Thematization: A Contrastive Study of Persuasive Texts Written by Native and Nonnative Columnists

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Thematization is considered the mental act or process of selecting particular topics as themes in discourse or words as themes in sentences. This paper examines thematization strategies in English opinion articles written by American and Iranian journalists. To this end, 2 of the leading newspapers in the United States and Iran, The New York Times and Tehran Times, have been chosen. Based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis of textual features and marked and unmarked themes of 12 opinion articles (6 from each newspaper), this study aims to find out how these 2 groups of professional writers organize their themes, into marked and unmarked ones and what effects these organizations have on the audiences. The findings revealed that textual features were present in both sets of data. The occurrences of marked and unmarked themes were not significantly different. However, it was found that the American writers used marked themes more frequently than the Iranian writers.