A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON ANGLO AND NON-ANGLO ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract. This article showed that Anglo dialogic academic discourse cannot be separated from several aspects such as linear, more personal, writer responsible and focus on form. This writing convention is underpinned by cultural tradition. Anglo community is influenced by democratic thought pattern belong to Socrates, who stressed the writing as a medium of negotiating meaning and creating knowledge and truth. Meanwhile, the monologic discourse is found to be produced in non-Anglo communities which have no long democracy tradition. This academic discourse is characterized by impersonal tone, digressiveness, reader responsible and focus on content. It encourages writer to use writing as a medium of showing knowledge, in which reader do not necessarily need to be guided in explicit and direct way, and assuming that they are intelligent human whom there is nothing much to be directed, guided and explained.

Key Words: anglo, non-anglo, comparative study.

Introduction

Writing is a medium used by human to socialize in their communal interaction. Historically, it is used for documenting knowledge to pass to next generations. Most of that knowledge is stored in written language. Many classic stories which date back to Socrates and Confucius period until modern present day’s literature are produced in written form. For today’s modern literate communities’ life, the massiveness of writing by people is well mentioned by Grabe and Kaplan (1996, p. 3). They point out that most of people are engaged in writing activity everyday and the necessary of writing are marked by pervasiveness of print media.

Writing is “a dialog between the conversant; including writer and reader, and it functions as a vehicle or a medium which mediate the exchange of meaning” (Nystrand, 1986b, p. 1). Despite this definition, there are some differences in the way that people express and communicate their idea through writing. First, the difference lies on the conventions that govern the way people write. Kaplan has demonstrated how people produce texts are governed by the rule that has been established. He believes that culture become a factor in directing people from a particular culture to write in a certain way.

Since the hypothesis of language and culture was introduced by Sapir and Whorf, many bodies of research have been attempted to figure out the relationship between culture and written language. That culture governs people’s way in writing is first confirmed in Kaplan seminal work in 1966 (Noor, 2001, p. 256). In the study of comparing Anglo academic discourse with that produced by non- Anglo communities, Kaplan concludes that Anglo- community produce texts with linear development while Semitic and Oriental follow parallelism and circularity, and Romance and Russian language employ digressiveness (Connor 2003, p. 223).
Method

This section is purposed to demonstrate what characteristics are meant for an academic discourse to be seen as dialogic or monologic. I will begin by describing what aspect that constitutes and reflect a dialogic discourse pattern of Anglo community in their written language. Following Kaplan’s theory saying that culture governs language style, some Anglo’s historical and cultural values on which the dialogic style of its written discourse are based will be presented. Furthermore, I will provide and discussed some features that show the monologic pattern of non-Anglo academic discourse. These include some texts which are written by non-Anglo writers. Similarly, the cultural and historical values of these non-Anglo communities that underpin the monologic style of their academic discourse will be presented, and finally, the main points will be drawn together in the conclusion.

Research Finding and Discussion

The definition of academic discourse

According to Aijmer & A.B. Stenstrom (2004, p. 6) academic discourse is “a field with potential pedagogical application”. They point out that academic texts involve scientific procedures established by social activity and are maintained by members of the professional communities. Furthermore, it can be described as “hypothetical or theoretical and (is) not expected to produce an immediate or practical result; an academic discussion; an academic question” (synonym.com). From this definition, it can be understood that academic discourse is those texts that have a strong basis of reasoning and logic and that are written and produced with prior study or experiment on a certain thing. Academic texts therefore may include among other things, research articles, lectures, abstracts, and journals.

What does it mean to be dialogic?

In general, the term dialogic is often associated with face-to-face communication. However, dialogic can also be tied with the written discourse. In general, it indicates an attempt to be made in communication to encourage two sides of interactive direction; writer invites reader in order for an effective communication to occur in a written text. Broadly defined, dialogical pattern in written language is a style that encourages reciprocal relation between writer and reader. It promotes text as a medium of written interaction which needs two participants to be involved. Nystrand (1986b, p. 16) defines a dialogic discourse as the text that is “built upon a social and communicative process of negotiating meaning between the writer and the reader”. He notes that a dialogic text enables two participants to take a space to communicate through written interaction. This indicates that writer and reader are at the same importance of role for a text to allow the two participants to take part in a dialogic discourse.

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) urge that an important concern for English discourse lies on the development of a theory of audience. The audience has superior status in Anglo discourse, which means that writers are obliged to make their text intelligible and as communicative as possible. They note that in establishing a text and generation of meaning in English, audience is a crucial issue. This argument demands English writers to be more concerned with the role of reader in written communication. Moreover, the writer is encouraged to direct their readers, to provide cues that indicate the persona which the reader should take on during the reading. This shows that Anglo discourse
which is seen dialogic can not be separated with the presence of elements that function as a reader's guidance to be involved in a text, and it is the writer responsibility to provide these elements explicitly.

Aspects that show dialogical pattern of Anglo academic discourse

Personal tone in Anglo Academic writing.

Personal style which is found in Anglo academic discourse cannot be separated with cohesion, coherence and elaboration in the text. Tanskanen (2004, p. 89) describes cohesion and coherent as independent but intertwined. He further defines cohesion as grammatical and lexical elements on the surface of a text which can form connection between parts of the text, and coherence is the outcome of dialogue between the text and its readers. Thus, he adds, cohesion can be viewed as a collaborative device used by writers as a signal of their attempt to successfully interact with their fellow readers.

As Tanskanen mentions, one feature in cohesion and coherence of written text is reiteration and collocation. These two features are also frequently found in spoken interaction; this is what makes them similar. The following text is a sample that is frequently can be found in Anglo academic discourse. It is a fine example to describe dialogism in English academic written text.

At the risk of adding further to the list's exceptionally heavy email volume, I think I should try to explain why I think this discussion is appropriate for WMST-L. The situation Rosie described is very similar to the problems that arise involving offensive classroom speech and behaviour directed to all or some women. Indeed, a number of respondents have offered suggestions based explicitly on their experience with just such situations. So, I do felt this discussion fall within the list’s focus... (Adapted from Tanskanen, 2004, p. 104)

As we can see in the text, the use of I think this discussion indicates that the writer considers his discourse as a medium of discussion, rather than transmission of knowledge. This meets the criteria of a dialogic text in which the writer invites and includes his readers to reciprocally interact in the discourse. Furthermore, as Tanskanen says, the repetition such as I think, list, this discussion, situation and their which substitutes a number of respondent show that repetition and substitution found in the written discourse have the same pattern in spoken interaction in which repetition and substitution are typically encountered.

According to Samson (cited in Aijmer & Stenstrom, 2004, p. 6) written discourse can be as interactive face-to-face interaction, provided that understanding presupposes collaboration between writer and reader. She notes that the choice of personal markers also reflects the way the writer wants to “involve” the readers in the activity. Personal markers affect the texts to be seen personal or impersonal. Furthermore, according to Scollon (2004), a personal tone which resembles spoken interaction also can be found in the following sentences of Anglo academic discourse. He exemplifies the two following sentences.

1. **You** should sound like a serious student who is entering the ongoing conversation among academic.
2. When **we** look specifically at the reading practice.
   (Adapted from Scollon, 2004, p. 156-7).
In these two examples, it can be seen that the use of you and we have strong personal tone, which can be frequently found in face-to-face interaction. You, is indicated to invite readers as partners in the dialogue which take place in written language. Meanwhile, According to Scollon, personal pronoun we involves the writer and the readers which are two basic components for a dialogic text to happen. In a study of contrastive rhetoric between English and Finnish academic discourse, Mauranen (1993, as cited in Golebiowski, 1997) found English academic text is characterized by personal tone of the language, while as Finnish text is impersonal.

Linearity

In Anglo academic discourse, how information is presented is equally important as the content (Golebiowsky, 1997). One of the elements of focusing on form is text linearity. Linearity in English discourse is seen as a writer reflection of straightforwardness (Connor 2003). It is a term that emphasis on writers’ efforts to make their texts as communicative and interactive as possible. Linear or symmetrical, which is characterized by the presence of explicitness in a text help readers grasp what the writer want them to understand.

Kaplan (1666; 1980, as cited in Kachru, 1986 p. 112) believes that the convention of Anglo composition favour linear pattern. He mentions:

*The thought patterns which speakers of English appear to expect as an integral part of their communication is a sequence that is dominantly linear in its development. An English expository paragraph usually begin with topic statement, and then, by series of subdivision of that topic statement, each supported by examples and illustrations, proceeds to develop that central idea and relate that idea to all the other ideas in the whole essay, and then to employ that idea in its proper relationship with other ideas, to prove something, or perhaps to argue something.*

Clyne (1987, cited in Golebiowski, 1998) points out that linearity is seen in Anglo academic text as it pays more attention to the readability of the text. The readability is important point for Anglo discourse to be seen as dialogic since it allows the text to create reciprocity between writer and reader. Linearity in written communication is realized by the directness and explicitness of writers in bringing the information for their readers. This is the same as dialogic interaction in spoken English. Clyne (1994) relates the linearity in written form to the Grice’s maxim saying “be relevant” which is vital in Anglo’s face-to-face communication. He notes that being “relevant” in spoken language and linearity in written discourse has the same purpose; it is to prevent the speaker/writer to include extraneous information that has no link to the topic being discussed.

Furthermore, Clyne, on the notion of form-oriented role in Anglo academic discourse cites the term of “orderliness”. This term is fundamental part in English to be a dialogic text as it focuses on the presentation of information to readers in a text and one of the criteria of good academic writing in Anglo discourse. This can be related to English spoken interaction governed by Grice’s Supermaxim of “Be perspicuous” which has four Maxims; “Avoid obscurity”, “Avoid ambiguity”, “Be brief”, “Be orderly”. In face to face interaction and for a dialogic communication to be attained, Grice urges that speakers need to arrange, organize and manage the information in an order that their listeners find it easy to follow. Similarly, in written language communication, well-orderly information is reflected in a good presentation that enable readers to follow
logical or chronological progression of information that writers try to convey. This kind of well organized presentation in academic discourse becomes a contributing factor for Anglo text to be dialogic.

Bigner and Peyasantiwong (1988, p. 172-3), in comparing Thai writing text and English, report that almost all English writers indicate the discourse with clearly identifiable writing section while Thai employ more implicit guidance showing the division of section in their writing texts. Moreover, in English texts, the writers use more personal with conversational tone and much vocabulary which is associated with speech than with writing.

Writer responsible

The term is introduced by Hind (1987, as cited in Kaplan, 1988, p. 291) in distinguishing Anglo academic discourse and texts produced in non Anglo communities. He defines writer responsible is a text in which it is the duty of writers to make their texts to be clear to the readers. In his study, he concludes that Anglo academic discourse is writer responsible in which writers are keen to make their texts as intelligible as possible.

Hind also point out that the area of what constitutes writer-responsible and reader-responsible discourse is in unity. In English discourse, which is writer responsible, the unity is crucially important because readers expect landmarks along the way. Writers in English are demanded to provide transition statements so that the readers can piece together the logic that binds the discourse together. Furthermore, Clyne (1987, as cited in Noor, 2001, p.263) points out that the burden of intelligibility of a text falls on the writer. He/she is obliged to make his take readable.

This notion leads us to an understanding that Anglo academic writers manage their texts as communicative and interactive as possible. As the writer, they make themselves as if they were present in front of their readers in negotiating the meaning in the texts they are reading. It is similar to spoken interaction, in which a dialogue is gained when listeners and speakers interact to each other in discussing or exchanging a particular topic.

Form/Reader-oriented

A clue that Anglo academic discourse emphasizes on form is the employment of metadiscourse. The term of metadiscourse is defined ‘those aspects of the text which explicit explicitly refer to organization of the writer’s stance towards either the content or the readers’. Metadiscourse is, therefore, a crucial rhetorical device for writers as it allows readers to engage in a discourse. (Hyland, cited in Shokouhi & Baghsiahi 2009, p. 551-2). Dahl (2004, p. 1811) describes metadiscourse as an open acknowledgment of writers to their readers. Thus, the role of metadiscourse in a text can be seen as a feature of organizational structure of a discourse for the readers to follow the logical progression of the text. The fundamental position of metadiscourse in Anglo academic texts are well illustrated by Shokouhi and Baghsiahi (2009, p.551) who point out that Anglo community discourse treats metadiscourse convention as a crucial feature is the organization of the text.

According to Crysmore and Hyland (2005, as cited in Dahl, 2004, p.1811) metadiscourse can be categorized into two kinds, namely textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. The former serves the function as the text organizer and represent the presence of the audience in the text, and the latter provides interactive elements such as
the expression of the writer’s attitude and certainty. These two elements are believed to have characterized Anglo Academic discourse to be seen as dialogic because they are easily found in Anglo academic texts.

As indicated above, the majority of research has shown that metadiscourse is prime importance in Anglo discourse convention. Swales (1990) in his hypothesis of CARS reports that there is a tendency in Anglo academic discourse to employ a lot of metatext. Mauranen (1993, as cited in Dahl, 2004, p. 1821) in a study of Anglo-American and Finnish discourse, reports that the former use larger amount of metadiscourse than the latter writers do. He concludes that Anglo American writers are more concerned with guiding and orienting their readers by which they can reciprocally interact with their readers.

In comparing English to Spanish texts, Valero and Garces (cited in Shokouhi & Baghsiahi 2009, p. 553-4) point out that Anglo American writers show more interest in guiding and directing their readers in the process of orientation by employing greater amount of metatext. In guiding and directing the readers, the metadiscourse elements play an important role in it. Anglo American writers are also prevalent and explicit in the text than Spanish authors when composing in English.

Shokouhi & Baghsiahi (2009, p. 560), in contrasting Persian text with English, conclude that Anglo American are keen in using overt form of textual metadiscourse through which they guide and persuade readers and make their presence explicit in the text, and also use more amount of interpersonal metadiscourse. They add that Persian text is absent or weak in using textual metadiscourse and it is the responsibility of readers to determine the relationship between any part of the discourse and the discourse as a whole.

Dahl (2004, p. 1818) reports that Anglo writers employ larger amount of metadiscourse in their texts compared to French and Norwegian writers. His corpus are three different genres of texts which are medicine, economic and linguistic. It is shown that English employs greater amount of metatext in all three types of text. Similarly, in comparing English and Slovene academic texts, Peterlin (2005) concludes that English is found to employ greater amount of metatext that Slovene texts which enable readers to follow the texts easily.

Cultural elements in Anglo Academic discourse

Aristotelian academic writing tradition

In academic writing, the cultural values that are embedded in languages are reported by Kaplan in his contrastive rhetoric study in 1966. He mentions that English text values “logic” that manage the system of cohesion and coherence through which the logic is reflected in text. This logic can be traced to the tradition of Socrates/Aristotelian and Galilean systematization of English discourse (Wilkerson, 1986, as cited in Kaplan, p. 290). This is in line with Hinkel (2007) who says Anglo discourse convention require rational (Aristotelian) argumentation, objectivity in the writer’s position and views, and factuality in justification and proof (p. 107).

The dialogical rhetoric in Anglo academic discourse stems from the system of democracy that Socrates introduced. Scollon (1994) points out that dialogic is at the heart of Socratic method; a truth is found through ideal use of rhetorical skill in creating discourse and via question-and-answer sequence. She further notes that in Socrates’s view, dialogue is ideal in using rhetorical skills to create discourse that facilitate the
establishment of truth (p. 14). As we have understood, democracy is built upon a negotiation of heterogeneous perspectives. In writing discourse, Anglo academic writers try to include readers as a group with which a topic is negotiated in order to pursue a truth, and that truth cannot be gained without a dialogue. Thus, readers here are positioned as a partner for a dialogue to happen.

**Low context culture**

Linearity and explicitness in Anglo academic discourse also can be traced to the low context culture that those communities have. Low context culture is believed to have influenced Anglo writers to embrace linearity and explicitness in their writing. In this kind of culture, readers need to be explicitly guided in following the discourse, and this is reflected in frequent use of metatext that is employed in Anglo academic writing. According to Adams (2003) meaning is transferred more explicitly in low context culture. It lacks of employing of non-verbal message such as eye contact and body language. This theory can be related to the writing pattern in Anglo academic discourse. Anglo writing convention demands writers to explicitly provide logical argument or main points for readers in order to enable them to grasp the ideas that the writers really mean. Moreover, the writers are supposed to present clues which guide the readers to follow the progression of the text. It is a sole responsibility of the writer to make their arguments become intelligible for their readers.

**Theoretical explanation on monologue academic discourse**

Broadly defined, monologue in a text is a condition where readers are not or less included in participation in a text. Linell (1998, as cited in Tanskanen, 2004 p. 90) defines monologue text as a discourse that stresses the role of writer in the production of text. The status of the discourse is more as knowledge transmitter, from writers to readers rather than a medium in which a negotiation of meaning take place between them. The characteristic of monologue discourse is that there is great amount of implicitness and limited amount of guidance or clue provided by writers for their readers to follow the logical progression of the text.

Monologic style is seen in academic writing written in non-Anglo societies. There are some elements that show the monologue pattern of academic discourse in those communities. These elements are regarded to have characterized the academic discourse written by non-Anglo writers. Monologic academic discourse is seen to be marked by impersonal tone, digressive pattern, reader responsible and content oriented.

**Impersonal, digression, reader responsible and content oriented**

As has been reported by Mauranen (1993, as cited in Golebiowski, 1998) and Bigner and Peyasantiwong (1988), it is found that non-Anglo academic text is characterized by impersonal tone of the language. Impersonal text is noted by the frequent use of third person personal pronouns such as it, he, she, they, rather than I, you and we. The use of impersonal tone in the text has led to the absence of writer and reader in the text and consequently make it is less interactive and monologic. In impersonal writing, the writer is not seen present and reader is not invited to participate in the discourse. There is no inclusion of writer and reader in the text. This has contributed to the monologue pattern of the discourse. Apart from this, it is believed that the use of impersonal pronoun in non-Anglo academic discourse is purposed to keep writer in a neutral position. Bigner and Peyasantiwong, for instance point out that Thai discourse are
discourage to make use of either first or second person pronouns in order to maintain a neutral stance.

Another aspect of monologic text is digression. It is defined as academic discourse that frequently uses implicitness and low amount of metalanguage to guide the readers through the text (Golebiowski & Liddicoat, 2002). The rationale of digression in text is that writer put more importance on content rather than form. This is what make digressive text is different from linear one. Moreover, message which is provided in discourse is implicitly or indirectly conveyed to readers, leaving them to understand the message themselves.

In comparing Persian and English sociology texts, Shokouhi and Baghsiahi (2009) mention that the difference between the two texts is indicated by the degree of metadiscourse employment. Persian writers use less amount of metatext than English writers. They conclude that Persian writers are less interested in explicitly guiding the readers and orienting main points in the article. Yang and Cahill (2008) who study Chinese rhetorical pattern find that Chinese text is characterized by indirectness in conveying information. The same thing also indicated by Mauranen (1993, as cited in Golebiowski & Liddicoat, 2002). She reports that Finnish writers employ less amount of metatext in their academic discourse. She further notes that the readers in Finnish discourse are assumed to “conscientiously follow the writer’s train of thought without any need for metadiscoursal explanation” (p. 84).

Orientation on content of the discourse has been analysed in German and Polish academic discourse. Clyne (1987, as cited in Golebiowski, 1998), in his contrastive study work between German and English academic texts reports that the striking difference between them rests on linearity and digressiveness. German text is characterized by digressive pattern in structuring texts. The digressiveness in German academic text is identified by less amount of metatext and less symmetrical. He believes that this is because German academic discourse put the greater emphasis on proportional content than the presentation and this pattern has became institutionalized in German academic writing (p. 70). Similarly, According to Golebiowski (1998), Polish academic texts are content-oriented since they pay more attention to the knowledge in their discourse. Following the Polish writing tradition, she mentions that the evidence of the possession of knowledge is seen far more important than the presentation of the knowledge itself. As a result, there is less discoursal clue that guides readers in understanding the progression of the texts.

Another element that characterized monologue text is reader responsible. Hind (1987, as cited in Shokouhi & Baghsiahi, 2009) defines reader responsible text is that it is the duty of reader to understand what the writer has intended to say (p. 551). Furthermore, in his study of comparing Japanese and English discourse, Hind mentions while English text employ great amount of metadiscourse showing it as writer responsible, Japanese texts can be considered reader responsibility because it lacks clues that orient and guide readers to follow the logical progression of the texts.

Cultural Element in monologic academic discourse

Teutonic culture, Confucius, knowledge-oriented and politeness

According to Clyne (1994, as cited in Golebiowski, 1998) communication and discoursal pattern is related to cultural value system. It is found that text belonging to Teutonic culture, involving German, polish and other Eastern European countries,

German and Polish traditions which value more knowledge than form is reflected in their academic texts. Clyne (1987, as cited in Noor, 2001, p. 263) says that digression in German academic text is because it is intended to provide knowledge, theory, and stimulus to thought to reader. Similarly, Golebiowski (1998) reports that in Polish discourse tradition, the presentation of the content is the main focus of attention in Polish scholarly writing. She says that digression in Polish discourse is to provide theory ideology, qualification or additional information (p. 75). This shows that German and Polish academic culture put more emphasis on the knowledge that is conveyed in the discourse rather than the form of how that knowledge is presented to readers.

In China, indirectness in its academic discourse tradition can be traced to Confucian tradition. Malcom and Pan (1989, as cited in Liao & Chen, 2009) point out that Chinese writers are encouraged not to give their view straightforwardly in order to avoid aggressiveness. Moreover, Chinese authors also “expect the audience to infer meanings rather than to have them spelled out” (Metalene, 1985, as cited in Liao & Chen, 2009, p. 712). This style of writing can be related to Confucius teaching that promote and maintain social harmony. In relation to this, Decapua and wintergerst (2004) mention that member of Confucianism culture adopt social harmony in communication strategies. This means that the way of Chinese communicate might have influenced its writing convention. Furthermore, the indirectness in Persian Academic discourse also explained by Shokouhi and Baghsiahi (2009, p. 561). They believe that the implicitness that Persian writers employ reflect the different notion of politeness. The implicit Persian rhetoric could be constructed as being polite by its treatment of readers as intelligent human beings, to whom nothing much needs to be explained. Saying to obvious things may seem to be scornful to the reader.

In digressiveness of Romance language, Golebiowski and Liddicoat (2002) mention that Roman writers see digression as “enriched text” (p. 63). The more information the writers provide, the more significant the text is seen. Similarly, according to Nichols (1988, as cited in Golebiowski, 1998, p. 82) Russian academic text has less interactive and communicative feature between writer and reader, mentioning it as resembling “gnomic statement of all available knowledge”.

High context culture

Most of the cultures which are seen to have monologue convention of academic discourse such as Eastern Europe and Asia belong to high context culture (HCC) except German. Given this fact, it is expected that this kind of culture in some way underpins the discourse pattern institutionalized in those cultures. As have been understood, in high context culture meaning is created more implicitly, which depend in large part upon non-verbal messages such as tone of voice, inflection and eye contact (Adams, 2003). In writing, writers from HCC assume there is no significant need to provide readers cluses that guide them to follow progression of the text. Moreover, writing in this culture is seen as the transmitter of knowledge; it is for passing values to younger generation as pointed by Confucius, whereas in Anglo society where democracy is embraced, dialogue is a core element in creating knowledge (Hinkel, 2009). Relating to this, Hall and Hall (1990, as cited in Dahl, 2004) have confirmed that there is a link between written discourse conventions with high and low context culture. In their study of German, French and
Anglo-American texts, they found that French, which represents reader-responsible discourse fit well to the high context culture it embraces, in which its text provides very little information in explicit and in the coded way, assuming that the information is already in the person. While Americans, representing low context culture presents the information in the explicit code.

**Conclusion**

Anglo academic discourse which is seen dialogic cannot be separated from several aspects such as linear, more personal, writer responsible and focus on form. This writing convention is underpinned by cultural tradition. Anglo community is influenced by democratic thought pattern belong to Socrates, who stressed the writing as a medium of negotiating meaning and creating knowledge and truth. Moreover, low context culture of Anglo society also affects the way they present information in text. This culture encourage writer to provide message and guide reader in explicit and direct way. Meanwhile, the monologic discourse is found to be produced in non-Anglo communities which have no long democracy tradition. This academic discourse is characterized by impersonal tone, digressiveness, reader responsible and focus on content. This rhetorical pattern can be traced to cultural values such as Teutonic which promote knowledge-oriented in Eastern Europe, Confucius in Asia and politeness in Iran. High context culture in these countries has influenced the rhetorical pattern in academic discourse. It encourages writer to use writing as a medium of showing knowledge, in which reader do not necessarily need to be guided in explicit and direct way, and assuming that they are intelligent human whom there is nothing much to be directed, guided and explained.

**References**


