Adjectives and Modal Verbs Used in Horoscopes in Dawn Newspapers and their Impact on Readers: A Corpus-Assisted Study

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Abstract

Horoscope columns are among the permanent features of English Newspapers in Pakistan, especially the Dawn. The current study aims to analyze the use of adjectives and modal verbs in the horoscope columns published in the Dawn newspaper and their impact on the readers of these horoscope columns. This is a concurrent study comprising quantitative and qualitative data. The data for the first part are gathered from the official website of the Dawn Newspaper from March 04, 2024, till July 28, 2024. The data for the second part of the study are gathered with the help of a questionnaire from a purposive sample size of 20 males and females in equal proportion. Identification of adjectives and modal verbs is carried out with the help of the software Sketch Engine. The types of adjectives are categorized with the help of Classification Modal by Biber et al. (2002) whereas modal verbs are categorized with the help of the Dichotomy of Modal Verbs by Quirk and Greenbaum (2000). Systemic Functional Grammar by Halliday (1985) has been used to investigate the meanings of adjectives within a clause. The responses from participants have been categorized with the help of Thematic Analysis of Braun and Clarke (2014). The findings of the study have revealed that mainly positive adjectives and modal verbs of possibility and prediction are used. Furthermore, these adjectives impact the readers' emotions positively and the modal verbs mainly provide a sense of hope and control regarding the future.

Keywords: Horoscopes, Adjectives, Modal Verbs, Dawn, Corpus, Sketch Engine.

Introduction

A horoscope refers to the movement and positioning of the stars when we are born. According to astrological studies, the positioning of these stars at the time of our birth plays a vital role in determining our future as defined by the Collins Dictionary:

> The Horoscope provides a prophecy about the events that some people believe is going to be true in the future. The horoscope columns make people believe in these prophecies with the help of the use of language more specifically adjectives and modal verbs. Position of the stars is the basis of the horoscope. (2016, p. 1009)

Horoscopes are one of the permanently featured parts of major print media such as magazines and newspapers in the present times. Chang (2002) also finds out that horoscopes are published in print media like newspapers and magazines. So, these column(s) of horoscope appear in the print media permanently and attract the attention of its readers out and out.

Though horoscopes focus on multiple issues related to human existence in general, they also focus on the particular issues and concerns of human life. These issues entail love, luck, marriage, friendship, relationships, self-reflection, spending money, gaining self-control, fine and change, etc. Similarly, Zareva (2013) also notes that horoscopes mainly focus on the issues and concerns about the daily lives of humans. Hence, the prime focus of horoscopes is matters pertaining to daily routine matters and concerns of humans. As the focus of a horoscope is issues and concerns related to the daily lives of humans, the horoscope column(s) aim to flatter the reader(s). In the same vein, these horoscopes intend to provide predictions, give advice, reproach, and make the readers cautious. Further, these horoscopes aim to predict future events. McLoughlin (2000) rightly notes that horoscope texts aim to flatter the reader through their simple and attractive use of language.

Significance of Language

Language is a natural phenomenon. It performs several functions: expressing thoughts, expressing emotions, conveying messages, and carrying out communication. One

of the six functions of language is emotive: to express emotions (Garson 2019; Neander 2017). Similarly, dwelling upon the proper functions of language, Unnsteinsson (2022) puts forward that the proper function a language performs is nothing but communication. Another function language performs is to control the thought process of humans. Khawar et al. (2021) also observe that changes of thought processes and language are directly related.

Language and Human Psychology

It is a general perception that both the use and perception of language are directly connected to human psychology. When any person reads or listens to anything, it directly has an impact on his/her psychology. As stated by Chomsky (2014) when humans see the world through the lenses of language, their understanding and version of the world becomes completely different. Similarly, human emotions of positivity and negativity are also controlled by the use of language. Satpute and Lindquist (2021) observe the relationship between human emotions and language. Apart from having a direct relationship with human emotions, language also affects human psychology. As noted by Lindquist et al. (2015), language affects human psychology potentially.

Impact of Newspaper Language on Humans

There exists a strong connection between human psychology and media reporting. News items are also liable to present their ideologies as well as to influence human psychology. Zehra et al. (2020) observe that newspapers sometimes lack objectivity and present their ideologies through subjectivity in structures. The language used by media strongly affects humans. The lexical selection of these newspapers can greatly affect the masses in general and the readers in particular. Wilson (1995) observes that media language affects humans a great deal as it is the source of information for people. As media is a source of information and affects the readers, the choice of language becomes paramount. The current study aims to find out the use of adjectives and modal verbs used in the horoscope column(s) in the Dawn newspaper. Also, the current study endeavors to unearth the impact of these adjectives and modal verbs on the consumers of these horoscope articles with the help of corpus-assisted method.

Research Objectives

(i) To explicate the types of adjectives and modal verbs in horoscope columns in the Dawn newspaper.

(ii) To elucidate the impact of these adjectives and modal verbs on the readers of these horoscope columns

Research questions

(i) What types of adjectives and modal verbs does the Dawn newspaper use in horoscope columns?

(ii) How does the use of these adjectives and modal verbs in the Dawn newspaper impact its readers?

Literature Review

This section is going to give an overview of the past studies conducted on horoscopes and their impact on the readers. This will be further comprised of four subsections i.e. existing literature on horoscopes, use of adjectives, modal verbs, and corpus-based studies conducted on different parts of speech in media discourse.

Studies on Horoscope

As for the past studies conducted on horoscopes, Koka et al. (2023) carried out a corpus-based discourse analysis of the lexical bundles in horoscopes of selected English websites. They utilized the discourse stylistics method and found out that the lexical bundles used in the selected English websites had some new structural and functional traits in them.

Similarly, Surzhykova (2020) conducted a corpus-based study on constructive rhetoric organization and linguistic features of Russian and English in horoscopes of two different websites. With the help of the Framework of Move Analysis, the researcher found five typical moves that help form an archetypal series of horoscopes. Further, the findings of the study also discovered the process through which the horoscopes are prepared methodically.

Correspondingly, Khuhro et al. (2020) conducted a questionnaire-based study about the perception of university students about the horoscopes in mass media in Sindh, Pakistan. The study concluded that reading horoscopes makes them feel happy and relaxed.

In the same vein, Ragini (2019) accomplished modal-based research to investigate the relationship between the zodiac signs and the English learning knacks of students at the University level. With the help of Reid's Perceptual Style Questionnaire, the researcher found that a great relationship between the language learning attitude and the horoscope of the participants existed.

Likewise, Ling (2016) conducted a corpus-based study about the use of modal verbs in the horoscopes of magazines and their role as language learning material. The study indicated that these modal verbs prove to be suitable material for language learning.

Existing Literature on the Importance of Adjectives

This subsection contains a review of the studies of the past conducted on adjectives and their importance in English grammar. By its very definition, the adjective is a word that is used to modify a noun or to put it into simple words, an adjective gives more information about a noun.

Karunakaran and Ang (2023) conducted a concurrent study on types and functions of adjectives in the print media utilizing the classification framework model of Biber et al. (2002) and concluded that various classes of adjectives are used in newspaper headlines and the use of these adjectives show some kind of effect on the minds of the readers.

In the same way, Al-Issawi (2020) conducted a study on the treatment of adjectives in tourism websites and has concluded that adjectives have a great role in influencing the opinion of news consumers and drawing their importance to significant issues. She also noticed the use of evaluative and descriptive adjectives on websites of tourism in Jordan and observed that European websites make use of evaluative adjectives for promotion; however, more descriptive adjectives are used by Jordanian news on tourism websites. The study also showed the relationship between adjectives in the given discourse and the function of adjectives in directing the attention of the reader.

Faiz et al. (2018) conducted a study of the use of adjectives in Mohsin Hamid's novel "How to Get Filthy Rich in Asia" through the Lexical Category model presented by Leech and Short (1981). The results of the study divulged that the writer has used adjectives to influence the emotions of the readers regarding color and auditory features.

Likewise, Jitpranee (2017) has conducted a study for the investigation of the rhetorical organization of adjectives in science articles. The researcher utilized the adjective classification modal of Khamying (2007) and concluded that these science articles make use of adjectives to influence the readers' perception of the discourse.

Modal Auxiliaries through the Lens of Existing Literature

The use of modal auxiliaries is very problematic, tricky yet very important in English. Modal auxiliary verbs are paramount in English to perform various functions. According to Halliday (1970), modal auxiliaries serve as a method through which it becomes possible for the speakers to take up a viewpoint on an incident and interfere in it. Similarly, Quirk et al. (1985) stated that modality is the speaker's decision on the authenticity of the topic. In the same vein, Radford et al. (1999) opined that auxiliaries are placed just before lexical verbs to perform different semantic functions. Correspondingly, Huddleston and Pullum (2005) stated that modality is the decision the speaker makes about the "Possibility" and "necessity" of the subject(s).

Modal auxiliaries are generally divided into two main categories: central auxiliaries and marginal auxiliaries (Biber, et al. 2002; Kennedy, 2002). Central auxiliaries entail, *will, would, can, could, may, might, should, shall, and must*, whereas, marginal auxiliaries include *need, need to, used to, and ought to* which sometimes perform the function of the main verb and sometimes that of the auxiliary. Leech (1987) asserted that to express ideas related to free will, obligations, purpose, understanding, and opinions both in writing and speaking, the modal verbs are key. The use of modality has been a tool of newspaper media to influence the opinion of the readers regarding certain social issues. The use of modality is used to influence the readers of the newspaper media.

Kenneth and Odhiambo (2020) conducted a corpus-driven study to demonstrate the utility of modal verbs in the English newspaper reporting on COVID-19 in Kenya. Their

findings concluded that the newspapers made excessive use of modal verbs of possibility, obligation, necessity, and prediction.

Sadia and Ghani (2019) conducted a corpus-based study on the employment of modal verbs in the editorials of two Pakistani Newspapers: *the Dawn and the News.* The focus of the study was to see how modal verbs are used to manipulate the opinion of the readers towards particular issues. The findings revealed that both the editorials prioritized predicative modal verbs over other types of modal auxiliary verbs.

Similarly, Ahmad et al. (2019) conducted a research study to investigate the use of modal verbs in selected Pakistani newspaper editorials as the personal stance marker of these editorials. The study was focused on examining the use of model verbs for making personal stances. The findings demonstrated that the said editorials had taken use of different modal verbs to realize both personal and institutional judgment. Moreover, the opinions of the readers were manipulated against or in favor with the help of the use of modality. The domino effects showed that the editorials used the prediction model (will and would) more expansively which marked that prediction was the key feature of these editorials. The results showed that the said editorials may express their bias through the use of modality.

Likewise, Yang (2018) conducted a corpus-based study on the use of modal verbs in the academic writing of Chinese learners and professional corpora. The results indicated that the learners use more modal verbs compared to the professional writers. The learners were found to have used the modal verbs of ability and prediction (will, can, and would). However, the learners did not use the modal of prediction (may) excessively.

Accordingly, Ling (2016) performed a corpus-based research study to analyze the frequency of modality used in the horoscopes, of women's magazines. AntConc, a computer-based software was used to accomplish the data analysis. The findings showed that these magazines used modals of possibility (will) and prediction (may) more excessively whereas modal verbs (must and should) of obligation and necessity were the least used ones.

Corpus Studies on Different Parts of Speech in Discourse

Amjad et al. (2023) carried out a corpus-based study to investigate the occurrence of nouns in articles of business in two leading English newspapers in Pakistan. The data analysis was carried out with the help of AntConc. The upshots of the research revealed that out of the targeted 45 top nouns in the list, the noun 'tax' was used at a maximum frequency of 477 times. However, the name of the only politician to have occurred is Imran Khan_ the PTI chairman.

Likewise, Ahmad & Jami (2023) completed a corpus-based study investigating the use of metaphor in the legal discourse of Pakistan. The results of this mixed method research study indicated that 13.60% metaphors are used which are mostly co-texted with prepositions, nouns, and verbs. In the same vein, Batool et al. (2022) accomplished a corpus-based study to investigate the frequency of the conceptualization of the content words in children with autism. The findings showed that these children seem inclined to the use of nouns and adjectives more than verbs. Similarly, Ihsan et al. (2019) in their study on the use of verbs of citation in different research works through sentiment analysis techniques concluded that chiefly the verbs of citations entail three categories, i.e. positive, negative, and neutral.

Based on a small review of the literature conducted, as far as the researchers have seen, there are several studies conducted to investigate the types and functions of both adjectives and modal auxiliary verbs in newspapers and literature separately. Various studies have been conducted to analyze the attitude of the newspapers to sway the attitude of the readers through the use of modality. The use of modal auxiliary verbs has also been investigated in the horoscope as a material for English language learning. Based on the small data sets reviewed, the researchers have found that no study has been conducted on the types of adjectives and modal verbs used in the horoscope together and the impact of these adjectives and modal verbs on the readers of that discourse. Hence, this study intends to fill the existing knowledge gap together with the gap of the contexts in which the earlier studies have been conducted.

Methodology

This study has used both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms for the interpretation of collected data. The results of the quantitative data will provide the foundation for qualitative analysis of the data.

Variables of the Data

Only the concordances and collocates of adjectives and modal auxiliary verbs are searched with the help of the software Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff, et al. 2014).

Methods of Data Collection

Data for the current study has been retrieved in two phases. In the first phase of the data collection, Horoscope columns were downloaded in soft from the official website of the Dawn newspaper. The rationale behind selecting this newspaper is that this is one of the oldest English newspapers published in Pakistan (Hassan, 2022). Moreover, the Dawn enjoys an overwhelming readership both locally and internationally. This newspaper attracts the attention of a wide variety of readers. In the second phase of the data collection, a questionnaire was distributed among purposively selected participants to observe the impact of the use of these adjectives and modal verbs on them. The questionnaire comprised both close-ended and open-ended questions. Keeping in mind the research ethics, prior permission and consent were taken from the participants explaining to them clearly the purpose of this study.

Demography of the participants

Only a small sample size of 20 participants, both male and female in equal proportion, has been purposively taken from age group 20 to 25. All the participants had completed their graduation in various subjects in the English medium of instruction and were regular readers of the horoscope columns.

Timeframe of the Data Collection

The newspaper data for this study is collected from March 04, 2024, to July 28, 2024.

Management of Data

Each horoscope was saved in soft form on a computer with its publication date (Hassan, 2019; Hassan, 2022; Hassan, et al. 2024). All the files were saved in a separate folder titled "Horoscope Data of Dawn".

Conceptual Framework

The collected data consists of three sub-categories – classification of adjectives, modal verbs – and impact of these adjectives and modal verbs on the readers. The adjectives are classified with the help of the classification modal of Biber et al. (2002) whereas the modal verbs are classified with the help of Quirk and Greenbaum (2000) Dichotomy of modal auxiliary verbs. Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) is used to categorize the responses of the readers. Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1985) is used to analyze the impact of these adjectives and modal verbs in constructing meanings within a clause.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The focus of this study was to see the frequently appearing adjectives and modal verbs and their impact on the perception of the horoscopes readers. Table 1 below shows the frequency of various parts of speech that appeared in the selected corpora of horoscope columns in the Dawn. Nouns are the most frequently used part of speech with 2633 times whereas numerals are the least used part of speech with a mere 8 times. However, adjectives are the third most frequent part of speech with 940 times after verbs: 1198 times. Modal verbs are also used 290 times.

Table 1

Percentage of different parts of speech in the word list of corpora

S No	Part of speech	Frequency	%
1	Adjective	940	14.38188494492044
2	Adverb	110	1.682986536107711
3	Conjunction	690	10.55691554467564
4	Noun	2633	40.29074215761285
5	Pronoun	667	10.20501835985312
6	Verbs/ modal verbs	1198/290	18.32925336597307/ 4.436964504283966
7	Numeral	008	0.1223990208078335
	Total	**6536**	**100**

Analysis of the Adjectives in the Corpus of Horoscopes

The software Sketch Engine has been used to analyze the Horoscope data. The data was uploaded to the software's dashboard and the features such as *wordlist>adjectives>concordances>collocates* were initially used to retrieve the list of frequently occurring adjectives, and their frequencies, concordances, and collocates in the data as shown in the Fig 1 below:

Figure 1
List of frequency of adjectives used in Horoscope Columns of the Dawn

	Adjective	Frequency		Adjective	Frequency		Adjective	Frequency
1	personal	114	18	meaningful	13	35	likely	6
2	new	78	19	behind-the-scenes	13	36	future	6
3	good	51	20	exciting	12	37	practical	6
4	financial	39	21	joint	11	38	adaptable	5
5	professional	31	22	great	11	39	deep	5
6	social	28	23	harmonious	10	40	pisces	5
7	daily	28	24	romantic	10	41	sagittarius	4
8	positive	26	25	gemini	10	42	past	4
9	important	24	26	mindful	9	43	aquarius	4
10	key	24	27	cautious	9	44	artistic	4
11	clear	21	28	careful	9	45	strong	4
12	open	20	29	innovative	9	46	necessary	4
13	emotional	17	30	beneficial	8	47	productive	4
14	domestic	15	31	educational	8	48	unexpected	4
15	unresolved	14	32	long-term	7	49	short	3
16	libra	13	33	aries	7	50	impulsive	3
17	quiet	13	34	creative	7			

Figure 1 shows the total number of adjectives (940) that appeared in the corpus of the selected horoscope columns in the Dawn. The descriptive adjective *personal* appeared the most 114 times. However, the adjective *impulsive* has been used only three times which is the least. The adjective *New* has been used 78 times which is the second highest. The descriptive adjective *good* has appeared 51 times. Similarly, the adjective *financial* has been used 39 times which is the fourth highest. The adjective *positive* has been used 26 times and *important* 24 times. All these adjectives are used positively. However, the less negative adjective *cautious* has been used very meagerly: only 9 times. The only adjective which is negative in connotation is *unexpected*, which is used merely 4 times.

Case study of Adjective "Personal"

The lemma *personal* has appeared 116 times in the corpus of Dawn's Horoscope. The adjective has been associated with goals, growth, development, space

projects, and values as shown in Figure 2 comprising concordance lines of the adjective *personal*. This seems to indicate that personal achievements are positive:

> *This is a good time to work on personal development and embrace new opportunities (The Dawn, March 4, 2024).*

Figure 2
Concordance of the Adjective 'personal'

Case Study of the Adjective "New" in the Dawn's Horoscopes Corpus

The adjective *new* (79) has frequently appeared in the corpus of Dawn's Horoscope. The collocate list and concordance lines (as shown in Figure 3 below) of the adjective *new* suggest that all the nouns before it is used show positive intent for future actions. Nouns such as *connections*, *objectives*, *opportunities*, *discoveries*, and *projects* imply positivity in the mind of the reader(s):

> *Use this time to set new objectives and work towards your ambitions. (The Dawn: March 8, 2024)*

> *Use this time to focus on your ambitions, pursue new projects, and showcase your talents. (The Dawn: March 12, 2024)*

Figure 3

Concordances of the Adjective "New" in the Dawn's Horoscopes Corpus

Classification of Adjective through Biber et al. (2002

Table 2 below shows the choice of adjectives made in the horoscope columns. Four major classes of adjectives have appeared. These categories or classes include the use of personal, evaluative, descriptive, and contextual adjectives. Personal adjectives (114 times) have been used in the highest number whereas the least used adjectives are contextual (3 times). The choice of these adjectives is vital in terms of meaning-making in the context.

Table 2

Classification of Adjectives Used in the Dawn's Horoscope Corpus Based on Biber et al. (2002) Modal

S No	Adjective Class	Function	Example from analyzed data
1	**Personal**	This class of adjective is used to relate to the personal attributes or emotions.	Personal, deep, emotional
2	**Evaluative** • Negative • Positive	This class of adjectives is used to pass negative or positive judgments.	Beneficial, good (positive) Unresolved (negative)
3	**Descriptive** • General • Social	This adjective class is used to describe features or attributes in different contexts. These descriptions can be either general or social or both at the same time.	Social, clear, practical (General) Likely, New (Social)
4	**Contextual**	This class of adjectives is used to create the relationship in specific contexts.	Impulsive

Table 3 below shows the frequency of various classes of adjectives, used in horoscope columns of the Dawn, based on Biber et al. (2002). The most frequently occurring class of adjectives is contextual adjectives. (331 times) Personal adjectives stand at the bottom. (136 times) This seems to suggest that the writer has used a maximum number of contextual adjectives to allow language to make meanings in the contexts it is used.

Table 3
Percentage of the frequency of different classes of adjectives based on Biber et al. 2002

S No	Class of adjective	Frequency	%
1	Personal	136	14.46808510638298
2	Evaluative	161	17.12765957446809
3	Descriptive	312	33.19148936170213
4	Contextual	331	35.21276595744681
	Total	**940**	**100**

Halliday (1985) believed that different adjectives play different roles and functions in order to accomplish communication. Take for instance personal adjectives. These adjectives seem to establish a relationship of the audience directly with the speaker. Through the use of personal adjectives, the readers/audience and the speaker experience more proximity and intimacy. Evaluative adjectives are paramount to forming judgments. Further, these adjectives can be used to leave an impact on the perception of and attitude of the reader. Positive adjectives further give vent to positive and encouraging responses. However, negative adjectives are essential for the formation of a critical outlook. Likewise, descriptive adjectives including general and social adjectives can be very useful in bringing clarity to the meanings and presetting social values. Lastly, contextual adjectives are much needed for enabling language to make meanings in specific contexts. These adjectives are not only useful for description but also have an impact on the sentiments and understanding of the consumer of the text.

Adjectives through the Lens of Systemic Functional Grammar

Systemic Functional Grammar by Michael Halliday demonstrates the function(s) of language in terms of communication. It further examines how various elements of language contribute to the meaning-making process. Adjectives play various roles in the clauses they are used in. The analysis of the data seems to indicate that these horoscope columns have taken use of more personal adjectives or interpersonal metafunctions as these horoscope

columns are related to each individual differently. In the same way, the analysis of the present data insinuates that the more positive adjectives are used in the evaluative class (Ideational metafunction). The use of these adjectives proposes that readers are made to feel worth something about. Table 4 below illustrates the importance of these adjectives in the meaning-making process:

Table 4
Importance of adjectives in the meaning-making process based on Systemic Functional Grammar

S No	Category	Role/function in Meaning-making	Example
1	Interpersonal Metafunction	In this aspect, the use of language is related to personal experiences or relationships. Hence, these adjectives used in the analyzed data seem to contribute to the personal experiences or relationships of the readers. The writer seems to very aptly use these adjectives to address the personal experiences or relationships of the readers of these horoscope columns.	This is a good time to work on personal development and embrace new opportunities. (The Dawn: 4th March 2024)
2	Ideational Metafunction	In this metafunction, the choice of words communicates the ideology of the producer of the text. Adjectives in the ideational Metafunction elucidate that the qualities of someone or something are valued and viewed as negative or positive. The use of Ideational Metafunction of adjective seems to indicate that these horoscope columns tend to affect the ideology of the readers and want the readers to view those events with certain ideology of something worth.	Implementing positive changes in your lifestyle will be beneficial. (The Dawn: May 08, 2024)
3	Experiential Metafunction	These adjectives refer to the characteristics or attributes in certain situations. Such adjectives express the situational attributes. Similarly, the adjective *clear (21 times)* is also an experiential adjective that adds to the meanings. It is used to remove doubts and bring clarity. This adjective contributes to making the communication and thinking of the readers clear.	Practical and clear communication will help you manage these areas effectively. (TheDawn: June 4, 2024)
4	Logical Metafunction	This is another metafunction expressed through the use of adjectives in the horoscope columns. Just like experiential metafunction, this aspect also is used for contextualization and generalization indicating probability or possibility. These adjectives make meanings of probability.	Financial opportunities are likely, but be careful of jealousy from others, which could strain personal relationships. (The Dawn: June 16, 2024)

Impact of Horoscopes on Public

Table 5 shows the response of the public towards the Horoscopes section in the Dawn newspaper. Questionnaires comprising five questions (both open and closed-ended) were distributed among 20 participants, selected through purposive sampling.

Table 5

Analysis of the impact of these adjectives on the readers of these horoscope columns

S No	Question	Yes/ No	Analysis
1	Do you read horoscope columns?	20/00	All the selected participants are regular readers of not only the Dawn Newspaper**.**
2	Did you ever realize the use of language in these horoscopes?	16/04	About 80% of the readers of the horoscope concentrate on the use of language used in these horoscope columns whereas only 20% don't realize the use of language.
3	Does this use of adjectives have any effect on you?	16/04	As already recorded, 16 out of 20 sample participants don't pay much attention to the use of language, the rest of the 16 participants responded that of course, the use of does create an effect on them.
4	What kind of effect do these adjectives create on you?		The participants responded that the use of adjectives makes them feel positive in various aspects of life: personal, social, and contextual in general. Even those who didn't seem to focus on the language used in these horoscope columns responded that the subject matter and content given created a feeling of jubilation and positivity in them. It made them feel good.
5	Why does this use of language have an effect on you?		In response to this question, the participants said that it is of course the use of language through which the content is presented appropriately.

Thematic Analysis of the Responses of the Participants

Based on the responses of the participants, one major category of the effect can be seen. All the participants, even those whose prime focus was merely the content matter, seem to be influenced positively using these adjectives. The use of these adjectives provides them with positivity and jubilation. Moreover, it makes them feel good or worthy about themselves.

The analyses of the data seem to indicate that the use of personal adjectives makes the reader feel more confident and worthy of themselves. Similarly, the data analysis shows that the use of evaluative adjectives makes the reader feel good and positive. It can be gathered that these horoscope columns make use of such adjectives so that the readers do not feel bad

about themselves. The adjectives used in these horoscope columns have a positive impact on the readers.

Modal Verbs' Analysis in the Corpus of Horoscopes

Categories of Modal Verbs Based on Quirk and Greenbaum (2000)

Based on the major usages of modal auxiliary, Quirk and Greenbaum (2000) have categorized the modal verbs into three major categories. The following table shows those three categories:

Table 6

Categories of Modal Auxiliary Verbs based on Their Major Usage

S No	Category	Modal verbs	Example
1	Ability / Permission/ Possibility/	Can, could, may, might	Can I do this? (permission) It could rain yesterday. (possibility) I can swim. (ability)
2	Obligation/ Necessity	Must/ should	We must obey traffic rules. We should not waste our time.
3	Volition/ Prediction	Will, would, shall	We will visit England next year. I would love to go with you.

Each modal verb given in Table 6 above carries an idiosyncrasy in the process of meaning-making of a language. *Can*, a modal verb of ability, is also used to make communication less complicated and more straightforward and clearer. However, the modal verb *could* refer to the less likelihood. The level of certainty, permission, and possibility associated with each of these verbs varies, however.

Table 7 below shows the frequency and percentage of different types of modal verbs based on Quirk and Greenbaum (2000) and the function those modal verbs perform according to their usage. Only two major categories of modal verbs have emerged from the data i.e. possibility and prediction. It is interesting to note that the horoscope columns haven't used (based on the small datasets) any modal verb showing obligation or necessity. However, the modal verbs showing possibility are used more frequently: 163 times.

Similarly, the modal verbs of prediction are also used frequently: 127 times. The present data show that horoscopes seem to be more inclined towards possibilities and predictions rather than necessity and obligations:

Table 7

% of the frequency of various categories of modal verbs based on Quirk and Greenbaum (2000).

S No	Category of Modal verbs	Frequency	%
1	Ability/ possibility/ permission	163	56.20689655172414
2	Volitional/ prediction	127	43.79310344827586
3	Obligation/ Necessity	00	0000000000000000
	Total	**290**	**100**

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Case Study of Modal Auxiliary "Will" in the Dawn Horoscope Corpus

Figure 4 below shows the frequency and concordance of the modal auxiliary verb *will*. This modal verb appeared 127 times in the selected corpus of horoscope columns.

Figure 4

Frequency and Concordances of the Model Verb "will"

The analysis of the data shows that mostly the modal verb *will* has nouns related to the future in the ±5 left contexts and ±5 right contexts; there are verbs denoting the prediction of success in the future. The data shows that the modal auxiliary verb is used to indicate the prediction of success in the future. It is not used to show any wish for the future:

> *Practicality and careful planning will help you make informed decisions. Personal goals and self-improvement are highlighted (The Dawn, July 8, 2024).*

Case Study of Modal Verb "May" in the Dawn's Horoscope Corpus

Similarly, Figure 5 shows the concordance and frequency of the modal verb *may.* The modal verb *may* has been used 77 times. According to Quirk and Greenbaum model, the modal verb *may* is used to show the possibility. The modal verb *may* is clustered with positive lexical actions of the future. This indicates that the modal verb *may* is used to demonstrate positive predictions of the future time:

> *Your innovative ideas **may** lead to discoveries and experiences (The Dawn, April 22, 2024).*

Figure 5

Frequency and concordances of model verb 'may' used in the Horoscope Columns

Case Study of the Modal Verb "Can" in the Dawn's Horoscope Corpus

Figure 6 shows the concordance and frequency of the modal verb *can.* It has appeared 41 times in the analyzed text. The modal verb *can* is surrounded by the nouns and verbs of future possibility. According to Quirk and Greenbaum (2000), one of the three functions of the modal verb *can* is to denote the future possibility. Its keywords in the ±5right and ±5 left contexts indicate that the modal verb *can* is used to indicate the possibility in the near and far future.

Your innovative ideas and curiosity can lead to exciting discoveries (The Dawn, May 16, 2024)

Figure 6

Frequency and concordances of model verb 'can' used in the Horoscope Columns

	can	
nner world and address any unresolved issues.\</s>\<s>Quiet moments	can	lead to important insights and personal growth.\</s>\<s>Sagittarius Soc
and explore community events.\</s>\<s>Your enthusiasm and optimism	can	help you connect with others and make a positive impact.\</s>\<s>Capri
nner world and address any unresolved issues.\</s>\<s>Quiet moments	can	provide important insights and personal growth.\</s>\<s>Sagittarius Soc
participate in group activities.\</s>\<s>Your enthusiasm and optimism	can	help you connect with others and make a positive impact.\</s>\<s>Capri
, travel, or new experiences.\</s>\<s>Your innovative ideas and curiosity	can	lead to exciting discoveries.\</s>\<s>Pisces Shared resources and fina
r reflection and address any unresolved issues.\</s>\<s>Quiet moments	can	lead to important insights and personal growth.\</s>\<s>Scorpio Social
participate in group activities.\</s>\<s>Your enthusiasm and optimism	can	help you connect with others and make a positive impact.\</s>\<s>Sagit
, travel, or new experiences.\</s>\<s>Your innovative ideas and curiosity	can	lead to exciting discoveries.\</s>\<s>Aquarius Shared resources and fina
f-reflection and address any unresolved issues.\</s>\<s>Quiet moments	can	lead to important personal insights and growth.\</s>\<s>Sagittarius Soc
vities and connect with friends.\</s>\<s>Your optimism and enthusiasm	can	help you make a positive impact on those around you.\</s>\<s>Capricor
, travel, or new experiences.\</s>\<s>Your innovative ideas and curiosity	can	lead to exciting discoveries.\</s>\<s>Pisces Shared resources and finan
f-reflection and address any unresolved issues.\</s>\<s>Quiet moments	can	lead to important personal insights and growth.\</s>\<s>Sagittarius Soc
vities and connect with friends.\</s>\<s>Your optimism and enthusiasm	can	help you make a positive impact on those around you.\</s>\<s>Capricor
, travel, or new experiences.\</s>\<s>Your innovative ideas and curiosity	can	lead to exciting discoveries.\</s>\<s>Pisces Shared resources and finan
f-reflection and address any unresolved issues.\</s>\<s>Quiet moments	can	provide important insights and foster personal growth.\</s>\<s>Sagittar

Case Study of the Modal Verb "Might" in the Dawn's Horoscope Corpus

Figure 7 shows the concordance and frequency of the modal verb *might.* It has been identified 34 times in the Dawn's Horoscope data.

Figure 7

Frequency and Concordances of the Model Verb "Might"

	might	
ons.\</s>\<s>Cancer Home and family matters are in focus.\</s>\<s>You	might	find yourself dealing with domestic issues or focusing on creating a m
Gemini Communication and relationships are emphasized.\</s>\<s>You	might	have important conversations or find opportunities to connect with otl
will help you manage these areas effectively.\</s>\<s>Aries This week	might	bring a focus on personal projects and creative endeavors.\</s>\<s>Use
Gemini Your focus may turn to home and family matters.\</s>\<s>You	might	find yourself addressing domestic issues or making improvements to
ncer Home and family matters may come to the forefront.\</s>\<s>You	might	find yourself addressing domestic issues or working on creating a mo
ncer Home and family matters may come to the forefront.\</s>\<s>You	might	find yourself addressing domestic issues or working on creating a mo
ication will help you manage these areas effectively.\</s>\<s>Aries You	might	find yourself focusing on partnerships and collaborations.\</s>\<s>This
s>Cancer Home and family matters may come into focus.\</s>\<s>You	might	be addressing domestic issues or working on creating a more harmon
anges with confidence and enthusiasm.\</s>\<s>Taurus Your attention	might	turn to finances and practical matters.\</s>\<s>Review your budget, ma
cer Home and family matters may come into the spotlight.\</s>\<s>You	might	find yourself dealing with domestic issues or making improvements tc
ith cooperation and listening to others' input.\</s>\<s>Taurus Attention	might	turn to personal growth and self-care.\</s>\<s>Use this time to focus or
ncer Home and family matters may come to the forefront.\</s>\<s>You	might	be dealing with domestic issues or focusing on creating a more harmc
nd take charge of projects that matter to you.\</s>\<s>Taurus Attention	might	shift to communication and daily routines.\</s>\<s>Organize your sched
s>Cancer Home and family matters may come into focus.\</s>\<s>You	might	find yourself dealing with domestic issues or working on creating a mc
e of others to foster harmonious interactions.\</s>\<s>Taurus Attention	might	turn to work and daily routines.\</s>\<s>Focus on being productive and

The modal verb *might* is surrounded by the nouns and verbs of future prediction. According to Quirk and Greenbaum (2000), this modal verb predicts an unsure future. The keywords in its ±5 right and ±5left contexts indicate that the modal verb *might* is used to indicate probability or prediction of future actions.

> *You might be dealing with domestic issues or focusing on creating a more harmonious living environment (The Dawn June 29, 2024).*

Case study of the Modal Verb "Could" in the Dawn's Horoscope Corpus

Figure 8 visualizes the concordance and frequency of the modal verb *could* which appeared 11 times in the selected corpus. The modal verb *could* is surrounded by the nouns and verbs of future possibility. According to Quirk and Greenbaum (2000), the modal verb *could* refers to a possibility in the future or past. Its ±5 right and ±5 left contexts indicate that the modal verb *could* is used to indicate probability or prediction of future actions.

> *Express your ideas clearly and confidently, as new connections or collaborations could lead to exciting opportunities in the near future (The Dawn, 18th April 2024).*

Figure 8

Frequency and Concordances of the Model Verb "could"

The analysis of the data shows that two categories, (see Table 8 below) of modal verbs i.e. the modal verbs showing possibility and prediction, have been used in the horoscope columns. This implies that the horoscope focuses more on possibilities and predictions rather than obligations or necessities. The choice of these adjectives helps the readers feel positive about future possibilities. Moreover, the concordances of these modal verbs are all positive lexical actions. None of those, as far as the small sets of data have shown, create any necessity or obligation.

Table 8

Categories of modal verbs used in the horoscope columns based on Quirk and Greenbaum.

(2000)

S No	Category	Modal verbs	Example
1	Possibility	May, might could, can	Your financial situation improves and help from superiors could come (Dawn, April 4, 2024).
2	Prediction	Will	Communication and compromise will help you navigate any differences (Dawn, May 15, 2024).

Impact of the Modal Verbs on the Readers of Selected Horoscopes

In addition to the questions asked to observe the impact of the adjectives, the participants were asked about the impact of the modal verbs as well. In response to the question *"How do you feel when you read a text studded with modal verbs in horoscope columns?"*, 18 out of 20 participants responded that they look into the choice of these modal verbs. The verbs of necessity, if appear anytime create a feeling of unease. However, the modal verbs of prediction and possibility excite a feeling of control and possibility. It provides a feeling that certain things, that may be possible in the future, lie within our control. Similarly, these modal verbs make the reader feel several opportunities within their reach. At certain times, these modal verbs can give the readers a feeling of stronger possibilities.

Discussion

Based on the responses of the readers, the readers feel positive and hopeful and have control of future events with stronger possibilities. The choice of adjectives and modal verbs used in the horoscope columns indicates a positive impact on the readers. Various types of adjectives such as positive and general create a positive attitude in the readers about their future. It can be concluded that the use of modal verbs of possibilities and predictions of the future infuses optimism and happiness. The choice of these adjectives decreases the element of dejection and pessimism, if any. The use of these adjectives and modal verbs implies these texts of horoscope seem to be designed in such ways that do not create any sense of urgency or pessimism. All the possibilities are open in the future. Hence, it can be concluded that the use of these modal verbs and adjectives has a great role in order to only create feelings of

happiness and future possibilities. The language of these adjectives and modal verbs is positive. The results appear to be significant in order to show how the use of language particularly that of the media, sets the attitude of the people about certain events or possibilities.

As regards to previous studies conducted on horoscope modal verbs, this study deviates from Ling (2016) in which he concludes that modal verbs used in the horoscope columns are only useful for language learning. However, this study agrees with Khuhro et al. (2020) in which the researchers conclude that the reading horoscope makes the reader feel relaxed and happy. Moreover, the study also agrees with Al-Issawi (2020) where the researcher concludes that adjectives have a great role in impacting the opinion of the readers on any social issue. In addition, the current study also agrees with the study of Faiz et al. (2018) where the researchers have concluded that the use of adjectives influences the minds of the readers.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to find out the types of adjectives and modal verbs used in the horoscope columns of the Dawn newspaper from March 4, 2024, to July 28, 2024. As regards adjectives, the analysis of the data has shown that the use of personal and positive adjectives is at the highest. In the same way, the modal verbs of possibility and prediction have been used in the specific. As regards the impact of this lexical choice on the consumers of this text, it has been observed through data analysis that these modal verbs provide a positive vibe about the future, together with possibilities and predictions.

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