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Encouraging Problem-Solution Patterning and Co-Textual Referencing in L2 Written Discourse

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1.0 Introduction

A text is a frame of communication which extends beyond the scope of a single complete sentence. In English, as in other languages, texts provide meaning to the reader in how they function—that is, the way in which they present information. Winter (1994, 49) points out that

> The moment you put together any two sentences for a purpose, your listener or reader looks for a sensible connection between their topics, and if they make sense to him/her, it will be because s/he can *relate the two sentences* in the same way as they relate to the constituents of the clause in *expected ways*. The important fact in these utterances is the fact of *sequence*."

For the reader, the concept of expectation in text plays out in how text is sequenced. Texts which are grammatically correct may or may not function as coherently as anticipated. Sequencing in text produces an ease of "processing"—understanding or coherence in the broadest sense—and may occur as a result of certain elements.

This paper will examine two theoretical frameworks of text production: a larger-text problem-solution structure delineated by Coulthard, Winter and Hoey and referencing as described by Halliday and Hasan, and Francis. We shall also consider limitations of L1 rhetorics imposed on L2 text production by L2 English writers as described by Kaplan.

Subsequently, utilizing the above frameworks, we shall analyze a student-produced text which is difficult to process. The above-mentioned forms of sequencing help textual comprehension by making it easy for the reader to anticipate the particular flow of information to create semantic relations, and to understand the text as a whole—without which, or present yet operating in unexpected ways, the text is considered "difficult to process."

Concurrent with the analysis, this paper will present a rewrite of sections of a student's paper dealing with the frameworks in consideration in a more acceptable form. A complete rewrite will follow in the Appendix. Finally, this paper will discuss pedagogical implications derived from the discussion of the theoretical framework as well as the student's paper analysis and rewrite.

2.0 Literary Analysis

Before undertaking an examination of the student's essay, we will consider two theoretical frameworks and follow up with a brief review of literature concerning contrastive rhetoric and reader/ writer typology. The discussion of the theoretical frameworks regarding text construction is important to understanding the particular situation in which the student writer finds himself in within his text in order to adequately discuss pedagogical implications. The discussion of contrastive rhetoric and reader/ writer typology (section 2.6) will pertain primarily to the pedagogical implications as they relate to ESL teachers.

2.1 Pattern Signaling in Discourse

Coulthard states,

> Knowledge is not linear, but text is. Thus every writer is faced with the problem of how to organize and present his/ her non-linear message into a comprehensible linear form.

(Coulthard, 1994: 7)

Recognizing several major rhetorical structures available to writers to organize their message, two of which Coulthard focuses on are the General-Specific and Problem-Solution patterns as outlined by Winter and Hoey. In this paper, we shall not deal with the General-Specific pattern but the Problem-Solution pattern. Each element of the PS pattern is represented linearly within certain structural segments of the overall text, and, as their labels suggest, are self-explanatory: the elements, Problem-Solution-Result-Evaluation (PSRE). However, as Coulthard identifies, the PSRE pattern is "deceptively simple and may be recombined and complicated by embedding the four-part structure into one of the components of another structure" (ibid: 8). In other words, any of the structures mentioned above may have their own PSRE structure embedded within them.
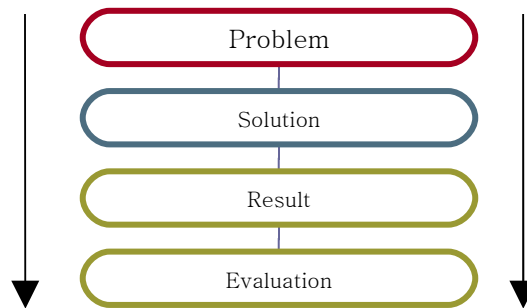
McCarthy asserts each of the above larger textural elements may be signaled through particular lexical items, realizing a positive or negative connotation:

Problem	concern, difficulty, dilemma, drawback, hamper, hind(er/ance), obstacle, problem, snag
Response	change, combat (vb), come up with, develop, find, measure(s), respon(d/se)
Solution/ result	answer, consequence, effect, outcome, result, solution, (re)solve
Evaluation	(in)effective, manage, overcome, succeed, (un)successful, viable, work (vb)

(1991: 35)

Though McCarthy's list is not exhaustive, we can generalize semantically to other structures and lexical items producing each structural effect noted above.

2.2 Winter's Expansion of PSRE through Basic Text Structure 1: Situation and Evaluation
Winter (Coulthard, 1994: 57), in his evaluation of basic text structure restructures PSRE to include basis/ reason for evaluation; thus, we have Situation-Problem-Solution-Basis/Reason for Evaluation (SPSBRE). Since, as Winter describes, we "judge by making comparisons", it may be necessary to recognize the quality of the Basis/ Reason offered for the evaluation. For reasons which will become explicit during the student textual examination, the following, expanded model (SPSBRE) will be most useful.
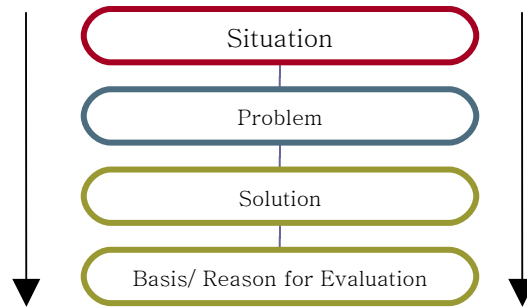
2.3 Hoey's Dialogue Test

Hoey (ibid: 27) identifies Winter's model of the minimum structure available to writers of texts as Problem-Solution-Response-Evaluation (PSRE). This is an extension of that which Coulthard, noted above, discusses. Hoey's dialogue test of this structure allows linguists to quickly and efficiently recognize structure which may not be explicit in discourse (spoken and written), removing any "artificially regulated signals in order to establish the basic structure" (ibid: 42). Hoey utilizes the following questions dealing with the specific aspects of the PSRE structure:

- What is the situation?
- What was the aspect of the situation requires a response? *or*
- What is the problem?
- What response had there been? *or*
- What solution has been proposed? *or*
- Who has proposed a solution?
- How successful is this?
- What are the details of the solution?
- What evidence have you for saying it is successful?

- What is it capable of?

(ibid:42)

2.4 Halliday and Hasan: Lexical Cohesion

Halliday and Hasan identify cohesion as the "non-structural text-forming relations" (1976: 7). Within a given text, readers are interested in the semantic ties which exist between ideas on an intra-sentential level. These ties are what define a text as such. Without such links, a text might simply be a random collection of sentences with little overt meaning. Halliday and Hasan identify four primary types of linking through referencing: reference, substitution, ellipses and conjunction.

2.4.1 References

Personal references utilize personal pronouns such as *me, you, and he*; and possessive adjectives such as *mine, yours, and theirs,* etc. Demonstrative references use words that point, or demonstrate such as *this, that, here,* and so on. Comparative references refer to identity, similarity, and comparison, utilizing adjectives such as *same, equal, better,* and so on; and adverbs like *similarly, otherwise* and *more* (ibid: 37—39).

2.4.2 Exophoric and Endophoric References

References may be either exophoric, referring to things and events outside the given text,

or endophoric, referring to things and events within the text.

Under the category of endophoric referencing, the most relevant subcategory is anaphora which refers to elements previously mentioned in the text. Using McCarthy's example from the opening lines of Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*,

> *The* schoolmaster was leaving *the* village, and *everybody* seemed sorry. *The* miller at Cresscombe lent *him the* small white tilted cart and horse to carry *his* goods to *the* city of *his* destination, about twenty miles off, *such a* vehicle proving of quite sufficient size for *the* departing teacher's effects.

As McCarthy (1991: 35) notes, the italicized items refer to their referents. The word *him* in the phrase "lent *him* the small white tilted cart" refers to the schoolmaster. This is an example of an anaphoric reference. It points backward in the text to something previously mentioned, thus creating lexical cohesion.

Cataphoric referencing is referencing an item not yet lexicalized within the text. This is, McCarthy identifies, "a classic device for engaging the reader's attention"(ibid: 36), as in the example he gives:

> They pressed round him in ragged fashion to take their money. Andy, Dave, Phil, Stephen, Bob.

They refers to someone not yet mentioned in the text. The audience is unsure and suspenseful as to who *they* refers to.

2.4.3 Substitution, Ellipses and Conjunction

Other forms of lexical cohesion identified by Halliday and Hasan are Substitution, Ellipsis, and Conjunction. Using Substitution, a speaker or writer does not wish to repeat an already utilized lexical item. Consider the example:

> Jack, John and Jim did not do their homework. *The boys* were therefore given detention.

The boys in the second sentence provides an example of lexical substitution in that it stands in for *Jack, John and Jim*.

Ellipse is identified as similar to substitution by exchanging a given phrase or clause with nothing. The audience (reader or listener) is asked to supply the missing information. In other linguistic situations, a phrase or clause missing certain grammatical elements might be considered functionally deficient. However, with ellipses, some elements may be omitted because the speaker/ writer assumes they are contextually obvious and need not be raised (ibid: 43).

> The children *will carry* the small boxes, the adults the large ones.

In McCarthy's example, above, *will carry* is ellipted from the second clause. In English, this is a typical finding. English speakers would not expect the ellipses to be placed on the first clause, as we see in the next example. Interestingly, McCarthy notes Hinds' finding that that certain types of unexpected structure in English seem possible in other cultural linguistic systems, as in Japanese (ibid: 43):

The children the small boxes, the adults will carry the large ones.

Conjunction is an important and much used aspect of the English language. Conjunction creates a lexical relationship between two clauses or sentences within a segment of text. It does not, as McCarthy identifies, cause the reader to search either backwards, forwards or outside of the text to discover the relationships inherent in different textual segments. Relationships are typically linear from one clause or sentence to the next. Four simplified sub-categories exist for conjunction:

1.   Additive (e.g. and, in addition)
2.   Adversative (e.g. but, however)
3.   Causal   (e.g.   because, consequently)

4.   Temporal   (e.g.   then, subsequently)

(ibid: 46)

Each of these categories functions lexically different, and, taken together, provide a sense of texture within the written discourse, as well as giving logical meaning to ideas.

2.5 Nominal-group Lexical Cohesion: Gill Francis

Francis identifies two important labels functioning cataphorically and anaphorically: the advance label and the retrospective label, respectively (In Coulthard: 83). A label, Francis says, must be lexicalized in its co-text, and, while the author recognizes a label and its lexicalization within a single clause, labeling and lexicalizing in Francis' work is restricted to those which "operate cohesively across clause boundaries." While Francis' concept of lexical cohesion through nominal groups is similar in some functions to Halliday's and Hasan's concept of coherence, the latter researchers' work identifies coherence as operating suprasententially.

2.5.1 Advance Labels

The purpose of advance labels is to tell the reader what to expect in an upcoming discourse. Their use, according to Francis, has not yet been supplied and has the function of prediction (ibid: 84), as evidenced by Francis' example:

The *New York Post*, which has been leading the tabloid pack, has added *two salacious details* to this bare outline.

Here, *two salacious details* is an advance label. The reader is unaware of what the details are and can predict that the next segment of text will contain those two items of interest. Advance labels function besides prediction. They perform an internal organizational role in written discourse, similar to signposts on a freeway, allowing the reader to understand the structure of a text from within as a driver understands the road not simply from a map but from the roadway.

2.5.2 Retrospective Labels

Retrospective labels, in contrast to advance labels, do not perform a predictive function. Instead, they function similarly to mental compartmentalization. While reading or listening, the audience is expected to pack stretches of discourse into mental "boxes" for further utilization in later discourse. Retrospective labels are not simply synonymous with their referent. They are similar to Halliday and Hasan's idea of substitution. The main difference is in the use. Where these authors recognize substitution as being useful for preventing repetition of the same lexical item, Francis understands retrospective labels as being equivalent to the clause or clauses they replace, while, as she says, naming them for the first time (ibid: 85).

Retrospective labels perform, as Francis further identifies, an important organizing function within discourse by identifying the boundaries between segments of discourse and packaging it, as she says, "in a single nominalization" (ibid: 86). This semantic package works cohesively within later text, and though not prospective, its modifiers may be.

2.6 Contrastive Rhetoric, Reader/ Writer Typology and Korean English Writers

Writing a text is a daunting task, and perhaps no more so than for an L2 writer. Kaplan (in Panetta: ix) realizes a set of five questions L2 learners must ask when they write:

1. What may be discussed?
2. Who has the authority to speak/ write? Or: Who has the authority to write down to whom under what circumstances?
3. What form(s) may the writing take?
4. What is evidence?
5. What arrangement of evidence is likely to appeal (be convincing) to readers?

In an examination of writing textbooks used in classrooms containing both L1 and L2 English students, Kaplan recognizes many of the questions and suggestions put forth to students were are unavailable to L2 students due to a lack of English language context. A question such as "who are my readers?" would be, Kaplan identifies, confounding to L2 student writers (in Kaplan, 1996: 24). Other L1 writing assumptions such as making a point, arguable issues, intertextual connections, reason, awareness of topic complexity, incorporating values, audience, counter positions, and voice are as much or more cultural than learned (ibid: 25—29). This presents L2 learners with a distinct disadvantage when writing in English. Tony Silva agrees, stating that "ESL writing practitioners need to have a clear understanding of the unique nature of L2 writing, of how and to what extent it differs from L1 writing" (Silva: 657).

Contrastive Rhetoric, a term coined by Kaplan in 1966, is used to describe a system of instruction whereby teachers take into consideration an L2 student's pre-existing cultural rhetorical forms thereby helping students recognize the differences between English and their own cultural systems, as well as helping teachers to recognize reading and writing difficulties (Panetta: 1—3). Leki identified that though writing instructors of L2 language learners may not know their students' L1 rhetorics or background cultures,

> contrastive rhetoric helps us bypass stereotypes and realize that writing strategies are culturally formed....What is relevant/ irrelevant, what is logical/ illogical, what constitutes an argument, even, are all culturally determined. Sometimes ESL writers seem to "miss the point." However,

the "proper" way to make a point in one language differs from the "proper way in another.

<div align="right">(ibid: 5)</div>

John Hinds, by contrast, looks at reader versus writer responsibility. Depending on the language involved, users of that language have a different expectation of the reader's degree of responsibility (Hinds, 63). In English, Hinds notes, the desire to speak or write clearly is of high value (ibid: 65). For Japanese speakers, and perhaps for Koreans, it is the responsibility of the listener or reader to make sense of the message. Citing Yoshikawa, "he states that the Japanese actually have a mistrust of verbal language" (ibid: 66), and whether this is a truthful assessment, or not, "most Japanese believe it to be true." English focuses on coherence between ideas, utilizing transitions to produce co-textual meaning. The Japanese may omit these devices since the reader plays an active role in deciphering the material. (ibid: 67)

3.0 Student Paper Analysis Discussion

Thus far, we have considered the specific theoretical frameworks through which we will reflect on the challenges in the student paper. We will contextualize the student assignment, and discuss each of the challenges of the student's paper in turn. Within this discussion, we will examine the corrected version of the student's paper.

The student, herein referred to as "D", wrote an assignment in an advanced writing class in Pagoda Foreign Language Institute, a popular adult English educational institute located in Seoul, South Korea. Peter S. Gardner's 2005 second edition printing of *New Directions: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking*, published by Cambridge University Press was utilized. The assignment asked the students to write a research paper on a topic related to the unit of critical readings we were discussing, to present relevant data and exhibit critical reasoning as per our class lessons. D's paper utilizes a problem-solution structure with the problem localized as expected and the solution placed in an unanticipated position: the last clause of the last paragraph.

The first paragraph deals with what D considers to be the problem, paraphrased as "Television is an environmental cause of mental problems". However, much work on the part of the reader must be done to elicit this understanding in keeping with Kaplan's observation of an L2 writer's L1 rhetoric interfering with his/ her L2 writing. D introduces three potential candidates as the problem in the structure:

> **[1]**Tragic accident of Virginia in April, 2007 shocked the whole world with sorrow and grieves. **[2]**As called as "**Virginia Tech crisis**," the **incident was committed by a person who was a fellow student**, killing his 50 friends without any pity. **[3]**The young student, who was only 23 years old, committed a historical crime. **[4]**The most shocking part of this accident was that it was not **an impulsive action but, calculated**. **[5]**Psychologists say that he had some mental problems, which leave us a question, "**Who should we blame for**?"

<div align="right">(emphasis mine)</div>

D does not use problem-solution lexical items, outlined by McCarthy, however semantic generalization identifies the following elements as problems: the "Virginia Tech crisis", the fact of the incident being impulsively committed by a student, and the lack of an individual responsible for the situation.

These are eventually forgotten as D transitions to the problem he intends to deal with. He signals a cause/ result paired relation ([9/10]), dropping the Virginia Tech Massacre and all previously mentioned "problems". Typically, in English, causes precede results, though the reverse order can also be true. However, D gets himself semantically and syntactically in trouble with his attempt at lexicalizing the cause and result without being clear about which is which:

> **[9]**Moving forward, our process moves on to a next step to figure out what sort of environment was the cause. **[10]**Not proved 100%, but with a strong evidence, the result was strongly relying on TV.

With the phrase, "was strongly relying on", D signals a cause as already presented, which we find in [9] with "what sort of environment was the cause". Since D recognizes a cause, he must then lexicalize a result: TV ([10]). This produces a confusing effect, for D has identified the environment as the cause of television and cements this view with the observation that television is "also facing its threats of the side effects ([11])"—it is also a victim.
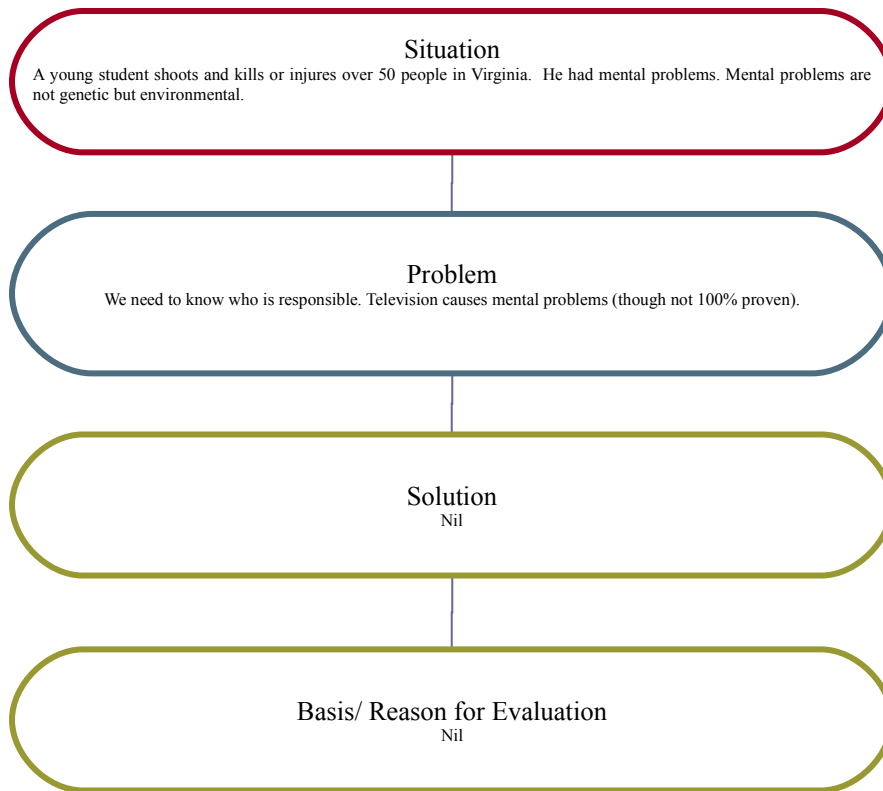
The use of the definite article in "the side effects" signals a retrospective label, yet looking backwards through the text no side effects can be found. Further confusion is induced in the last sentence, "**[12]**How does this vicious device operate through our lives without any restrain?[sic]" Since the television has been nominalized as the receiver of "side effects", then it makes little sense to contrast the "victim" role of the television with the "aggressor" role. With this lack of coherence, the reader is put in the position, as with a reader-responsible text (according to Hinds), to put the pieces of D's puzzle together and draw a logical conclusion: Television is vicious, operates through our lives without restraint, causes moral and mental deficiencies in people and commit atrocities against friends.

Although a simplistic and logically tenuous argument, it would be more textually appropriate to signal the problem-solution structure clearly, eliminating explication of the writer's mental processes leading to an introduction of the problem, as he does in sentence [9], and to utilize a clear exophoric reference to contextualize the problem. Thus,

> Though it is considered to be one of the most innovative devices known to mankind, television creates some large problems by operating through our lives without restraint. It is one of many causes of mental problems which could have lead to events such as the 2007 Virginia Tech Massacre, in which a young man, Cho Seung Hui, killed or wounded fifty fellow students on his university campus in a manner similar to the much televised Columbine shootings.

This rewritten introduction, shorter by comparison, provides the same detail as the original, though it reverses the order of ideas. The television is visible as *the* problem to be dealt with, rather than the last (and only one dealt with) in a series of more and more sharply focused problems. The context asks the reader to remember two situations both of which were highly televised and sharply focused in the community's mind as being centered on the problem of television violence influencing people negatively.

Using Winter's expansion of Hoey's Problem-Solution structure, as well as Hoey's dialogue question test (see Appendix 7.1) the structure of D's paper becomes clear. D's paper exhibits a problem-solution structure, visible in the following graphic:

```
┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                          Situation                         │
│  A young student shoots and kills or injures over 50 people in Virginia.  He had mental problems. Mental problems are  │
│  not genetic but environmental.                            │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                          Problem                           │
│  We need to know who is responsible. Television causes mental problems (though not 100% proven).  │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                          Solution                          │
│                             Nil                            │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                  Basis/ Reason for Evaluation              │
│                             Nil                            │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Though stating a problem, cited above, and a solution, "[48]…we must stand up", D's text neither evaluates the success or failure of his solution nor provide a basis/ reason for the evaluation. Hoey's dialogue question analysis confirms this. The first six questions garner responses from the text. The remaining four questions have responses of "unknown". The solution is necessarily ignored since it is not examined, thus the larger textual structure D provides is an unanticipated Situation-Problem-Response. Therefore, D's text is unsatisfying, as the expected text structure has not been fulfilled.

```
┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                  Basis/ Reason for Evaluation              │
│  It entertains and informs us, confuses us, dazzles us, persuades us to buy, shos inappropriate things to us and  │
│  children. It politically deadens us with propaganda.      │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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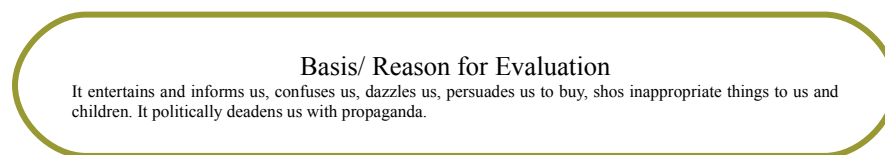
Referring to the corrected version of D's essay, however, a reorganization of material is one way in which it will begin to function within the SPSBRE structure. Reversing the order of the final two paragraphs places the solution to the problem within the body of the text and transforms the second-to-last paragraph into a potential evaluation of the anticipated solution.

D's essay creates a sense of confusion in many of his lexical references. Lexical cohesion across his text is accomplished with eighty-nine references, the majority of which are demonstrative utilizing the definite article. In the event of such phrases as, "the most innovative device", "the black box", "the wonderful device", and "the dull black box", the reader of D's essay may be surprised to discover that all of these references refer to the same thing—the television—in the space of four sentences:

> **[11]**Known as one of **the most innovative device** behalf of mankind, TV is also facing its threats of the side effects. **[12]**How does **this vicious device** operate through our lives without any restrain?
> **[13]**Thanks for **the wonderful device**, definitely our daily lives has been enriched. **[14]**All sorts of information, entertainment, and news showed in **the black box** reaches our boring life with fresh ideas without any filter.   (emphasis mine)

The use of the definite article presumes reference agreement, which D may or may not have adequately secured. Many of D's referents are extremes in contrast, signaling subjective opinion and bias. However, given Kaplan's viewpoint of different cultural rhetorics, it may be wise to consider that D's use of contrasting referents potentially reinforces a cultural desire to present a balanced argument and to delineate common ground with the reader. This argument may be contested, however, since D shows he is capable of utilizing contrastive conjunctions. A closer reading reveals that D uses contrastive conjunctions almost exclusively in the form of "not X, but Y". In the case of the above text selection, a single contrastive lexical item allows D, in English, to realize an opinion without sacrificing objectivity or textural flow:

> The television was once considered one of the most innovative devices, **but** its use has gotten out of hand in recent years.
> **Though** it has enriched our lives, providing all sorts of information and entertainment (though in an unmediated way), the quality of television is much in question because of the way in which it works to capture our attention with visuals.

D's text draws heavily on exophoric references:

> **[39]**Such as politically, some **broadcasting companies** might exert their own point of views on such events. **[40]**However, most of the people might not be well educated and miss **the hidden meanings** (political meaning). **[41]Public opinion** can be fabricated in these terms which means people are expose to a propaganda instrument; TV. **[42]**People have little doubt when a **fancy looking anchor** comes up in the TV and says "Survey has been shown that half of the Koreans like the **president Noh's Politic strategy**." **[43]**Regardless of the other factors that might differ the results, people believe it with blind faith. (emphasis mine)

The highlighted references, above, are being for the first time in D's text. However, many items require contextualization at the least or a more complete explication. While "a fancy looking anchor" may not be challenging for a non-Korean audience to understand, "public opinion" and "president Noh's politic strategy" require more direct explanation, as below:

> Public opinion **in favor of the President** is further cemented by appeals to authority in the form of news anchors, **well-dressed celebrities in their own right**, who declare on television, "Surveys show that half of the Korean population like President Noh's political strategy…", **even though few can pinpoint what his actual strategy is**.

In terms of endophoric reference, D produces a dizzying effect: this was seen in the earlier example with the following terms: "the most innovative device behalf of mankind [sic]"—"vicious device"—"wonderful device"—"source". When discussing television's effects, D identifies "fresh ideas", "insensibility", "more violent", "media violence", "fascinating colors, visual images and sounds" and "people suffer from the flood of advertisements" as equatable. These systems of endophoric referencing give the impression that D is exercising a measure of control. However, as in the following example, the references actually pad the writing to give the

reader a sense of the greater substance of the text:

> **[23]Fascinating colors, visual images, and sounds are mixed in 15 sec.** which we call as advertising. **[24]**Watching TV, most people suffer from the flood of the advertisements, trying to avoid them by turning the channels. **[25]Not so tolerance enough for the 'creature', you soon find out that, the harder you run the faster it catches you up! [26]It's not the quantity it matters but also the quality.** **[27]**Advertisement comes in all kinds of shapes mesmerizing your mind. **[28]**It tries to dazzle your mind by sex, violence, fantasy, baby, and animals. **[29]**It uses almost any element to convince the consumer to be fooled. **[30]***On the other hand*, what about the people that is not the exact target of the product? **[31]**Children watch sexy, violent, gender stereotype, and exaggerated ads. **[32]**They yield the ad without any filter.

It can be considered that adding words fills up a text, however adding too many dilutes the meaning. This is the case in D's text, above. To construct a tighter text, D needs to remove unnecessary references:

> Watching TV, people generally try to avoid the flood of advertising by changing channels. However, no matter how hard people try to avoid them, advertisements always seem to catch them. Advertising varies in so many forms that they mesmerize the mind. Sex, violence, fantasies, infants and animals are typical subjects used to capture the audience's attention. These elements are designed to fool people into buying products. On the other hand, what about those who are not the intended product demographic? Children *are also* subject to many of the same advertisements that adults are. Yet children are not as sophisticated as adults; they have a more difficult time recognizing advertisements as elements of an idealized world created to convince.

In line [30] "On the other hand…" is used as a contrastive cataphoric advance label, yet the subject reference, "the people," is meant to be added to the argument to strengthen it. However, D confuses the function of the contrastive with the additive function, showing instead that he is changing the direction of his argument. The correction reads, "Children *are also…*", utilizing the additive function. In another example, D appears to defeat his own logic by presenting two negative ideas consecutively with a contrastive element between:

> **[19]**The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that "media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial." **[20]**Two facts can be infer from this, that media violence is now reached the extreme and also adolescents have less judgment to it. **[21]**The dull black box is mutating to a dangerous virus to infect our nerves! **[22]Still**, just violence can't explain all the side effects.

Here, his structure would be improved by removing his subjective statement in sentence [21] entirely, shifting his word usage from *still* to *however*. D intends to connect sentence [22] to his brief discussion of the citation of Johnson and colleagues in [20]:

> Two results can be inferred from Johnson's study: media violence has reached an extreme, and adolescents are less sensitive to it. ***However***, media violence cannot explain all the side effects of television.

In his text, D utilizes an unwarranted number of advance labels, which, previously discussed, act cataphorically. In the following example,

> **[7]**Focusing to the "Virginia Tech Crisis," it gives us a question mark on our minds what exactly was the reason for the mental problem, mainly the genetic problem or the environments?

a grammatical problem realizes "the genetic problem" as an advanced label. Reading forward,

however, does not present the particular referent called for. In the corrected version, this particular reference was deleted since its use did not enhance D's argument.

While retrospective labels are, as Francis states, to encapsulate a portion of text and compartmentalize it in the mind for later recall, and to operate as a sort of boundary between textual segments, there is little in D's text to encapsulate. His choices of label in each of the following cases—"innovative device", "vicious device", "black box", and "dull black box" simply rename the item discussed previously while packaging it with a contradictory message. These do not help to improve the flow of the argument.

In an interesting set of references, however, D creates an interesting effect which should be discussed in light of Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric. Within the introduction of his paper, D uses "a fellow student", "the young student", and "he" to refer to Cho Seung-Hui, who we might identify either by name or as "the perpetrator" of the "Virginia Tech crisis". By neither naming nor lexicalizing Hui, D very subtly includes him in a lexical grouping of "single people" containing other lexical items like "person", "student", "consumer", "you" and "me". It may be an aspect of Korean culture when dealing with tragedy of magnitude of the Virginia Tech Crisis to refrain from naming the perpetrator in an attempt to exclude him or her. In an examination of the apology letter written by the sister of Cho Seung-Hui (Cho, 2007) though nominalized, he is never named. It is possible that in Korean language nominalizations are commonplace; however, D's implication is clear: Cho is as much a victim of circumstance (and the television by extension) as his victims and others subject to television's effects.

In terms of Kaplan's list of questions (see page 7, above), D appears to be able to handle the first question of that which may be discussed; yet he mishandles the crucial term, "media violence." He does not define its use and leaves it up to the audience to understand its meaning. Furthermore, D's writing lacks the crucial evidence necessary to support his argument. He provides two references in the forms of "some researchers" and "Johnson and colleagues" to support his claims, while leaving the reader without knowledge of who they are. Also, the citations he chooses are untenable for his purpose:

> **[15]**However, the quality of the source is a question. **[16]**Intentioned to capture our senses, more and more stimulative images are provided. **[17]**Interesting fact is that, people gets more insensibility to these visual images which are getting more violent than ever. **[18]**Researches show that, the effects of media violence on society are unquestionable. **[19]The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that "media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial."** **[20]**Two facts can be infer from this, that media violence is now reached the extreme and also adolescents have less judgment to it.
>
> (emphasis mine)

While adding more words, D's choice of evidence does not appear to support the supposition provided in sentence [15]. The quote in [19] begs the question: *What evidence supports this?* D, nonetheless, mistakes the purpose of evidence throughout his paper. Moreover, his sentential structural elements do not match the formalistic elements of the particular discourse medium—a research paper: his language moves fluidly between formal elements and colloquial statements:

> **[18]**Researches show that, the effects of media violence on society are unquestionable. **[19]**The

study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that "media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial." **[20]**Two facts can be infer from this, that media violence is now reached the extreme and also adolescents have less judgment to it. **[21]**The dull black box is mutating to a dangerous virus to infect our nerves! **[22]**Still, just violence can't explain all the side effects.

These elements, citation, evidence, and form, may be lacking in Korean rhetorical practice, particularly when discussing a seemingly pedestrian topic as television. The writer may have considered the topic incommensurate with the form. In view of Hinds' reflections, if, given that Korean is a reader-responsible language, then D may be unaware of his responsibility towards his readers—particularly in the body of his essay where much evidence is required. Yet, a side-by side comparison between D's paper and the more "academic" rewrite highlights the difference.

Original Paper 1st Body Paragraph	Academic Rewrite 1st Body Paragraph
[13]Thanks for the wonderful device, definitely our daily lives has been enriched. **[14]**All sorts of information, entertainment, and news showed in the black box reaches our boring life with fresh ideas without any filter. **[15]**However, the quality of the source is a question. **[16]**Intentioned to capture our senses, more and more stimulative images are provided. **[17]**Interesting fact is that, people gets more insensibility to these visual images which are getting more violent than ever. **[18]**Researches show that, the effects of media violence on society are unquestionable. **[19]**The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that "media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial." **[20]**Two facts can be infer from this, that media violence is now reached the extreme and also adolescents have less judgment to it. **[21]**The dull black box is mutating to a dangerous virus to infect our nerves! **[22]**Still, just violence can't explain all the side effects.	People generally believe that television is getting more violent. However, in his review of W.J Potter's text, *The 11 Myths of Media Violence*, Barrie Gunter argues that this belief is groundless. He points out "real-world incidents are blamed on media violence" resulting in two outcomes: "the harm of media violence and the offence it causes to people" (Gunter, 226). Gunter goes on to say that the first is "a subjective matter linked to personal taste and moral values." Scientifically, no causal link has been found for the second. While it is plausible that the simple fact of a televised violent act may not provide a direct causal link between television and society, it is certainly one of many threads in the tapestry composing an individual, including, but not limited to mental and physical health, social conditioning, living conditions, educational background, exposure to ideas and concepts, and the will to carry out a particular plan of action resulting in the violent act. Certain structural elements of television programming certainly assist in creating the right conditions for mediated violence.

4.0 Pedagogical Implications

As much as English teachers in Korea want their students to be able to produce a text as close to the "academic" version of the corrected student paper, the reality may take many decades to achieve. Primarily there is little instruction on different forms of English text. The "standard 5-paragraph" essay model dominates the ESL market because it is mandated by the TOEFL test—the current register of English competence in Korea. Most instruction focuses on written grammar functions and some spoken language instruction, but little larger textual patterning or referencing.

Students of D's level generally produce papers with good grammatical form, though some editing skills would make worthwhile instruction. Nevertheless, many of the linguistic effects achieved by native L1 English writers are simply not possible by most Korean L2 English

writers. Part of the challenge may lie in the fact that most Koreans, while motivated to attend classes, are unmotivated in their studies. English is "hard" in the negative, "I can't do it" sense. Many simply do not try to develop beyond basic grammar and vocabulary. For those who do, most write as they speak and are underdeveloped in other forms. They do not recognize formal, poetic or rhetorical structures and so are unable to utilize them to any effect.

Comparative instruction in the differences and similarities in how texts work between English and Korean may be useful for students to pursue. This necessitates teachers having the skills to make those comparisons. In Kaplan's terms, native English and Korean English teachers alike should be versed in the others' language forms to make best use of classroom writing instruction. As a necessary second step, teachers should slowly introduce comparative English texts to begin inculcating English rhetorical forms and lexical structures. Beginning in elementary school, students should learn skills for more critical reading to discover lexical cohesion within textual boundaries. Paired with critical readings should be parallel writing activities to enable students to attempt similar linguistic structuralizing.

5.0 Conclusion

We have considered two important aspects of text production: problem-solution textual organization and referencing. We have also undertaken a review of an advanced student's essay for how it fulfills the requirements of the problem-solution form, of which the essay is an example, and how it realizes referencing to create lexical and co-textual coherence and cohesion. We have compared the student's essay to two versions of a rewrite—one using similar language, the other academic language.

Currently, there is a greater national need to produce better written texts by Korean users of English. However, the mechanism of English language teaching is in a condition of stasis: some parts argue for a radical overhaul while others are locked in place. Consequently, language instructors do more of the same, and little development evolves. Developing referencing and form activities to get at the gears of language may help to revitalize the machine, as might retraining the users.

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7.0 Appendix
7.1 Dialogue Question Analysis

- What is the situation?

Tragic accident of Virginia in April, 2007 shocked the whole world with sorrow and grieves. As called as "Virginia Tech crisis," the incident was committed by a person who was a fellow student, killing his 50 friends without any pity.

Cho Seung-Hui, a South Korean national and landed immigrant in Virginia, United States, shot and killed or injured several of his fellow classmates.

- What was the aspect of the situation requires a response? *Or*

The young student, who was only 23 years old, committed a historical crime. Psychologists say that he had some mental problems, which leave us a question, "Who should we blame for?"

At only 23 years of age, Cho had severe mental problems that were documented. We need to know who is responsible.

- What is the problem?

Many researches show that most of mental problems can't be inherited by actually developed by the environments.

Not proved 100%, but with strong evidence, the result was strongly relying on TV.

Much research shows that mental problems are not inherited but develop through environmental causes. Television is an environmental cause strongly linked to, though not proven to cause violence.

- What response had there been? *Or*

The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that "media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial."

Some researchers say that "advertising encourages greed and selfishness, and leads to people being less community-oriented, less cooperative, less compassionate, and less charitable."

Researchers are finding that media violence socially affects people in a big way—particularly teenagers— and leads to undesirable community effects.

- What solution has been proposed? *or*

TV violence, advertising, and propaganda are not easy opponent to resist, but, the invading has begun and we must stand up.

Television is getting worse, and we must stop using it before it destroys us.

- Who has proposed a solution?

The student writer.

- How successful is this?

unknown

- What are the details of the solution?

unknown

- What evidence have you for saying it is successful?

N/A

- What is it capable of?

unknown

7.2.1 Original Student Essay

Invasion of the TV

PIP ADV 100F
Yoon Jang Sik (DECO)
2007, 06, 22

[1]Tragic accident of Virginia in April, 2007 shocked the whole world with sorrow and grieves. [2]As called as "Virginia Tech crisis," the incident was committed by a person who was a fellow student, killing his 50 friends without any pity. [3]The young student, who was only 23 years old, committed a historical crime. [4]The most shocking part of this accident was that it was not an impulsive action but, calculated. [5]Psychologists say that he had some mental problems, which leave us a question, "Who should we blame for?" [6]Many researches show that most of mental problems can't be inherited but actually developed by the environments. [7]Focusing to the "Virginia Tech Crisis," it gives us a question mark on our minds what exactly was the reason for the mental problem, mainly the genetic problem or the environments? [8]With a slight relief, genetic problems can be measured quickly with a little help of science, which eventually had no evidence for the reason. [9]Moving forward, our process moves on to a next step to figure out what sort of environment was the cause. [10]Not proved 100%, but with a strong evidence, the result was strongly relying on TV. [11]Known as one of the most innovative device behalf of mankind, TV is also facing its threats of the side effects. [12]How does this vicious device operate through our lives without any restrain?

[13]Thanks for the wonderful device, definitely our daily lives has been enriched. [14]All sorts of information, entertainment, and news showed in the black box reaches our boring life with fresh ideas without any filter. [15]However, the quality of the source is a question. [16]Intentioned to capture our senses, more and more stimulative images are provided. [17]Interesting fact is that, people gets more insensibility to these visual images which are getting more violent than ever. [18]Researches show that, the effects of media violence on society are unquestionable. [19]The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that "media

violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial." **[20]**Two facts can be infer from this, that media violence is now reached the extreme and also adolescents have less judgment to it. **[21]**The dull black box is mutating to a dangerous virus to infect our nerves! **[22]**Still, just violence can't explain all the side effects.

[23]Fascinating colors, visual images, and sounds are mixed in 15 sec. which we call as advertising. **[24]**Watching TV, most people suffer from the flood of the advertisements, trying to avoid them by turning the channels. **[25]**Not so tolerance enough for the 'creature', you soon find out that, the harder you run the faster it catches you up! **[26]**It's not the quantity it matters but also the quality. **[27]**Advertisement comes in all kinds of shapes mesmerizing your mind. **[28]**It tries to dazzle your mind by sex, violence, fantasy, baby, and animals. **[29]**It uses almost any element to convince the consumer to be fooled. **[30]**On the other hand, what about the people that is not the exact target of the product? **[31]**Children watch sexy, violent, gender stereotype, and exaggerated ads. **[32]**They yield the ad without any filter. **[33]**Some researchers say that "advertising encourages greed and selfishness, and leads to people being less community-oriented, less cooperative, less compassionate, and less charitable." **[34]**These statements are proved in the way advertisings are mostly encouraging about you only. **[35]**For example, most slogans are "You make the change!" or "It's me that matters!". **[36]**What can possibly be left if all the people are kings!

[37]The final side effect that can be accused is the disturbing people from wide views. **[38]**Almost every media suggest an idea in different forms. **[39]**Such as politically, some broadcasting companies might exert their own point of views on such events. **[40]**However, most of the people might not be well educated and miss the hidden meanings (political meaning).

[41]Public opinion can be fabricated in these terms which means people are expose to a propaganda instrument; TV. **[42]**People have little doubt when a fancy looking anchor comes up in the TV and says "Survey has been shown that half of the Koreans like the president Noh's Politic strategy." **[43]**Regardless of the other factors that might differ the results, people believe it with blind faith. **[44]**Eventually, TV damages people to think broadly.

[45]Society is a place where diversity should be acknowledged and people's mind should not be controlled in any ways. **[46]**Each human being is different from each other which mean people can't be pressed out like robots. **[47]**TV is somehow viciously affecting our lives by using its comfort, enjoyment, and efficiency as a mask. **[48]**We must try to use the TV optionally and carefully. TV violence, advertising, and propaganda are not an easy opponent to resist but, the invading has begun and we must stand up.

7.2.2 Corrected Student Essay

Invasion of the Television

Though it is considered to be one of the most innovative devices known to mankind, television creates some large problems by operating through our lives without restraint. It is one of many causes of mental problems which could have lead to such events as the 2007 Virginia Tech Massacre, in which a young man, Cho Seung Hui, killed or wounded fifty fellow students on his university campus in a manner similar to the much televised Columbine shootings. The television was once considered one of the most innovative devices, but its use has gotten out of hand in recent years.

Though it has enriched our lives, providing all sorts of information and entertainment (though in an unmediated way), the quality of television is much in question because of the way in which it works to capture our attention with visuals. People become desensitized to images on television, so producers must choose more and more sensational imagery. As a result, television has become much more violent than in the past. The effects of media violence on society are undeniable. A study undertaken by Johnson and colleagues suggests "media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial." Two results can be inferred from Johnson's study: media violence has reached an extreme, and adolescents are less sensitive to it. However, media violence cannot explain all the side effects of television.

Watching TV, people generally try to avoid the flood of advertising by changing channels. However, no matter how hard people try to avoid them, advertisements always seem to catch them. Advertising varies in so many forms that they mesmerize the mind. Sex, violence, fantasies, infants and animals are typical subjects used to capture the audience's attention. These elements are designed to fool people into buying products. On the other hand, what about those

who are not the intended product demographic? Children are also subject to many of the same advertisements that adults are. Yet children are not as sophisticated as adults; they have a more difficult time recognizing advertisements as elements of an idealized world created to convince. Some researchers say that "advertising encourages greed and selfishness, and leads to people being less community-oriented, less cooperative, less compassionate, and less charitable." Advertisements tend to focus on the individual as opposed to society with slogans such as, "You make the change!" or "It's me that matters!"

Society should acknowledge diversity of viewpoints without attempting to control what people think. Every person is different; people are not programmable robots, pressed out in factories. Television somehow masks the machinery of its intentions with images of comfort, enjoyment and overall entertainment value. We must try to be conscious of the effects of television programming. Television violence, advertising and propaganda are not easy opponents to resist, but the invasion has begun and we must stand up.

Television can be seen as manufacturing a kind of social consciousness—it dictates how we are to think and act. Getting away from our televisions might be a very difficult thing to do when the general person might not be sufficiently educated or sophisticated to catch the details of that which is broadcast. In this way, television can be seen as a propaganda instrument which attempts to fabricate public opinion on any number of matters. Public opinion in favor of the President is further cemented by appeals to authority in the form of news anchors, celebrities in their own right, who declare on television, "Surveys show that half of the Korean population like President Noh's political strategy…", even though few can actually pinpoint what his strategy is exactly. Regardless of factors which might show what the other half of the Korean population believes, the general public follows these people with blind faith. Ultimately, television prevents

people from being able to formulate their own thinking, keeping us from breaking away from its

hold.

7.2.3 Corrected Student Essay Academic Form

Shifting the Balance of Mediated Violence on Television

For decades modern society has been entertained and informed by television programming. Television provides us with a variety of shows to keep updated on the goings-on in the world, and to feel as if we are participating in a more direct way in political policy shaping —even if by merely watching events unfold through daily newscasts. We are able to relax to less demanding programming in the form of entertaining sitcoms and "movies-of-the-week" which serve a dual purpose of delighting the mind and shaping people's social opinions to less "stereotyped" ways of thinking. We, as modern people, feel that we know more about the world than our forefathers (and mothers) ever did, and, further, are more capable of dealing with life's crises.

However, when an event such as the Virginia Tech Massacre occurs, society struggles to rationalize the situation as a one-off and localize the causes. Certainly, Cho Seung-Hui, a South Korean permanent resident in America, had pre-existing mental disorders, but the young man likely based his plan to murder as many of his classmates as possible, on the much-televised Columbine incident. Television, as informer and entertainer, moves away from an innocuous informational-entertainment medium to one which negatively affects society in a catastrophic way.

People generally believe that television is getting more violent. However, in his review of W.J Potter's text, *The 11 Myths of Media Violence,* Barrie Gunter argues that this belief is groundless. He points out "real-world incidents are blamed on media violence" resulting in two outcomes: "the harm of media violence and the offence it causes to people" (Gunter, 226). Gunter goes on to say that the first is "a subjective matter linked to personal taste and moral

values." Scientifically, no causal link has been found for the second. While it is plausible that the simple fact of a televised violent act may not provide a direct causal link between television and society, it is certainly one of many threads in the tapestry composing an individual, including, but not limited to mental and physical health, social conditioning, living conditions, educational background, exposure to ideas and concepts, and the will to carry out a particular plan of action resulting in the violent act. Certain structural elements of television programming certainly assist in creating the right conditions for mediated violence.

Eyal and Rubin identifies that the effects of violent television content are uneven and based on viewer characteristics such as a "disposition to behave aggressively" (Eyal, 2003). Eyal and Rubin cite much research substantiating the concept of aggressive tendencies developing over time and remaining stable across situation and time. While this appears to refute the argument of television violence, they go on to say

> whereas people who are not aggressive in nature also may be influenced by media violence, the nature and extent of the effects are likely to be different from the effects on more aggressive viewers…media violence may teach non aggressive viewers aggressive attitudes, but it is more likely to do this and more..for aggressive persons.

Gunter, Eyal and Rubin point out, established, contrary to his later viewpoint, that "people with violent dispositions enjoy watching violent content, perceive violence in shows to be more humorous and exciting, and are more tolerant of others' violence than less aggressive people" (ibid). Eyal and Rubin continue by considering Bandura's position (2001) on social cognitive theory in which Bandura elucidates the concept of abstract modeling. In this concept, symbolizing, self-efficacy, self-regulation, self-reflection and forethought are important. Also,

> the ability to participate vicariously in another's experiences, at times to the point of identity loss, is an important cognitive function with implications for a character's influence on viewers….Observers not only learn how to act but to extract rules governing a specific judgement or action exhibited by others [sic] They can then use these rules to generate new instances of aggressive attitudes and behavior that go beyond what they have viewed or heard.

The close-up of a character, studied by Balazs (1952), enhances viewer identification with television characters. Identification has been identified

as a socialpsychological process involving the assimilation and internalization of the values and social roles of another person, up to and including having a sense of "oneness" with that person.
(Kelman, 1961; Theodorson & Theodorson: 1979 in Bucy: 1999)

Furthermore, Bolls et al. observe in their study that memory for television viewing is substantially improved with the assistance of edits. Edits, "camera changes with the context of a single location" (Bolls, 2000), increase sympathetic arousal and attention, which has been shown to improve memory for television messages (Bradley, 1992, 1994; Lang, Dillon & Dong, 1995 in Bolls, 2000).

Predisposition to violence and identification with violent acts, enhanced visuals through the use of close-ups and edits are three links in the chain. Cho Seung Hui had been living in the United States since 1992 and had certainly been exposed to media violence through television shows and movies. Likewise, he had most certainly seen televised news broadcasts of the Columbine incident. News broadcasts replayed the video footage of the perpetrators, audio tape of 911 calls, the police emergency response, the terror of the victims and their bloodstains. Given his mental instability and his inability to attain adequate professional psychological help, Cho may have been predisposed to recognize in the students committing the Columbine incident (as well as any potential number of others) as kindred spirits with a solution he admired and wanted to emulate. The gunmen, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold became immediately infamous and immortalized on television, in documentaries and in public discourse. Wikipedia rates their massacre as the fourth-deadliest in American history. Taken together, a mediated thread may be drawn from media violence in television to violence committed in the real world. This is, however, not a complete picture, and much more study needs to take place before a conclusive

answer can be determined.

To counteract the potential negative impact television may have on people beginning in their early years of life, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (1999), according to Anderson and Pempek (2005), has made recommendations that children younger than two years of age be exposed to no screen devices whatsoever (televisions, computer DVDs, video games, etc.). They conclude that very young children are, however, much more likely to watch television than in the past. Repeated exposure to TV violence, according to Cline, Croft and Courrier (1973) is a major factor in the gradual desensitization of individuals to such scenes. Doob and Wood (1972) point out that "desensitization may weaken some viewers' psychological restraints on violent behavior…and their fear of social disapproval." The National Television Violence Study showed that "66% of children's programs were found to contain violence compared to 57% of general programming (Wilson et al., 1997)" (in Larson, 2003), suggesting that children are exposed to more violence on television than adults are. Anders (1999) presents the criticism that media violence "leaves children the impression that force is an acceptable means of problem solving." Other researchers, however, recognize that some viewers experience violence on television as a "cathartic" means of getting rid of "violent tensions and animosities" (Fowles, 1999).

Violence aside, television may have a debilitating effect on children's academic progress. According to Levine & Levine (1996), children daily watch three or more hours of weekday television programming, with 60% of parents rarely or never limiting their children's viewing habits. They further indicate that high levels of viewing might promote "unintelligent consumerism". Housden (1991) suggests that individuals in lower income brackets with lower educational levels watch more television, whereas the Corporation for Public Broadcast

identifies that "teens who are in the lowest per week viewing category are more likely to continue their education by enrolling in college" (in Austin & Thompson, 2003). In one study put forth by Thompson and Zerbinos (1995) children recognized that there are differences in how males and females are portrayed. These differences, according to the authors, appear to relate to "reporting more stereotypical job preferences" by children.

Television representations through the media also have an effect on how a culture portrays its own members. Returning to the idea of the close-up, long-range views of political candidates produce a distancing effect whereas a close-up is "interpreted on a more individual, micro-level of analysis where the emotional drama emanates from the candidate himself." Essentially, where the political candidate is clearly seen filling the television screen, he or she is perceived as being more intimate, and closer to the audience. They are able to identify with him or her more easily, as indicated by the comments of one focus group participant in the Bill Clinton election campaign:

> It's the closeness of Bill Clinton almost filling the entire screen with his face … He was making eye contact … I'd vote for the man based on that … You sat there and watched the man and you're not even listening to his answer.
>
> (Busy & Newhagen, 1999)

Television viewing is also able to mediate and manipulate a public's perception of its own members, especially in connection to crime. While, according to Yanich (1999), adult crime dominates the news, almost a third of all crime stories are juvenile-related. Most of these, Yanich notes, focus on violent crimes, such as murder, and nearly 80% were covered in the first block of the newscast. Dorfman and Schiraldi (2001) note the nonexistent connection between actual crime rates and news coverage (which focuses on violent crime); the episodic nature of news coverage focusing on individual crimes as isolated events; the connection news coverage makes between race and crime; and the highlighting of youth primarily in the context of violent

crime. While this is the case, media coverage of juvenile crimes also increases while juvenile crime decreases (Chesney-Lind: 1998). This presents a biased and unrepresentative picture of you in television media. To make matters worse, criminals, according to a number of studies, portrays people of color as criminals. For example, as Azocar et al. show, "Dixon and Linz (2000a) found African Americans were twice as likely as whites to be portrayed as perpetrators of crime on local television news….Furthermore, Oliver (1994) and Dixon and Linz (2000a) have demonstrated that Whites [sic] are overrepresented as police officers on local television news and reality-based programming in comparison to employment records."

A solution to the complex problem of television viewing is neither easy to discover nor simple to implement. Television has become such an ingrained part of our lives that we take it for granted. Alongside the trivial and trite, television is a useful communication device, alerting us to real threats and performing real educational feats. Many advocate completely personally foregoing television, yet this is too simplistic a response. As a communicative tool, researchers and educators have noted the strength of television in creating and nurturing literacy and the inculcation of social values in young children. Bethan Marshall (1997) recognized a program entitled *Rat a tat tat* designed to help children develop their reading with encouragement and enthusiasm while focusing students' attention on the mechanics of reading through context. She noted students were indeed enthusiastic and following the text through textual devices such as prediction. Marshall notes one teacher's observation that

> the use of television seemed to encourage children to use books. Children were interested in seeing books come to life and this was motivating and confidence building. They picked up books used in the series with the confidence of already knowing the story. This helped them retell the story in their own words and to guess at some of the words used in the text.

Social reconstruction through television programming owes its start to critical multiculturalism. Henry A. Giroux (2003) examines how power [is] designed to exclude, contain or disadvantage

the oppressed. It "advocates the use of formal and informal education, including media, to teach students about oppression, domination, and power relations in society (Hurtado & Silva, 2008)." In their study, Hurtado and Silva look at the children's program, *Little Bill*, created by Bill Cosby. They see how the program utilizes the narrative to examine stigmatized social identities through racialization, genderization, and ethnicization. The critical perspective, they report, is particularly effective because it is never explicit in its goal of creating social awareness and avoids the use of a preachy tone.

Though it may never be possible to completely eliminate the social problems which exist either in the outside world, the home, the heart or the television, as individuals we can make conscious choices about which messages underscore the ethical and moral attitudes we wish to take on. As individuals, we have a responsibility to do that which does no harm to others, and we have a responsibility to teach our children how to recognize and evaluate influences which may exert subtle or overt pressure to act in certain ways. We are also responsible to act as guides rather than stern overseers to help our children and each other to form and maintain standards of thinking and acting which are beneficial to all. Television as it exists now is moving in this direction, and has been for many years. However, the popular pull of entertainment is still a more alluring force created by individuals seeking sensationalism for profit.

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