

## **Investigating Linguistic Variation of Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews: A Multidimensional Study**

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### **Abstract**

Recent technological advancement on social media and the internet has given popularity to the online book review and acknowledged it as a distinctive register. The research aims to explore the linguistic variation of Pakistani online fiction book reviews with Biber (1988) five textual dimensions. A specialized corpus of these book reviews was developed through online newspapers, magazines and academic journals spanning over 10 years. The compiled corpus was analyzed by employing Biber (1988) multidimensional tagger. To explore the distinct identity of Pakistani online fiction book reviews as a register, the current research aims to explore linguistic variation across three mediums on five textual dimensions of Biber's 1988 study. The findings of the study reveal Pakistani academic writing as highly informational, non-narrative, exceedingly explicit, non-persuasive and impersonal in style. This study may be fruitful for journalistic writing courses, social media professionals, and ESP course developers.

**Keywords:** Online book reviews, fiction, multidimensional analysis, linguistic variation.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The online book review is defined as an opinion-expressing form of literary criticism (Roche, Hooffacker & Meier, 2013). The online book review is related to the practice of literary criticism by discussing new publications and specialized journalistic forms of reviewing. Online book reviews as a user-generated form of literary criticism that takes place online (cited in, Kutzner, Schoormann, & Knackstedt, 2020). So, online reviews are more objective and

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the given information tends to be more authentic than privately generated reviews.

For almost 2000 years, reviewing practices have had a crucial role within the academic landscape (Orteza y Miranda, 1996), and it emerged as a modern genre in the West, in the mid-17th century. In academia, book reviews are the most important realization of academic knowledge for high social accomplishment that involved cultural activity and ideology. Larregue, Mongeon, Warren, Sugimoto, and Lariviee (2019) consider book reviews as a vector for the dissemination and evaluation of scientific knowledge, and it also determines the "geography of thoughts" (Nisbett, 2003).

Within the academic review genre, reviewing books has received enormous interest in the recent past. The importance of the book review genre in academic and non-academic life can be realized in a way that it reports the ideas of an author, so that, the reviewer can build an evaluative discourse (Diani, 2009). The book review genre contributes to new knowledge construction in a particular academic discipline that is evaluated by professional and expert writers. On the other hand, the book review genre is fundamentally communicative in nature. It means that book reviews also function to build interaction between the reviewer and the reviewee. The book review genre is also known as critical review (Valor, 2000). Critical review is a type of discourse that involves information, description, and evaluation. Book review functions to inform the prospective reader regarding the content and structure of newly published books it is professionally assessed by the critics.

There is extensive literature from past studies that maintains its importance. The book review genre has been investigated from different perspectives. In academic review genres, the book review genre is known as noteworthy sub-genre of academic writing. Book reviews have been foci of research during the past three decades from structural analysis i.e., rhetorical patterns (Motta-Roth, 1998; De Carvalho, 2001; Suarez & Moreno, 2008; Shahnaz, 2018). Gender-based and disciplinary variation has also been studied by Romer (2005), Tse and Hyland (2006), D'Angelo (2008). In past studies, little attention has been given to the co-occurring linguistic feature analysis of book review registers. Past studies on linguistics have methodological issues i.e., they either focus on generic structure or individual linguistic features. However, the current research has established its findings based on specific distributional patterns of co-occurring linguistic features and their communicative functions across three different mediums in Pakistani online book reviews. For this purpose, the multidimensional (MD) approach is considered to be the best analytical approach.

The present study fills the niche by employing multidimensional analysis as empirical framework in order to explore linguistic variation exist among the Pakistani online fiction book reviews across three mediums on

Biber's 1988. Due to the methodological inadequacies in the past researches, the investigated findings have limited significance mainly for following reason: First of all, findings are based on distribution of individual the linguistic features. Secondly, linguistic analysis is not attempted in a way that is comparable to different linguistic dimensions. The idea of dimension has not been acknowledged by the past studies to explore linguistic variation for register analysis. As Biber (1988, p.55) illustrated the idea of dimension as "dimensions are bundles of linguistic features that co-occur in texts because they work together to mark some common underlying function". The main objective of this current research is to conduct a linguistic analysis of Pakistani online fiction book reviews on statistical Biber (1988) MD analysis approach. The present research answers the following question:

- To what extent the linguistic differences will be found among the Pakistani online fiction book reviews associated with their linguistic choices across Biber's (1988) set of textual dimensions?

## **2. Literature Review**

The recent popularity of the online review genre has given rise to research interests in this digital genre, which includes online book reviews (Chik, 2017; Chik & Taboada, 2020; Kutzner, Schoormann & Knackstedt, 2020), hotel reviews, online movie reviews (Taboada, 2011; De Jong, 2013) sentiment analysis (Taboada, 2016) and product and services (Skalicky, 2013; Vasquez, 2014). One of the practical reasons for expanding the research scope on online reviews is due to the scholarly evaluation of highly specialized topics in specific fields to share their judgments and opinions publicly of products and services. In past studies, little attention has been given on the linguistic feature analysis of book review register. Only fewer studies have been found that attempted to investigate distribution of individual linguistic features.

Most of the past studies investigated generic structure of book reviews on move level from the Swalesian tradition. Motta-Roth (1998) study may be considered as pioneer study of academic book reviews from different disciplines i.e., economics, chemistry and linguistics examined. The outcomes of the study suggested a framework to investigate the rhetorical organization of book reviews by proposing four major and eleven sub- functions. The findings of Motta-Roth's work related to rhetorical organization of academic book reviews were supported by other researchers like Gea Valor (2000), De Carvalho (2001), Suarez & Moreno (2008), Ali (2016). Findings of these studies show that there are no major differences, either cross-disciplinary or cross-linguistically, in the basic rhetorical structure of book reviews. This evidence clearly supports the claim that book review as a distinctive genre. On the contrary, the results obtained by Ali (2016) identified that Arab reviewers use additional sub-moves that are not used by other researchers and Arab review writers summarize uncritically. Similarly, Ulum (2016) investigated

different types of moves in ESP book reviews. A sample of 12 book reviews has been collected from prestigious academic journals. He identified four specific moves i.e., defining the general topic of the book, providing a general view of the organization of the book, providing focused evaluation, finding the book useful. Several moves were not found in some book reviews. Book reviews are also studied from a pragmatic perspective.

The current paper explores the systematic linguistic practices in the writings of male and female book reviewers in Pakistani online book reviews. Shedding light on the previous studies, it has been noticed that numerous studies have been conducted on gender identity and authority (Angelo, 2008), use of meta-discourse markers in three contrasting disciplines book reviews (sociology, philosophy, and biology) by male and females (Tse & Hyland, 2006), gender and professional identity (Tse & Hyland, 2008). Romer (2005) compiled a corpus Book Reviews in Linguistics Corpus (BRILC). The findings showed that males and females differ significantly in their critical adjectives and hedging devices adopted as politeness strategies. Based on a limited data set and few linguistic features, these findings cannot be over-generalized.

Birhan (2021) studied meta-discourse patterns in three academic disciplines. The data findings revealed that all disciplines employed interactional and interactive metadiscourse markers in which English discipline contained maximum meta-discourse devices as compared to computer and Education.

Gender-based study on book reviews has been new focus of register analysis. Angelo (2008) studied discrepancies in the writings of English book reviews of both genders. The findings were in line with Tse and Hyland (2006) and confirmed that linguistic variation is linked with genders and especially with specific disciplinary culture. Hyland and Tse (2006) focused on the less studied factor i.e., gender in published academic writing. He analyzed the corpus of book reviews of three academic disciplines, that is, biology, philosophy, sociology. The findings confirmed that there is no one to one relation between language and gender. Similarly, academic discourse is highly influenced by gender when it is considered within specific disciplinary affiliation i.e., the difference in rhetorical choices of male and female in the discipline of sociology, philosophy, and biology.

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate mitigation strategies by employing appraisal framework by Hyland and Diana (2009), Etaywe (2017), Itakura and Tsui (2011), Diani (2017), Qian (2018), Nayernia and Ashouri (2018). The findings of the researches demonstrate more quantitative analysis and lesser on qualitative interpretation to show how evaluative language works in academic book reviews.

In Pakistan context, book review genre has received less attention, only handful of researches has been conducted. Shahnaz (2018) investigated online Pakistani newspaper book reviews from the perspective of move analysis. Findings significantly revealed that all the moves were present with varied

percentage. Thus, the lack of statistical findings and relying on qualitative interpretations do not give deep insight into how communicative functions are varied cross-culturally due to differences in lexico-grammatical features. Another comparative study was conducted by Malik, Manzoor, Jamshaid (2020) to explore informational, explicit and abstract dimension scores in total 290 online book and film reviews by employing MD analysis. The findings of the study revealed that book and films reviews have not significant differences on three dimension values. Due to small data set and findings based on only three dimension values it is not enough to generalize linguistic variation in book reviews and film reviews. Qasim and Shakir (2016) conducted a study on limited corpus of 200 fiction and non-fiction book blurbs by employing 1988 MD. Latif, Ali and Shakir (2022) explores the gender based linguistic differences in short stories, written for adults and children published in Pakistani English magazines in 300 samples (150 children and 150 adults) on the second dimension of Biber's (1988) study. The findings revealed that children short stories are more narrative than adults. The comparative study also showed that males short story writers are more narrative than females. Moreover, up till now, no single research has been conducted on Pakistani online fiction book reviews across three different mediums to explore review registers both qualitatively and quantitatively simultaneously.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Corpus Design**

For the current study, the first step is to build a representative specialized corpus of Pakistani online fiction book reviews. To make corpus reliable, a comprehensive list of freely accessible archives of Pakistani e-newspaper was searched. The data of fiction book reviews were retrieved from six e-newspaper websites, online magazines and online academic journals. The reason behind selecting online reviews from e-newspaper sources was that a greater number of book reviews were published on websites. For the current study, the researcher included only Pakistani online fiction book reviews from Pakistani e-newspaper, magazines and academic journals websites.

Selection of the Pakistani online fiction book reviews has been based on a set of criteria to study linguistic variation in corpora. The following are the controlling factors that were considered during data sampling:

- Only single-authored written book reviews were added.
- No book commentaries, book inauguration, book notes, and author interviews were included.
- All the included book reviews were written by different authors to avoid biases.
- Unnamed book reviews were not added.
- Reviews written by the author himself were not included.
- Only Pakistan-based reviewers were included.

The sampled data for the present study were collected from e-newspaper websites spanning over the years from beginning of 2011 to 2022. While corpus compilation, the text length of book reviews was varied. Only those texts were saved that contained approximately 100 words or longer than 100 words. The book reviews were reviewed and Each file was saved with distinct code. Each file code denotes its source of data source, gender, sub-categories by using capital letters and serial number. For instance, NPFN01 (newspaper fiction female novel 01). Additionally, separate meta-file on excel has been maintained in which all relevant details during data collection i.e., reviewers' name, book name, reviewers' profession, data of publication and hypertext link has been saved for record.

### 3.2 Data Analysis Procedure

For data analysis, the present study employed MD approach postulated by Biber (1988) to investigate register variation.

MD approach of register variation synthesizes both qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques. The quantitative analysis explores textual relations between different registers based on the co-occurrence of linguistic features. Qualitative analysis requires interpreting co-occurring linguistic features on their underlying communicative functions. In previous studies on book reviews, the analysis was based on individual linguistic features and also insufficient to summarize the comparative approach of register variation (Biber & Conrad, 2009). For data tagging, the corpus of the Pakistani online fiction book reviews tagged by Jesse Egbert at North Arizona University, U.S.A. through Biber (1988) tagger on five textual dimensions. After tagging, the next step was to compute raw frequencies of linguistic features and covert it to normalized frequencies. The frequency counts normalized according to the standard set by Biber (1988). This purpose of converting into normalized is to avoid error due to variation in text length and it also makes comparisons possible across texts. This process of normalization was also completed by using Biber's tag count program. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) has been conducted for simultaneously comparing means of dimensions across three different mediums.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

Table 4.1 given below presents Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) results to indicate the statistically significant differences across three mediums (academic journal, magazine, newspaper) of Pakistani online fiction book reviews.

**Table 4.1**  
*Multivariate Tests<sup>a</sup>*

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
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<b>Intercept</b>	Pillai's Trace	.588	121.194 <sup>b</sup>	5.000	425.000	.000	.588
	Wilks' Lambda	.412	121.194 <sup>b</sup>	5.000	425.000	.000	.588
	Hotelling's Trace	1.426	121.194 <sup>b</sup>	5.000	425.000	.000	.588
	Roy's Largest Root	1.426	121.194 <sup>b</sup>	5.000	425.000	.000	.588
<b>Medium</b>	Pillai's Trace	.036	1.583	10.000	852.000	.107	.018
	Wilks' Lambda	.964	1.586 <sup>b</sup>	10.000	850.000	.106	.018
	Hotelling's Trace	.037	1.588	10.000	848.000	.105	.018
	Roy's Largest Root	.031	2.618 <sup>c</sup>	5.000	426.000	.024	.030
	<b>Fiction</b>	Pillai's Trace	.000	. <sup>b</sup>	.000	.000	.
	Wilks' Lambda	1.000	. <sup>b</sup>	.000	427.000	.	.
	Hotelling's Trace	.000	. <sup>b</sup>	.000	2.000	.	.
	Roy's Largest Root	.000	.000 <sup>b</sup>	5.000	424.000	1.000	.000
<b>Medium Fiction</b>	*Pillai's Trace	.000	. <sup>b</sup>	.000	.000	.	.
	Wilks' Lambda	1.000	. <sup>b</sup>	.000	427.000	.	.
	Hotelling's Trace	.000	. <sup>b</sup>	.000	2.000	.	.
	Roy's Largest Root	.000	.000 <sup>b</sup>	5.000	424.000	1.000	.000

a. Design: Intercept + Medium + Fiction + Medium \* Fiction

b. Exact statistic

c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.

**Interpretation:** The column of real interest is the one containing the non-significance values of the F-ratios. For the data, Pillai's trace ( $p=0.18$ ), Wilks's lambda ( $p=.018$ ), Hotelling's trace ( $p>.001$ ) and Roy's largest root ( $p>.001$ ) all reach the criterion for non-significant at the .05 level.

**Table 4.2**

*MANOVA Analysis to Compare Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews Across Three Mediums*

Dependent Variable	(I) Medium	(J) Medium	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. <sup>b</sup>	95% Confidence Interval for Difference <sup>b</sup>	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Dimension 1 score	Journal	Magazine	-.460	1.964	.994	-5.169	4.249
		Newspaper	-2.643	1.901	.418	-7.200	1.914
	Magazine	Journal	.460	1.964	.994	-4.249	5.169
		Newspaper	-2.183*	.717	.007	-3.902	-.464
	Newspaper	Journal	2.643	1.901	.418	-1.914	7.200
		Magazine	2.183*	.717	.007	.464	3.902
Dimension 2 score	Journal	Magazine	-.324	.701	.955	-2.006	1.357
		Newspaper	-.634	.679	.726	-2.261	.993
	Magazine	Journal	.324	.701	.955	-1.357	2.006
		Newspaper	-.310	.256	.538	-.923	.304
	Newspaper	Journal	.634	.679	.726	-.993	2.261
		Magazine	.310	.256	.538	-.304	.923
Dimension 3 score	Journal	Magazine	.932	.824	.592	-1.042	2.907
		Newspaper	1.232	.797	.326	-.679	3.142
	Magazine	Journal	-.932	.824	.592	-2.907	1.042
		Newspaper	.299	.301	.686	-.422	1.020
	Newspaper	Journal	-1.232	.797	.326	-3.142	.679
		Magazine	-.299	.301	.686	-1.020	.422
Dimension 4 score	Journal	Magazine	.449	.699	.890	-1.226	2.123
		Newspaper	.054	.676	1.000	-1.567	1.674
	Magazine	Journal	-.449	.699	.890	-2.123	1.226
		Newspaper	-.395	.255	.323	-1.006	.216
	Newspaper	Journal	-.054	.676	1.000	-1.674	1.567
		Magazine	.395	.255	.323	-.216	1.006
Dimension 5 score	Journal	Magazine	.530	.730	.850	-1.220	2.280
		Newspaper	.333	.707	.953	-1.361	2.026
	Magazine	Journal	-.530	.730	.850	-2.280	1.220
		Newspaper	-.197	.267	.842	-.836	.441
	Newspaper	Journal	-.333	.707	.953	-2.026	1.361
		Magazine	.197	.267	.842	-.441	.836

\*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Sidak.

#### **4.1 Comparative Analysis of Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews Across Three Mediums on D1**

The first dimension is labelled as 'involved vs. informational production'. On D1, the comparison across three mediums (table 4.2) indicated non-significant results among Pakistani online fiction book reviews of academic journal with respect to online fiction magazine and newspaper book reviews. The associated sig. value is (0.994) and (0.418) which showed



no difference on D1. While comparing online fiction magazine with newspaper book reviews, the associated sig. value is (.007) which showed that online fiction magazine and newspaper book reviews have been different from each other on D1. In pairwise comparison of Pakistani online fiction academic journal and newspaper book reviews have mean score (-2.643). While comparing online fiction magazine and newspaper book reviews having mean score (-2.183) which depicts that Pakistani online fiction book reviews of newspaper are more informational. Pakistani online fiction academic journal and magazine book reviews having mean score (-0.460).

The informational stance in Pakistani online fiction book reviews of newspaper have been found as non-interactive style amongst other mediums. However, comparing the current findings with the study of Qasim and Shakir (2020) revealed that Pakistani book blurbs are also less informational by having -19.01 score on D1. The linguistic features in Pakistani online fiction book reviews across three mediums reside on D1 with negative loadings are nouns, attributive adjectives, average word length and prepositions and all these linguistic features are directly proportional to densely packed information and lexical specificity. Attributive adjectives generally have a capacity to condense the information and present it precisely (Qasim & Shakir, 2020). It also plays the function of “careful integration of information” (Biber, 1988, p. 104) which is not possible without proper planning and revision (Biber & Conrad, 2005) especially in book review writing. Online book reviews register a written discourse that produce under formal conditions and it constitutes as highly information production text. The current findings of fiction book reviews on D1 supports the findings of Song, Qu, Zhu, Wang, Zhang (2021) who investigated 20 Mandarin Chinese spoken and written registers found that press reviews register located on negative polarity have rich vocabulary, substantial nouns, attributive adjectives imply densely informative discourse, carefully elaborated and non-interactive.

The sample extract (see appendix) highlights how Pakistani online fiction book reviews of three mediums characteristic of being informational discourse. The informational features in the below text excerpts JNF06, JFMP01, MGFMN20, NPFSS22 (see appendix) are bold.

The above text excerpts are taken from fiction book reviews from newspaper, magazine and academic journals. These three excerpts exhibit the high occurrence of nouns, attributive adjectives and prepositions. These findings of D1 are parallel to Azher and Mahmood (2016) findings of Pakistani research articles. The linguistic feature nouns accumulatively serve the purpose of densely pack with information in the text to introduce the characters or theme of the book in the opening section of book reviews. Nouns emphasize to transmit information concisely and precisely, not on effective or

interactive concerns (Biber & Conrad, 2005). In the above extracts adjectives (*unique, simplistic, melodious, old, inspirational, Afghan, gripping, newlywed, young, in laws*) modify nouns (*attempt, teacher, city, teacher, bride, house*) provides specific details about the characters. This pre-modification of adjectives conveys more precise and vivid image to the readers of the nouns. Attributive adjectives are the primary marker of evaluation (Ehret and Taboada, 2019). Online fiction book reviews are characterized by the adjective-noun sequence that reflects the reviewer's subjective evaluation or opinion on the noun. Therefore, it can be concluded that Pakistani fiction book reviewers.

#### **4.2 Comparative Analysis of Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews Across Three Mediums on D2**

The second dimension is labelled as 'narrative vs. non-narrative concerns'. On D2, according to table (4.2) the comparison across three mediums, it is observed that there is no significant statistical difference observed among Pakistani online fiction book reviews of three mediums. The significance value of Pakistani online academic journal fiction book reviews with respect to online fiction magazine is (.955) and newspaper book reviews (.726) shows no significant difference on D2. Similarly, Pakistani online fiction book reviews of magazine with respect to online academic journal book reviews and it remains insignificant respect to newspaper (.538). The comparison of online newspaper fiction book reviews shows no significance with respect online fiction academic journal (-.634) and magazine book reviews (.310). In pairwise comparison of online fiction academic journal and newspaper book reviews have mean score (-0.634), online fiction newspaper book reviews have been found non-narrative in nature than online fiction academic journal book reviews. The mean score of online fiction academic journal and magazine book reviews is (-0.324). While online fiction magazine and newspaper book reviews have mean score (-3.10) The mean values across three mediums depicts that Pakistani online fiction book reviews are on non-narrative concerns on D2.

On D2, it has set of co-occurring linguistic features like present tense verbs, past participle WHIZ deletions, attributive adjectives. Although, all the linguistic features are not appeared in noticeable frequency on this dimension, yet it marks as non-narrative concerns. Due to the grouping of these features Pakistani online fiction book reviews are characterized as descriptive, explanatory and expository rather than 'event oriented'. Hence, they are less narrative. The below table illustrates the mean score of linguistic features of fiction book reviews from three different mediums. The non-narrative features are bold in the text excerpts MGFFN26 and NPFFN38 (see appendix).

The text excerpts show that Pakistani online magazine, newspaper fiction book reviews are descriptive in nature. In the present findings attributive adjectives are one the linguistic feature among three that have highest mean

score in three mediums. Attributive adjectives like *calm*, *philosophically interesting*, *slightly implausible*, *unclear*, *strong methodological*, *ancient* illustrate dense description about Noor's conversation who is animate referent in this text. For instance, the word 'calm' is pre-modified by *strangely* which describes Noor's degree of calmness while on her trip. Similarly, the word 'philosophically interesting' provides a vivid description about Noor's conversation with that man that has philosophical aspect. The attributive adjective 'unclear' provides understanding to reader about what Noor wants from life. The dense presence of attributive adjectives gives elaborated information of descriptive discourse. Past Participle WHIZ deletion usually modify noun and elaborating the nominal description (Biber, 1988, p.105). The present tense refers to the situations or ongoing actions that happens in the present time having truth value. In the above examples, present tense verbs like *remains*, *is*, *wants*, *form*, *lies*, *loves* express fact statement and current state of understanding. The present verb 'remains' describes Noor's ongoing state of calmness. Similarly, the verb 'knows' explains Okorafor's knowledge that she possesses and her understanding of city's strength in the present. The current findings of Pakistani online fiction book reviews.

#### **4.3 Comparative Analysis of Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews Across Three Mediums on D3**

The third dimension is labelled as 'explicit vs. situation dependent reference'. On dimension 3, the comparison (table 4.2) shows that there lies no significant difference among Pakistani online fiction book reviews of newspaper, magazine and academic journal. While comparing results of online fiction academic journal book reviews with respect to online magazine book reviews (.592) and online newspaper book reviews (.326), the results showed no significant differences across three mediums. Similarly, there is no observable difference among online magazine book reviews with respect to online newspaper book reviews (.686). In pairwise comparison, the mean score of online fiction academic journal and newspaper book reviews (1.232). The mean score of online fiction academic journal and magazine book reviews (0.932) and comparing online fiction magazine and newspaper book reviews have mean score (0.299). The mean score value across three mediums have profoundly inclined towards situation-dependent reference on D3.

On D3, the linguistic features include Wh-relative clauses on object positions, pied piping constructions, Wh-relative clauses subject positions, prepositional coordination and nominalization. Wh-relative clauses are bold, Pied piping constructions are italicized, phrasal coordination is underlined and nominalizations are underlined and bold in the text excerpts JFFN05, MGFFSS02 and NPFFN57 (see appendix).

In these excerpts, the positive co-occurrence of Wh-relative clause on subject position, Wh-relative clause on object position, Pied-piping construction, Phrasal coordination and nominalization deployed in Pakistani

online magazine, newspaper fiction book reviews exhibit the characteristics of explicit/elaborated references. In the above examples, it shows how greatly Pakistani online fiction book reviews relies on phrasal coordination, nominalization and Wh relative clause at subject position with high mean scores. However, the mean score of Wh-relative clause at the object position and pied-piping construction are comparatively minimum.

The following examples from the corpus of Pakistani online fiction book reviews indicates that the frequent use of phrasal coordination and Wh-relative clause at subject position are mainly used for the specific and exact identification of referents explicitly like *a Tamil boy who is being mercilessly bullied and humiliated by a gang of classmates in a Colombo car park*. The reason for referring subject (*a Tamil boy*) through Wh-relative clause for being elaborated and explicit to give information to the readers who have minimum knowledge about the main character of the story for their clarity. Conrad (1996, p.184) stated that Wh-clauses are mainly helpful in giving elaborated information as “they facilitate the packing of information into complex noun phrases”.

Nominalization are generally referring to larger issues like *rootlessness and cultural displacement*. The frequency of phrasal coordination and nominalization is higher in academic journals as compared to newspaper and magazine fiction book reviews. Nominalization is a prominent feature of academic written register (Azher & Mahmood, 2016). The results obtained by Conrad (1996) on academic discourse and Azher, Ali and Mahmood (2020) on sections of research articles are aligned with current findings where nominalization add plenty of information in few words and used to integrate the information in an explicit manner. While comparing the results of Pakistani online fiction book reviews with book blurbs (Shehla & Shakir, 2020), it is interestingly found that results for book blurbs show proximity to Pakistani online fiction book reviews on D3 of 88 MD analysis.

#### **4.4 Comparative Analysis of Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews Across Three Mediums on D4**

The fourth dimension is labelled as “overt expression of persuasion”. According to table (4.2) the statistical analysis of Pakistani online fiction book reviews across three mediums on D4, it is observed that there is no significant statistical difference observed mean scores across online book reviews of three mediums. The significance value of online fiction academic journal book reviews with respect to online fiction magazine (0.890) and newspaper book reviews (1.00) shows no significant differences on D4. Similarly, comparing magazine with online newspaper book reviews (0.323) with no significant difference. In pairwise comparison of Pakistani online fiction book reviews of academic journal and newspaper have mean score (0.54). Pakistani online academic journal book reviews and online magazine book reviews have mean score (0.449) while magazine and newspaper have mean score (0.395). The

mean scores depict that Pakistani online fiction book reviews across three mediums have elements of persuasion on D4.

On D4, it has positive co-occurring linguistic features like infinitives, prediction modals, possibility modals, necessity models, suasive verbs, conditional subordination and split auxiliaries. The current findings showed that linguistic features are appeared in low positive frequency except to-infinitive on this dimension 4. It makes Pakistani online fiction book reviews as not overtly persuasive. The text excerpts JFFN02, MGFMSS06 and NPFMMYS05 (see appendix) bold linguistic features that indicate non-persuasive linguistic features.

From the sample text files, the positive co-occurring features are infinitives (*to a frightening end, to those*), suasive verbs (*recommend*), split auxiliary (*to accept, to stop*), prediction modals (*might*), possibility modals (*can*), necessity modals (*should*). All these linguistic features serve the purpose of presenting direct information regarding content of the book without logical argumentation. The low occurrences of linguistic features also indicate that Pakistani fiction review writers neither try to convince the readers nor create argumentation. These findings show closeness with advertising text (Shakir, 2013) and book blurbs (Qasim & Shakir, 2020) research findings. The use of *should, can, may* indicate necessity/obligation. The possibility modals are used in the text to present different perspectives. The verb *recommend* indicates author's own intention rather than presenting alternate point of views for persuading readers. Like press reviews (Biber, 1988) Pakistani online fiction book reviewers presents opinionated discourse rather persuasive. This also depicts that Pakistani online fiction book reviewers hold factual and non-persuasive writing style and these results are quite unlike of the Pakistani academic writing (Azher & Mehmood, 2016).

#### **4.5 Comparative Analysis of Pakistani Online Fiction Book Reviews Across Three Mediums on D5**

The fifth dimension is labelled as 'impersonal/abstract versus non-impersonal/ non-abstract information'. According to table (4.2) the statistical analysis of Pakistani online fiction book reviews across three mediums on D5, it is observed that there is no significant statistical difference in mean scores of three mediums. The significance value of online academic journal fiction book reviews with respect to online fiction magazine is (-1.220) and newspaper book reviews (-1.361) shows no significant differences on D5. Similarly, the comparison of online fiction magazine with respect to newspaper book reviews (-.836). All these values are greater than 0.05, so there is no difference across three mediums. In pairwise comparison of Pakistani online fiction academic journal and magazine book reviews having mean score (.530). Online fiction book reviews of academic journal and newspaper have mean score (.333). On the other hand, online fiction magazine and newspaper book

reviews have mean score (.197) which display its least impersonal style. All these mediums on Dimension 5 shows impersonality in Pakistani online fiction book reviews. The representative features include agentless passives, by-passives, past participial WHIZ deletions and past participial clauses. adverbial clauses and conjuncts also support agentless passives and by-passives to indicate impersonal writings. The text excerpts JFFN01, MGFFSS 20 and NPFMN12 (see appendix) bold linguistic features indicate impersonal style/abstract focus.

In these sample text files, the representative linguistic features on this dimension are predicate, agentless passives, conjunctions and be as a main verb attributes the whole discourse impersonal. Pakistani online fiction book reviews displayed low score on positive polarity. The texts showed impersonal focus characteristics. If online fiction book reviews compared with Biber's (1988) findings, the online fiction book reviews turned out highly personal as compared to face to face conversation. The findings are similar to book blurbs (Qasim & Shakir, 2020). The reason of having low frequency of personal linguistics features refers that online fiction book reviews have informational production. On D1, online fiction book reviews indicated lack of involved and interactive feature and more inclined towards integration of information. The use of conjunctions in the above examples shows cohesion in the texts. Moreover, less use of passives indicates less impersonal stance.

#### 4. Conclusions

On D1, the Pakistani online fiction book reviews register has been found highly informative along Biber (1988) textual dimension. This shows that both Pakistani online fiction book reviewers use nouns, prepositions and attributive adjectives extensively to convey more technical information. On D2, Pakistani online fiction book reviews have characteristics of non-narrative discourse. The prevalent linguistic features like attributive adjectives and present tense makes the writing style more descriptive rather than event-oriented. These linguistic features utilized by male and females characterizes Pakistani book reviews as descriptive in nature. On D3, results revealed that Pakistani online book reviews present explicit discourse by using Wh clauses on subjective and objective position and phrasal coordination to add details, accurate reference, and further openness in book review discourse. On D4, the results reported that non-persuasive style has adopted by Pakistani fiction book reviewers. This means that Pakistani fiction book review writers lack overt expression of argumentation. This characteristic of the non-persuasion writing style is due to the lack of using persuasive verbs, prediction and necessity modals, and conditional subordination which are the indicators of reader persuasion. This non-persuasion style in academic discourse has been found in many Pakistani researches. As book review registers play a pivotal role in

disseminating knowledge then the reviewer must come up with strong claims rather than merely present information in writing reviews. On D5, Pakistani online fiction book reviews used an overall impersonal style in the production of review discourse.

## 5. Implications

The current findings will be of great importance for ESP practitioners, academic writing courses, and syllabi designers by giving them practical insights regarding the usage of linguistic features while evaluating text more critically for authorial identity and new knowledge construction.

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## Appendix

### Files and Their Codes

#### Sample File No: JNF 06

It is a **unique attempt** to use the genre of **Urdu novel** to deal **with the themes of** education, politics, and justice. The **protagonist**, Professor **Roy**, is an **inspirational teacher** who touches the **lives of students** and becomes an **eternal source** of motivation for them. The **story** opens with **Professor Roy's** returning **to his old city of work** where he had taught in a **well-known education college** called **Professional Teacher College (PTC)**.

#### Sample File No: JFMP 01

**Heer Ranjha** reads **with meticulous and punctilious** dealings of **mysticism and Sufism** which is depicted **in verse form**. The **simplistic and melodious** composition, in addition **to the subtlety and delicacy of Sindhi language**, strikes to the **readers' minds and hearts** which affect them **emotionally and spiritually**.

#### Sample File No: MGFMN 20

The **fast paced** narrative of the **book** alternates **between Amjad's personal life** and the **tales of** destruction visited **upon the Afghan people**. The **reader** introduced **to a host of characters** both **fictional and historical**.

#### Sample File No: NPFFSS 25

The **subject at hand** is how the **lives of women** are affected **by militants** and one of the more **gripping** stories in **Kalita's** collection is the **tale of a family** whose **son** becomes radicalized and joins a **band of local insurgents**. A **young woman** arrives **at her in-laws house** as a **newlywed bride** only to discover that her **brother-in-law** is acting **strange by** distancing himself **from the rest of the family**. **With time** the **brother-in-law's** connection to **militants** comes **to light** and the **family** is violently ostracized **by** the community they live in.

#### Sample File No: MGFFN 26

She **remains** strangely calm when on a trip to Malacca Malaysia. She **encounters** one of the men **involved** in the dacoity. Noor's conversation with this man **is philosophically interesting**. But in terms of the backstory **slightly implausible**. It is also **unclear** exactly what Noor **wants** from life.

**Sample File No: NPFN38**

Lagoon **is** both socio-politically and environmentally **aware** without ever letting go of the **strong mythological** narratives that **form** the core of Nigerian culture. Okorafor may be looking to the future for the city she **loves** but she **knows** its strength **lies** in its ancient soul.

**Sample File No: JFFN05**

He describes the **frivolities and** lavishly life style of Turkish upper class people and their mania to westernize themselves without extremism not like a radical moralist **whose** didactic style makes the reader bore.

**Sample File No: MGFFSS02**

These characters are struggling to understand the world around them sure but their concerns about a **rootlessness and cultural displacement are** almost peripheral to their experiences. This offers a different view of migrant communities' people **who** are comfortable with living away from their home countries.

**Sample File No: NPFN57**

Jay uses his skills with the catapult to rescue **and** befriend Channa, a Tamil boy **who** is being mercilessly bullied **and** humiliated by a gang of classmates in a Colombo car park. Monica witnesses the incident **and** is sufficiently impressed by Jay that she permits Kairo to spend an increasing amount of time with him despite clarence's protests.

**Sample File No: JFFN02**

The novel clearly provides the reader with a poignant conclusion which makes one **ask** certain questions which are like is Mansab telling her readers that asserting an agency **can** lead to a frightening end? Or is she against the struggles of the suppressed people in the face of power? These are a few questions that **can** be answered differently by different readers in accordance with their set of beliefs. However, on the part of Mansab, she forces the readers **to ask** the unaskable questions such as the questions of faith and free will.

**Sample File no: MGFMS06**

He writes about what excites him and we should be happy and content with that highly **recommend** this book **to those** who **would** like **to read** Punjabi fiction. But are either reluctant or ashamed. Bashir's language is humorous, crisp, modern and it **should** resonate with those who like a good story.

**Sample File no: NPFMMYS05**

One was by a colleague, white and female who posted an article on social media titled “White People Are Cowards?” by Michael Harriot. Harriot toys with the idea whether white people are inherently evil or just coward in doing nothing **to stop** racism. What surprised me while browsing the comments in response to my colleague's post was the willingness **to accept** by most that they **might** indeed be possessed by an evil DNA. One should not take this literally **instead** this reflects how angry and sad even helpless some people feel in the current political milieu.

**Sample File No: JFFN01**

Baba is of the view that stealing is the greatest sin of all sins **while**\_OSUB all other sins are at variance with Baba does not like Amir's habits but still he is **happy**\_PRED that **Rahim Khan** understands him.

**Sample File No: MGFFSS 20**

Zaidi **is** very particular\_PRED in distinguishing his short fiction from jokes fables **and** parables.

In structure a mini-story may resemble a joke a scene **is** set, an event takes place but it ends with an unexpected outcome which makes the reader laugh.

**Sample File No: NPFMN12**

Varonksy who was wooing Kitty now yielded to the infatuation **caused** by Anna unpremeditatedly in a railway station when he showed up to receive his mother wherein Anna was also on board. Subsequently, after that encounter Count Varonksy jilts Kitty for Anna. Love here **is** mind-bogglingly impervious to arguments and reasons. Love here is mind-bogglingly **impervious** to arguments and reasons.