, M. (1993). *Perelman's new rhetoric as philosophy and methodology for the next century*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer.

Martin, J. R. (1989). *Factual writing: Exploring and challenging social reality*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Martin, J. R., Christie, F., & Rothery, J. (1994). Social processes in education: A reply to Sawyer and Watson. In B. Stierer & J. Maybin (Eds.), *Language, literacy and learning in educational practice* (pp. 232–247). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall.

O'Sullivan, M. W., & Guo, L. (2010). Critical thinking and Chinese international students: An east-west dialogue. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education, 5*(2), 53–73.

Paltridge, B. (2001). *Genre and the language learning classroom*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Perelman, C., & Olbrechts-Tyteca, L. (1969). *The new rhetoric: A treatise on argumentation.* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). *Communication and persuasion: Central and peripheral routes to attitude change*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Project Atlas Canada. (2013). International students in Canada. Retrieved from http://www.iie.org/en/Services/Project-Atlas/Canada/International-Students-In-Canada

Strauss, C. (2004). Cultural standing in expression of opinion. *Language in Society*, *33*(2), 161–194.

Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Thompson, G. (2001). Interaction in academic writing: Learning to argue with the reader. *Applied Linguistics, 22*(1), 58–78.

Thompson, S. (1994). Frameworks and contexts: A genre-based approach to analyzing lecture introductions. *English for Specific Purposes, 13*(2), 171–186.

Tyler, A. (1992). Discourse structure and the perception of incoherence in international teaching assistants' spoken discourse. *TESOL Quarterly, 26*(4), 713–729.

Tyler, A., & Bro, J. (1992). Discourse structure in nonnative English discourse: The effect of ordering and interpretive cues on perceptions of comprehensibility. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 14*(1), 71–86.

Tyler, A., & Bro, J. (1993). Discourse processing effort and perceptions of comprehensibility in nonnative discourse: The effect of ordering and interpretive cues revisited. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15*(4), 507–522.

Tyler, A. E., Jefferies, A. A., & Davies, C. E. (1988). The effect of discourse structuring devices on listener perceptions of coherence in non-native university teacher's spoken discourse. *World Englishes, 7*(2), 101–110.

van Eemeren, F. H. (Ed.). (2001). *Crucial concepts in argumentation theory*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press.

van Eemeren, F. H., Grootendorst, R., Henkemans, F. S., Blair, J. A., Johnson, R. H., Krabbe, E. C. W., … Zarefsky, D. (1996). *Fundamentals of argumentation theory: A handbook of historical backgrounds and contemporary developments*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Voss, F., & Van Dyke, J. A. (2002, June). *Judgments of logical soundness and pragmatic convincingness as related to standard 3 component syllogisms and to enthymemes*. Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Argumentation, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Weisberg, R. W. (1993). *Creativity: Beyond the myth of genius*. New York, NY: W. H. Freeman.

Yayli, D. (2011). From genre awareness to cross-genre awareness: A study in an EFL context. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 10*(3), 121–129.

Appendix A
A Typical Spoken English Argument Genre by a Chinese EFL Learner (No. 8)

[Thesis]

I think it is appropriate for a college student to rent apartment outside the campus and live there,

[Argument 1]

because er firstly er college students are mostly adults, and adults should be responsible for their own … activities. If, er, other adults have the right er or should er independently, why shouldn't college students? Er, that is to say, er, if an adult can um have their own apartment, so, so is a college student.

[Argument 2]

Er, secondly, the dorm, the dorm on campus is too shabby, and the sanitary conditions are usually bad. Er, it is quite common for dorm mates to catch the same epidemics, um such as flu or some bad cold. Because the dorm is too sham … crowded and … and … in foreign countries it is usually for two students to share a room. But here in China, it is usually eight for one.

[Argument 3]

Thirdly, er, if a college student rents an apartment outside campus, er, he can enjoy much more freedom. Er they can … er … he can use electricity much more freely at any time. He can even have a bathroom to keep himself quite clean. Er, and most of all, he will not interfere with others. Er, but if in a dorm, er it is usually that er a student er should keep quite, or, keep, er, cau cautious most of the time er for fear of er interfere with others, for some example, sleeping, or doing exercises.

[Argument 4]

Fourthly, he's … it is more convenient for his friends or parents to visit him because er in dorm, er outsiders, especially male relatives are not allowed to enter the dorm building. So it is really, er, it is really not equal for male relatives. They should be, they should not be deprived of their rights to visit their, er … child … their children or friends.

[Reinforce thesis]

So I guess it is very good for a college student to rent an apartment outside the campus.

Appendix B
A Typical Spoken English Argument Genre by a Native English Speaker (No. 6)

[Issue]

[background information]

I'm assuming we are talking about Davidson College. It's a good thing. I think that the campus experience is something that should be required at least for all freshmen and possibly for sophomores. But once you get to be a junior or kind of an upperclassman, I think the choice is on the student, on whether or not he wants to live off campus or not.

[proposition]

I think there are many advantages of living on campus, but there are also many advantages of living off campus.

[Argument 1]

If you live on campus, your personality has to fit the kind of ultra-social environment that living on a hall brings. Freshmen year I think that's crucial, especially for those being away from home for the first time.

[Counter argument 1]

Once you gets to be junior, a lot of times you don't need that social dependency, or it is too loud all the time in your hall. If you want an option of living off campus, I think you shouldn't have to apply for it. You can just live off campus. Since it's a lot more quiet. More privacy is really what some people need once they get older.

[Counter argument 2]

And then they want the social aspect of college. They can invite friends over, go visit friends on campus, when others are often along those lines.

[Argument 2]

Another thing would be, perhaps, if someone lived too far away on campus, if they lived 4 or 5 miles down the road, that would be a kind of extreme. I think the new apartments of house should be pretty close to the campus, just so you maintain the campus's feel. It should be still like you're living in college, not like you're living away from the college and just happen to go to classes or something on campus.

[Restate position]

So my take on college students renting an apartment outside campus is that it should be mandatory for all the freshmen to live on campus and perhaps sophomores, but once you get to be a junior or senior, the choice should be the students, whether or not they want to live, off campus or on campus. I personally live off campus and I think it's great for my privacy, and of course a lot more quiet and I can get better sleep at night.