Copyright Statement

Advisory Board

Table of Contents

Coronavirus Rhetoric in Pakistani Media: A 'Solution Aversion' Pandemic Situation

Humaira Riaz
City University of Science & IT Peshawar, Pakistan
Tariq Khan
University of Malakand, Swat
Muhammad Ishtiaq
City University of Science & IT Peshawar, Pakistan

Keywords	Abstract
• Aversion • Awareness • Coronavirus • Pakistan • Poverty • Religion • Rhetoric	*Pandemics are natural threats. Coronavirus not only threatened human lives around the globe in the 21st century but also exposed human preparedness and behaviour against natural calamities. The present study attempts to highlight reinforcement strategies of Pakistani news channels during Coronavirus pandemic persuading the public to adopt preventative measures. Unfortunately, population of a third world country such as Pakistan reflected a degenerated moral response to pandemic compared to West and America. 'Stay home stay safe' being the sole solution and prevention against Coronavirus could not mould Pakistani citizens at large during the lockdown. 'Solution-aversion' attitude of Pakistani citizens completely refused social distancing due to illiteracy, poverty, religious extremism, ignorance and most of all population. Pakistani media adopted various persuasive strategies to convince people for social distancing during the pandemic. This paper examines headlines from three popular Pakistani news channels ARY, GEO and Samaa TV from March 7 to April 30, 2020, broadcast at 9.pm, prime time for television viewers in Pakistan. The main interest is the insightful assessment of media rhetoric in the backdrop of the pandemic. The study is non-linear i.e. it does not follow a fixed sequence of headlines rather it discusses appeals as an emphatic media strategy for persuasion. It encounters the traditional rhetoric appeals, bathos, ethos, logos and to a limited extent kairos as a descriptive model of media picture in the news headlines invoking listeners' emotions for a purpose in the context of the Coronavirus outbreak. As Media rhetoric in Pakistan (March 7-April 30 2020) unfolds, the headlines are contextualized, culminating in an extensive analysis of the sum of their parts by way of conclusion. However, worth anticipating argument is the power of persuasive language used strategically to develop consciousness and awareness in a situation where the public show aversion to the solution consequently causing threat to the lives around.*

1. Introduction

Pandemic basically, is the spread of a contagious disease affecting larger populations and regions. Its P is a passport, to travel and disturb the regions across the world. Since the creation of human beings, pandemics have ruined as well as transformed life and civilizations. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention documented the existence and spread of the Plague of Athens in 430 B.C and a long list continues. Antonine Plague 165-180 A.D, Plague of Cyprian 250-271 A.D, Plague of Justinian 541-542 A.D, The Black Death 1346-1353, Cocoliztli Epidemic 1545-1548, American Plague in 16th c., Great Plague of London 1665-1666, Great Plague of Marseilles 1720-1723, Russian Plague 1770-1772, Philadelphia Yellow Fever Epidemic 1793, Flu Pandemic 1889-1890, American Polio Epidemic 1916, Spanish Flu 1918-1920, Asian Flu 1957-1958, AIDS 1981- till date, SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) 2002-2003, H1N1 Swine Flu 2009-2010, West Africa Ebola Epidemic 2014-16, Zika Virus Epidemic 2015-till date.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) identified as SARS-CoV-2 has traumatized the globe in the 21st century. Like a pandemic, it is a 'perfect predator' ruthlessly exterminating human lives (Strathdee and Patterson 2019). World Health Organization has declared COVID-19 as 6th Public Health of Emergency Service (SPHEC) on January 30, 2020. Initial slow global response to Coronavirus is established as a major cause of its rapid spread and countries worldwide including the US run short of testing the disease.

No subtle information is available to speak the origin of the virus. Scientists have contested the idea of the production of SARS-CoV-2 in a laboratory and its emergence as engineered. However, the speculation remains unexplored. Scripps Research Institute has rejected the idea based on evidence that compared the available genome sequence data of Coronavirus determining its origin resultant of natural processes. First reported on December 19, 2019, from the Chinese Health Official, the virus overtook the globe. A 2.7 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 by April 23, 2020, roughly 730,000 recovered patients and 187,000 death numbers around the world. The highest number of affectees was reported in US followed by Italy and Spain. In Pakistan, Health officials reported 2 confirmed cases on March 19, 2020.

The geographical location of Pakistan required a high level of action plan in response to Coronavirus. National Action Plan for Preparedness Response to Coronavirus Disease Pakistan embarked on controlling the spread of the virus by community emergency preparedness. As an economically poor state, Pakistan expected a huge challenge to face the pandemic. Furthermore, its social structure (that considers illness, particularly pandemic within the cultural, psychological and religious constraints) remained a major obstacle for adopting protective measures.

Pakistan geographically has remained vulnerable to natural disasters; floods, droughts, cyclones and epidemics due to over population. CEPSA programme research on disaster preparedness in South Asia (2020) details substantial threats to Pakistan and their consequences. Reports show Pakistan enduring frequent natural disasters since its creation in 1947. The disastrous earthquake in 2005 killed over 75,000 people. Floods 2010, 2013, 2014 and massive heat waves in 2015 caused thousands of lives in Pakistan (Fayaz and Bussell, 2017, p.1). Though geographical factors pertain to disasters, however, majority of the Pakistani population regard these as direct 'azab' (punishment) from God. In Pakistani society, people usually interpret calamities 'within the idioms of religion' (Riaz and Qadir, 2018). Even if Pakistani government plans to deal with it, public behaviour obstructs its implementation. Because of its geographical location, Pakistan has developed a larger institutional structure for preparedness for disaster during the last decades. NDMA is the

agency, leading during times of floods, earthquakes, terrorism and epidemics. Federal ministry armed provincial organizations, NGOs and UN agencies work as major stakeholders during emergency situations. Inadequate political will, social behaviour and religious extremism cause damage to institutional improvement during a natural disaster. Poverty, ignorance, illiteracy and religious extremism, in short political, social and religious difference damaged awareness campaigns during Coronavirus and deliberation of social distancing remained disruptive. The present study highlights reinforcement strategies of Pakistani news channels during the Coronavirus pandemic persuading the public to adopt preventative measures.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Rhetoric- mass mobilization and socio-political engineering

Media as an effective social and political sphere rationalizes debates and discussions of various issues emerging in society. Rhetoric is associated with media and is basically understood as a guiding principle for communicators who seek to inform or persuade. 'To inform' is set in the background as a prime objective and 'persuasion' as the core objective is fore-grounded in the contemporary world. Persuasion is a powerful instrument of mass mobilization and socio-political engineering (Adeyanju, 2009, p.192).

Governments normally use media as a tool in such situations to inform about natural calamities so that the public may act to mitigate risks. The media runs frequent awareness campaigns for risk reduction as the audience demonstrate more concern when media content overemphasizes various aspects of the real world. Vocabulary choice is particularly significant during the process of linguistic categorization (Fowler, 1991). Media as an outlet to communicate information holds the responsibility of shaping and strengthening the opinions of the masses. Despite some lacunas, however, media remains a source of disseminating information with the potential to lead nations to meet unimaginable challenges. In pandemic situations, media covers the gaps by its vibrant, vigilant and vigorous role to reinforce social distancing as the only preventive measure. Unfortunately, a satanic sway also sustains in media aspiring to its angelic role seeing 'glass half full than glass half empty.

Modern rhetoric is relatively different from traditional rhetoric boundless to the established perspective of rhetoricians. The digital use of the word 'rhetoric' has undergone changes and emerged as an apparatus to emphasize, reinforce and persuade listeners. Modern rhetoric has 'a concern for audience, for intention, and structure' (Encyclopaedia Britannica). The intention is mostly inspired by the target audience.

Austin's proposition of speech act (1964), Searle's categorization of speech into taxonomies (1976) and Halliday's proposition of language functions as ideational, interpersonal and textual (1975) leave a gap as to how to safely categorize an utterance as rhetoric. Physical setting, content, intended goals and outcomes and language functions lead to the decision. However, the role of listeners and purpose to address them with an objective to persuade them to remain equally momentous (Mclnellyand Perry, 2008). Rhetoric in media is more functionalist; not only transmitting messages with words but transmitting well with words (Kock, 2004). It persuades, helps the audience to grasp the concept, exaggerates and minimizes the scope of the existing issues, uses familiar vocabulary, metaphors and

analogies. Fragmentation in media language is understood with a rhetorical methodological approach.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Rhetoric of Motives

Time and place, motivation, response and context are the significant elements to perceive messages through the situation of the receiver as well as the speaker. Rhetoric as an integral part of articulation in the contemporary world emphasizes the speaker's role to reinforce the implied beliefs that truth detached from its form can be demonstrated as credible. Discursive in practice, rhetoric adheres to the human mind and becomes indispensable to analyse practical reasoning. Rhetoric analysis proves effective in mapping the social behaviour of Pakistani people during the pandemic. Rhetoric situation i.e. the context of headline news is pandemic. The communicator here is the channel, COVID-19 and social distancing as an issue at hand with the purpose of spreading awareness and persuading the public to stay home for their safety as well as others.

Burk's *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950) well explains rhetoric. Conventionally rhetoric does not identify but persuade' (Burke, 1950, p.1019). Persuasion varies from sponsorship 'or propaganda to courtship, social etiquette and education' (Burke, 1950, p.1019). Persuasion strategy helps to grasp subtle shades of meaning. Rhetorical analysis unfolds persuasion strategies to decode visual and verbal messages. The present study synthesizes persuasion and rhetorical appeals to evaluate verbal and visual aspects of the selected headlines on Pakistani media during the pandemic for reinforcement and propagation; viable media tools for influence. The process identifies Aristotle's rhetorical devices namely bathos, ethos and logos through syntactical and verbal speech properties of news reflecting the pragmatic aspect of language. The rhetoric analysis identifies the social behavioural patterns of Pakistani citizens. In Pakistan, to regulate the living conditions promptly and expect the best cannot co-exist when political intents have denied enlightenment of education and awareness to people for decades.

The present study examines headlines from three popular Pakistani news channels ARY, GEO and Samaa TV from March 7 to April 30, 2020, broadcast at 9.pm, prime time in Pakistan for television viewers. The main interest is the insightful assessment of media rhetoric in the backdrop of the pandemic. The study is non-linear i.e. it does not follow a fixed sequence of headlines rather it discusses appeals as an emphatic media strategy for persuasion.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Coronavirus Rhetoric in Pakistani Media

Media is the key site for the production, representation and consumption of language; meanings in and out of context. A plethora of information created by media and technology shape the social attitudes by deconstruction and propagation. Coronavirus pandemic is transforming the social and psychological behaviours of the people. In Pakistan, the situation is challenging due to law enforcement during an emergency. Failure to enforce law chiefly

is a result of poverty, illiteracy and unawareness at larger scales because one-third population lives below the poverty line. The principal causes of poverty in Pakistan are poor governance, rapid increase in population over years, rural development and environmental degradation costing massive troubles at the time of natural disasters. Moreover, Pakistani conventional society finds it difficult to abandon social customs, particularly, social distancing. Religious institutions equally deprive people to consider and weighing the situation logically. Unfortunately, political and religious caprices as precursors during the Coronavirus pandemic worked for their glorification to divide and shatter individuals and groups.

Coronavirus hit the world at large to diminish its glory. During the pandemic, the entire world likely observed strict preventive measures. However, Pakistan faced dual challenges fighting with two enemies, the virus and the mind-set. Pakistani media, however, played a helpful role in the entire situation. Covering the news in challenging circumstances, it announced, renounced and denounced strategies to provide information 24hours appealing to the nation to learn from the world's experiences.

4.2. Media Appeal to Ethos

Ethos established credibility and plausibility in media rhetoric that recorded the daily development of Coronavirus in major cities of Pakistan during March 7- 15, 2020. Appropriate use of language, citation of valid sources of information, media disseminated information with confidence. The situation in Pakistan appeared comparatively safe in comparison to the rest of the world in the headlines recorded during five days at 9 p.m. News broadcast a nominal increase in numbers of infected people, around 13 to 15.

Appeal to ethos varied to the situations. News channels refrained from using hyperbolic i.e. exaggerated language initially to append credibility to their broadcast. Instead, vivid and rigorous language helped to reinforce facts about Coronavirus. The structure of headlines on all three channels was predominantly assertive and declarative unlike the conventional design of headlines arranged in phrases. Initially, the tone of the broadcast was condensed yet light and did not explicate the seriousness of the situation. Even the information ministry announced a penalty for propagating news of lockdown as per the Cyber Crime Act of Pakistan on March 15, 2020. Similarly, news of corona affectees reported from the province of Balochistan was declared as a sudden 'inkishaf' (revelation). Ban on religious gatherings, festivals, schools and cancellation of PSL cricket matches designated seriousness to the entire situation. Phrases such as 'aik hi din' (only in one day), 'aik or case' (one more case) implied a threat of impending danger. Reliability was endorsed by demonstrating practical intelligence and knowledge reporting frequently the number of cases across the country during 7-15 March 2020. The particular instance was the reporting of overseas passengers from Syria via Dubai and Doha showing depth and erudition to display the palpable impression of media providing facts during an emergency. The media attempted to demonstrate its authoritative role, which the audience could trust to receive credible information about the pandemic.

March 12, 2020, onwards, Pakistani media particularly ARY, GEO and Samaa TV adopted the rhetoric 'Darnanahi, larna hey' (No fear but fight). With a considerable objective tone, the channels ran awareness campaigns. Mild undertones of social distancing suddenly altered into a discourse of fear. It was not until March 22 that the headlines geared their rhetorical strategy convincing the Pakistani public to follow the lockdown. Initially, media channels

embarked on a deep and insightful investigation; however, a marked difference in data provided by the three channels raised questions on their credibility. Vivid instructions from National Command and Control Authority aligned the figures progressively. Afterwards, media channels adopted a special deictic style to cover the geographical spread by using phrases such as 'mulkbhar' (across the country), 'mulk k mukhtalifshehrun main' (in different cities of the country). A plethora of addresses spanned around the major cities of Pakistan Karachi, Sukkur, Hyderabad, D.I. Khan, Lahore, Skardu and Quetta. Those cities appeared the only accessible places to news channels that ignored coverage of the major rural places of Pakistan, once again undermining reports of media during the pandemic. During lockdown it attempted to communicate the scientific facts for maintaining social distance and demonstrating one flatten-the-curve graph of virus affectees, however, it did not prove helpful to persuade people to change their behaviour willingly.

Media efforts awarded credibility to the information announcing military forces to extend support to civil government. Since Pakistan forces particularly the military perform a pungent role during natural calamities fighting at the forefront and is honoured as saviour, the general masses welcomed the news. Persuasion also appeared promising with news channels' efforts owing to their ranking in electronic media. Their positions kept reminding the audience of the qualifications bringing credibility to the news broadcast.

4.3. Bathos- address to feelings

"At the heart of persuasion is the ability to adapt a message to the feelings, needs and values of an audience" (O'Hairr et al. 1995, p.585). Pakistani Media started appealing to the audience's emotions by familiarizing the message; spread of Coronavirus as the focal point of headlines when people must consider the inevitable transitoriness from sound health to a diseased condition for which people needed protection and cure.

Bathos is a rhetorical technique that conventionally invokes listeners' emotions for the idea and information expressed. Media rhetoric imaginatively constructs the original situation in order to condition the listener's understanding. The pandemic situation in Pakistan after March 20, 2020, aggravated due to people's behaviour toward the pandemic. Before further analysing media rhetoric in Pakistan, we in a glimpse understand the social behaviour of Pakistani citizens, which indicates the general public experiencing 'solution aversions', a loathing to the concept of social distancing as a solution associated with the pandemic problem (Campbell and Aaron Kay of Duke University). Pakistani citizens are conventionally extroverts in the sense that their social needs have been fulfilled for years through loose connections formed as a result of frequent interactions. Particularly men folk have no problem with shopping; they may just go to a store to converse with a clerk for maintaining social interaction. Moreover, they are regularly indulged in socializing through mosques, attending sporting events and spending afternoons in cafes. There is a strong need for personal connections and they may suffer from anxiety or frustration if they live outside a network of personal interaction. In such a situation, the notion of social isolation caused restlessness to Pakistani people. The media and government literally pleaded to stop them from the interaction. Slogans such as 'meragharmerijannat' (my home my Eden), 'stay home stay safe' failed to alter their behaviour. Media channels attempted to persuade the public by social, psychological and religious catchphrases.

Evoking pride in religion, origins or cultural heritage is a powerful strand of the motivational strategies in rhetoric. Mostly, the media quoted and highlighted the saying of the holy prophet (SAW) in the wake of pandemics. "If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; and if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place" (Sahih al-Bukhari). However, people refused to observe prayers at home, which raised a huge question on their belief system, wrapped more in culture than religious obligations. Headlines also created a black and white fallacy comparing the situation of the world to Pakistan (Adegoju, 2013, p.9).

March 20, 2020, onwards headlines on ARY, GEO and Samaa appeared more enraptured and detailed. 'Phailny se rokna hey wernahuspatalkam par jayngy' (We have to stop the spread or hospitals will not be available), 'Pakistan main Corona panjygarnylaga' (dense corona claws in Pakistan), 'sakhtfaisly ka waqtagya hey' (time to take hard decisions), 'tobaastaghfar k bagherchutkaramumkinnahi' (No safety until we beg mercy from God), 'Pakistan main haj muahidun per paish raft mansookh' (Pilgrimage contracts postponed). Corona virus was branded 'Jan leva' (killer), 'Muhlik' (injurious), 'khatarnak' (threatening) to intensify the severity of the situation persuading people to observe safety measures issued by the Health Ministry of Pakistan. Significantly, the headlines echoed the apprehensions alike and highlighted news issued by religious scholars emphasizing the role of a Muslim individual to take upon the responsibility to save one as well as fellow human beings. Sindh government remained in headlines with its beseeching strategy asking citizens to stay home as chaos might turn the situation worst. Media channels dwelled to attract people's attention enticing them with gruesome vocabulary and shocking facts. Headlines on GEO and Samaa were laden with fear. Comparatively, the ARY news channel used plausible language to project the situation credulous. 'Kahin der nahojai'(before it is too late), 'Lashainnauthanee par jain' (before we collect dead bodies), 'ventilators kamna par jain' (before ventilator run out). News headlines maintained a political aura propagating the performance of various political parties during the pandemic. In such a situation even religious scholars refrained from announcing explicit messages to stay home, to pray within the house, and not to socialize. The situation also recalls the history of the Russian Plague 1770-1772, which recorded the murder of Archbishop Ambrosius who encouraged people to avoid gathering for worship. Similarly, in Pakistan public refused to accept the solution to the pandemic.

The pandemic situation in Pakistan pertaining to the idea that people are less likely to believe Coronavirus is a problem. The idea of social distancing and self-isolation is undesirable for the majority. The devastation, which their attitude may wreak Pakistan seems unparallel to any country around the world during the pandemic. Their situation reflected that if a calamity is inflicted upon them, they themselves sabotaged the solution. Headlines, which frequently went on air was 'corona ka waar' (corona hits) and 'corona ka shikar' (corona preys). Such discourse of fear was also strategically adopted by news channels to stop people from interacting, which might result in the rapid spread of the virus. However, the process of quarantine itself contributed a significant psychological burden to the society, particularly a conventional society like Pakistan. Media in Pakistan failed to establish an effective pathetic appeal, and could not make the audience care about what was communicated frequently regarding the quarantine lifestyle. The general public did not care about the message during the lockdown and was not engaged with the arguments being made. At that point, news channels adopted interesting styles using hypothetical examples of Italy, Spain, China, UK and USA that could help the audience to imagine themselves in certain scenarios. Visual appeals to pathos were made by broadcasting footage from around the world about suffrage

and the damage that the coronavirus was causing. Pakistani Media appeal to pathos was appropriate and despite its fearful discourse, it did not try unfair play upon the audience's feelings and emotions through fallacious and misleading appeals through excessively emotional for a purpose. Such an appeal complemented rather than replaced reasons and evidence. Additionally, to use pathos, news channels established their credibility (ethos) as they regularly supplied reasons and evidence (logos) in support of their position. As a fact, when logos and ethos are replaced with pathos, power in a strong argument is lost.

4.4. Logos: Logic and Reason

With threat and fear arising from uncertainty, the media played a reasonable role for healthcare workers in Pakistan. With the increase in virus affected cases, it assumed a more responsible role not swaying the audience emotionally but convincing them logically. 'Darnanahi ab larna hey' (Not fear but fight).

News channels fused into information appealing to logic and reason. Pandemic news was wrought in an organized form with evidence to its support. Headlines broadcast doctors and physicians 'announcements instructing the public to defeat the pandemic. 'Shikastdena hey' (Defeat!). The headlines appeared recurrently at 9. p.m bulletin as a technique repeating ideas for transmittal of messages using technique known as anastrophe suggestive of strong rhetoric practice for communication and social cohesion. Media provided evidence to its claims showing numbers of affectees around the world and relevant source material in the form of doctors' interviews, world leaders' speeches and scientists' opinions. Particularly, it reported cases from Italy, its health staff and the prime minister's announcement. Parallels are drawn among the situations of different countries, the three channels used concrete facts and figures, statistics, dates, times, graphs, charts and tables to demonstrate the number of corona patients, deaths and recovered. Though if given attention to numbers and statistics, the broadcast demonstrated inconsistency, however, in pandemic situations such inconsistencies could be ignored. Moreover, many times footage appearing on the channels did not reveal valid sources, nonetheless, appeal to bathos made the situation credible arising pity and fear. That footage might have been the fallacies misusing appeals to logos or attempting to manipulate the logic of the situation in an exaggerated manner.

Consistency, logic and clarity of the message support logos. Pakistani news channels broadcast facts, reason, and hard evidence around the world to convince the public. Frequent broadcast of relief packages from federal and provincial governments particularly for wage labourers to an extent held people home. Prime minister Pakistan announced on-air to organize Tiger force on March 27 to ensure labourers food supply at home. President's meeting with religious scholar over concerns on Friday congregations on-air in headlines frequently followed by addresses from religious clerics warranted the public religion instructions in pandemics. Headlines highlighted many religious scholars refusing to disallow people directly from mosques. However, their coverage in headlines established logical appeals by reinforcing the pandemic situation. Although the information did not flow logically in news headlines, however, the amount of evidence of affectees across the globe provided sufficient logic to combat the situation perceptively. Citing WHO (UN) and NCC (Pakistan) recurrently in connection to the global pandemic situation appeared persuasive to most Pakistani residents of urban areas. As far as people in rural areas, the situation remained customary.

The 'supreme moment' that is an appeal to kairos by providing graph or the spike level of corona affectees comparing the position of the world with countries across the world helped number of people to understand the situation and remain at homes. Kairos, though not technically a part of the triangle of rhetoric devices, was used by Pakistani media to strengthen its argument. The strategy, unfortunately, failed with the sudden announcement of a smart lockdown..

5. Conclusion

The entire discussion focused the deployment of rhetorical techniques ethos, bathos, logos and to a limited extent kairos. It revealed that rhetoric focused essentially on the four types of propositions at the outset of the pandemic. Media communication implied Pakistani citizens being frequently exposed to natural disasters showed a relatively non-serious response and the situation was often manipulated to the general benefit of the lower class and the politicians.

The study also concluded that sensational headlines on media channels possibly led people towards desensitization. The reason was the media attempted to make a traumatic accident more of a spectacle. However, at the same time, it inevitably played a significant role in promoting protective measures such as frequent hand washing and distancing. For headlines, Pakistani media channels clearly failed to take a leading role; rather pandemic campaigns turned into a political drama of personal gains. Lack of substantial knowledge among the general population about Coronavirus pointed out public mitigation measures play a vital role in the extenuating impact of the coronavirus in Pakistan. Fluctuation and disagreement in numbers, denial of one news channel of the other remained constant sources of disbelief and estrangement on part of the Pakistani public during the pandemic.

Media attempts of persuasion through rhetorical devices went futile due to its political engagements and 'solution aversion' public attitude. ARY for government, GEO and SAMA supporting opposition parties delivered more party performances. Rhetorical use of nominals 'awaam', 'public', 'rehaishee' (all meaning people) implied people might transform into the vanguard of the innovation, arising as a more affluent and responsible citizen. However, various terminologies reflected class distinction thriving in Pakistani society foretelling 'self as first among equals.

Pakistani Media once again ended on pessimistic notes such as 'kaisyhoga' (how will it work?).

Recommendations:

A study can be conducted to explore the effect of pandemic on religion in Pakistan. Effects of pandemic on males and females can be examined. A study can be conducted on understanding post pandemic gender narratives in Pakistani villages.

References

Adegoju, A. (Ile-Ife). (2013). A rhetorical analysis of the discourse of advertising herbal medicine in southwestern Nigeria. *Linguistik*, *33*(1/08), 3-16.

Adjei-Fobi, C. K. (2011). *A rhetorical analysis of political discourse: A comparative study of the use of metaphor in the speeches of Nkrumah and Rawlings*. [MPhil. dissertation, University of Ghana].

Aristotle. (1926/1959).*The art of rhetoric*. Translation by John Henry Freese. Cambridge, Mass.

Asian Development Bank. (2002). Poverty in Pakistan: Issues, causes and institutional responses.

Austin, J. W. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Benjamin, C. J., Diane M. W. Ng, Dennis K. M. Ip, Quiyan,L, Wendy Lam W. T., Joseph Wu T., Joseph, Lau T. F., Sian, Griffiths M., & Richard, F. (2010). Community psychological and behavioral responses through the first wave of the 2009 influenza A (H1N1) pandemic in Hong Kong. *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*, *202*(6), 867–876.

Brekke, K. (2014, May 5). Sarah McLachlan: I change the channel when my ASPCA commercials come on. *Huffington Post.*

Burk, K. (1950). *A rhetoric of motives*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Bussell, J., & Asim, F. (2017). The political economy of disaster preparedness and risk reduction in Pakistan. *CEPSA Research Brief, 5*.

Campbell ,T. (2020, March 28). Why some people resist advice on how to behave in the pandemic: The reason is a phenomenon called solution aversion. *Observation*. https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/why-some-people-resist-advice-on-how-to-behave-in-the-pandemic.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. (2019). www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources

Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the news: Discourse and ideology in the press.* Routledge press.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean: Explorations in the development of language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.

Kock, C. (2004). Rhetoric in media studies. *Nordicom Information*, *26*(2), 103-110.

Mclnelly, B. C. & Perry, D. R. (2008). *Writing and rhetoric*. New York: Hayden McNeil.

O'Hairr, D. (1995). *Competent communication*. New York.

Peck, L. D. (1993). The fifty percent divorce rate: Deconstructing a myth. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*. *20*(3), 135-144.

Singal, J.(2014, November 10). Solution aversion can help explain why some people don't believe in climate change. *Political Psychology*.

https://www.thecut.com/2014/11/solution-aversion-can-explain-climate-skeptics.html.

Strathdee, S.& Patterson, T. (2019, March 6). Could viruses be the perfect predator to fight superbugs. https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2019/03/06/viruses-perfect-predator-superbugs

Zulkipli, M. F., & Ariffin, A. (2019). Understanding the roles of rhetorical devices and intertextuality in promotional discourse. *International Journal*, *2*(5), 90-107.

A Critical Appraisal of the Trope of Wilderness in *Red Birds*

Syeda Musbat Arooba
Riphah International University, Lahore

Muhammad Saleem
Govt. College Township, Lahore

Keywords

- Wilderness
- Colonialism
- Neocolonialism
- Imperialism
- Postcolonial Ecocriticism

Abstract

The research in hand endeavors to present a counter-narrative against the much-acclaimed West's conception of wilderness and seeks to inform the readers with an entirely new conception of wilderness that is in stark contrast to its Euro-American counterpart. The manipulative modes of communication and media hype have kept us blinded to view this trope according to our own geopolitical realities. So, this research is a modest attempt to represent an alternative view of wilderness that inculcates the imperialistic and neo-colonial brutalities in it. The ulterior motives under the garb of wilderness speak of lust to grab the natural resources of far-off lands and to displace the indigenous people in order to make the war mongers' capitalistic greed prosper with unprecedented speed. For theoretical framework, this research is reliant on William Cronon's The Trouble with Wilderness alongside Graham Huggan and Hellen Tiffins' Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment. This research follows a qualitative research model and uses the technique of textual analysis to explore the desired objectives in Red Birds by Mohammad Hanif.

1. Introduction

The West's preoccupation with the idea of paradise and a subsequent desire to find earthly heaven has been rampant in the annals of history (Nosan, 2008). The obsession with this idea took many forms in the past leading towards the idealization of a serene and ethereal piece of land. The degenerative epochs of the Industrial Revolution and mushroom growth of scientific advancements butchered the natural landscapes thus making them sterile and barren. All these advancements in the name of sustainable growth and development marred the natural magnificence ultimately penetrating the unfathomable desire of an untarnished land to the very core of advanced and cultured beings. Resultantly, these consequences aided in the germination of paramount affinity towards Wilderness (Buell, 1989; Mellor, 2014).

The trope of wilderness has been a significant player in the generation of American environmental consciousness. It is convenient to say that a considerable amount of American environmental paradigm revolves around this trope. Whether it is about the frontier myth or settler narrative, they both encompass this idea of a sacred and untrammelled piece of land in their very foundation. This concept of wilderness has also deeply embedded roots in the cultural and religious discourse of the West. This key feature has seen the evolution from its inception till now. Explaining the etymology of the word 'wilderness', Roderick Nash (2014) informs that this term originated from the word "willed" and shifted to "wild"; then it infused the word "deor" in it. Deor stands for wild beasts that are uncontrollable and ferocious. The first use of this word appeared in the "eighth-century epic Beowulf, where wildeor appeared about the savage and fantastic beasts inhabiting a dismal region of forests, crags, and cliffs" (p. 1). The word wildeor eventually reformed into wilderness thus depicting a place of wild beasts that are on leash without any constraint. With time the implications of this word started to expand and contain various explanations in its very foundation but more significantly it represented a place where humans lose their stable demeanour (p. 3). With the passage of time, nature writers tried to normalize this negative trope with their writings of experiences in those lonely landscapes. The works of Henry Thoreau, Barry Lopez, and Aldo Leopold are of significant nature regarding this. Afterwards, Romantics with the help of their acute love for nature tried to transform the emotions of awe and fear regarding these lands into a transcendental, and sacred emotional journey (Mellor, 2014). The emerging reverence for these specified pieces of land eventually echoed its voice in America's environmental activism thus resultantly forming the Wilderness Act of 1964. This legislation created a preservation system for the lands that fall in the category of wilderness definition. Greg Garrard (2004) states that wilderness is a place that signifies "nature in a state uncontaminated by civilization"; he further claims that it "is most potent construction of nature available to New World environmentalism" (p. 59). Now the American environmentalists are deeply engaged in wilderness conservation and preservation by making wildlife parks and harnessing boundaries to separate these regions from any accidental human trammelling. Though this initiative seems to be very pure and ecologically friendly, it marginalizes the voices of native sufferers who have been snatched off their homes and their basic rights of living and livelihood.

The Euro-Americans treated Wilderness as a sight of refuge devoid of any human trace. They considered it as sublime, untouched and primitive natural solitude that is in dire need of conservation. But this whole idea takes a new turn by considering the recent theoretical debates on the conflicting nature of this very concept of wilderness. The widely emerging

postcolonial connotation of this trope seems to give it a new dimension by embedding the colonial and neo-colonial ideologies of imperial domination in its very foundation. It can be hypothesized that the neo-colonial power dynamics and war tactics to expand the horizon of colonizers' neoliberal capital development produced not a sublime wilderness of refuge but a horrendous, devastated, sterile and desolate wasteland. This wasteland is impregnated with innumerable episodes of violence, treachery, and massive displacement of indigenous people.

1.1 Research Questions

i. In what ways is the postcolonial conception of wilderness contrary to its Euro-American counterpart in selected Pakistani fiction?

ii. How has Pakistani author interwoven the ideas of neo-colonial power politics and myth of development in the novel subsequently exploring their effects on native landscapes?

2. Literature Review

America's primarily yet paramount concern with the environment owes much to the works of John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, and Aldo Leopold. Moreover, the travel of President Roosevelt, 26th President of the United States in accompaniment of John Muir to Yosemite Valley in 1903 was a historical episode that gave an impetus to generate a new environmental awakening across America. During this journey, "Muir convinced Roosevelt to commit the federal government to the protection of the nation's natural heritage" (Minteer & Pyne, 2012, p. 1). Muir advocated for the formation of "nation's parks, which stood for the pristine and the preserved" (p. 1), thus restricting his activism and perceptions only to preserve the natural beauty. While on the other hand, Roosevelt's emphasis was on "rational use under the aegis of conservation" (p. 1) thus projecting a "state-sponsored conservation" (p. 2), completely imparting a politico-economic meaning to the environmental discourse.

The late twentieth century observed a remarkable ascent of US environmentalism. Thomas Robertson strived to locate this sudden surge in America's global role. He claimed that the 1960s was the era when US was tightly gripped in Vietnam War and also expanding its vista to various other regions. At this juncture, America propelled his theory of Think Globally. Under the garb of this theory of interconnectedness, America expanded its horizon to South Asia where India emerged as "a source of strategic minerals such as manganese, and a country strategically located near China, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East" and to satisfy her own political concerns, America started to patronize India in every way. He assisted this poverty-stricken land in the crucial years of the 1960s when India faced debilitating conditions in form of floods and famine.

History reveals that imperial and environmental paradigms always go hand in hand. Richard Grove (1995) emphasized that rather than being a homegrown attribute, it was the colonial expansion that necessitated the origin of environmental conservation ideologies. The British' interaction with new and unidentified flora and fauna of south Asian regions compelled them to take the assistance of biologists and ecologists to decipher this territory. Peder Anker (2001) also stressed the synergetic relationship that fostered between ecologists and British Empire as a requirement to manage these lands. Anker notes that these ecological advancements were necessary to manage resources and people on "the colonial estate" (p.

37) and to justify why they and not local inhabitants were capable to manage and administer the colonial resources.

The above discussion helped to view the American environmental concerns from a different perspective. The movement that started with preservation and conservation issues gained momentum in the post-war era. This movement definitely took inspiration from the British imperial legacy and fostered the former's ideas in its emerging field of environmentalism to gain the same strategic and economic benefits. Undoubtedly, this rapid environmental upheaval was due to America's expanding interest in far off regions of the world to cater for the needs of supplies and rising consumption.

The huge momentum that this wilderness preservation movement gained in the past years has activated the intellectuals of other regions to present a counter-narrative. This narrative incorporates a postcolonial dimension in it. Ramachandra Guha (1989) unveils the underlying facts regarding deep ecology's essential tenet 'Preservation of Wilderness'. He vehemently criticizes US environmentalism as it bespeaks only capitalist advancements and "proposes a militant defence of Mother Earth" (p. 1). Guha criticizes the American centeredness of this movement by claiming that it does not cater for the diverse socio-political and cultural realities of other regions. He claims that it is responsible for a "shift from an "anthropocentric" to a "biocentric" perspective (p. 1)". This shifting of perspective has led its followers towards an obsession with nature's preservation and conservation ultimately driving them towards "unspoilt wilderness, and the restoration of degraded areas to a more pristine condition" (ibid). He claims that the construction of wilderness is presented as an "antidote to modern civilization" (p. 4). Historian Samuel Hey (cited in Guha, 1989) explains that it's not in any sense an endeavour to turn back to pristine and primitive nature but "an integral part of the modern standard of living as people sought to add new 'amenity' and 'aesthetic' goals and desires to their earlier preoccupation with necessities and conveniences" (p. 4). Mukherjee also critiques this biocentric postulate while analyzing Aldo Leopold's work A Sand County Almanac. He claims that this work does not talk about the people who reside and toil on these lands. This work is completely devoid of any human projections and considers them only the hollow modernized beings "colonized by the virus of the marketplace" (Mukherjee, 23). This work gave an entirely new dimension to US environmental discourse where man started to be visualized as the destructor and intruder in nature. Parajuli (2001) highlights the nature/culture binary originated by Deep Ecology. He states that this dichotomy is deeply embedded in the Western conception of wilderness but it is foreign to peasant societies all over the world. For them, the wilderness has no such meaning as it is only a piece of land from which they derive their livelihood. Creating a boundary around these so-called sacred territories is to snatch the rights of natives from their own land.

Jennifer L. French (2012) strives to present a contradictory picture originated by transferring North America's environmental conceptions to Latin America. She claims that the transformation of primal negative aura associated with wilderness to a present subliminal level has played its crucial part in justifying the preservation of enormous areas as national parks which "intentionally or not erased the historical genocide of Native Americans from the cultural landscape by representing places like Yosemite National Park as pristine, uncontaminated, sacred space" (p. 158). French meticulously stabilizes her argument that expeditions of conquest have always been pivotal to transform the interconnected relationship of human and nonhuman nature that is exactly what has been done in the case

of Native Americans. How they have been thrown into the game of global capitalism and slavery. How the landscapes have been marred under this garb and how they have been demeaned into invaluable beings.

The notion of universality associated with America's wilderness conception is also challenged by Kylie Crane. She exclaims that this prevailing idea of wilderness goes through a critical transformation, even when transposed to the immediate cultural neighbours such as Australia and Canada. The stories of valour and masculinity in one region change into the tale of defeat and dispossessions in the other (2012).

3. Research Methodology

This research explores the trope of wilderness in accordance with Pakistan's geopolitical reality. The data selected to conduct the desired research consists of the novel Red Birds by Muhammad Hanif. For theoretical framework, this research is reliant on William Cronon's essay entitled The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature (1996) and Graham Huggan and Hellen Tiffins' Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment (2015). The rationale behind fusing these two theoretical underpinnings alludes to the ecocritical dimension of this study with a simultaneous emphasis on a postcolonial context.

Cronon (1996) in his essay The Trouble with Wilderness alters this whole privileged conception of wilderness and claims that it is a human and cultural conception that varies from one culture to another. Cronon boldly claims that wilderness is no doubt an elitist concept that has given rise only to elitism and capitalism. By making wildlife parks and reservation areas it has become a money-making site and an excursion trip for the upper strata of society.

While Huggan and Tiffin's Postcolonial Ecocriticism (2010) is a persuasive study that talks about the communion of postcolonial and ecocritical agendas. This ample work is a great document generating a critique of imperial power systems and power structures. The authors claim that the presently deteriorating conditions of the environment in postcolonial regions can never be properly apprehended by eliminating the historical imperial regimes. They extend their argument by maintaining that the imperial systems of the past have come to an end but their extended offshoots in the form of capitalism, neocolonialism, and neo-liberalism have entangled the whole world in their vicious claws. These modernistic economic reforms by them are considered as the "reinvention of imperial tradition" (p. 1).

This research is descriptive in its nature so the qualitative approach is utilized to conduct this research. Textual analysis is selected as a tool to carry out this research work as it helps to evolve various interpretations to a single text just not confining it to a fundamental truth or perception.

4. Data Analysis

This section deals with the textual analysis of Red Birds written by Muhammad Hanif. This fictional work has the persuasive power to show the wilderness of third world countries. Red Birds is replete with pungent satire on the unrestrained lust of America to seize power and control of the whole world. It is the tale of a deserted and unnamed land that is inhabited by 'living deads'. The whole story progresses with alternate voices of characters namely Mutt, Momo, Ellie, Father Dear, Mother Dear, Lady Flowerbody and Doctor. The background, against which the story is set, is a US Camp with a hanger. The whole landscape is the representation of a barren wasteland. This land is devoid of any vegetation and animals except some goats. It is the after-story of bombardments and annihilation, furthermore a realistic portrayal of "geographical violence" (Said,1993, p. 225).

The portrayal of landscape delineated in the novel bespeaks of all the cruelties and brutalities it has suffered at the hands of foreign masters. Though the novel is set in an unnamed place, it is undoubtedly akin to our own beloved land: the areas of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that have been destructed and bombarded by the US army to cleanse them up from any imminent danger. The destruction of land is comparable to the act of erasing identity as the colonized people share a deep bond with their respective lands. Furthermore, this land is the sole source of bringing them livelihood and "above all, dignity" (Fanon, 1961, p. 9).

The land portrayed in the novel is unquestionably the wilderness. The wilderness is devoid of any human beings because now the human-like species that lives there is more akin to senseless, lifeless objects who are just counting their remaining days of life aimlessly. These indigenous people have been transformed into submissive or imperceptible beings who just work as the domestic subjects of imperial powers (Pratt, 1985). The imperial forces have transformed them into dehumanized 'others' (Spanakos, 1998) and displaced the locals to the margins (Barry, 2012).

This place also tests human limits. The survival skills are a compulsion to stay alive here, so the novel also starts with the dilemma of survival in this unwelcoming land when Ellie, a US fighter pilot meets an unfortunate accident, crashing his expensive jet in a sandy desert. This was the very place that he came to bombard and eliminate from the world's map but accidentally, he himself fell on it. This place was like 'an endless sea of sand' (Hanif, p. 6) without any trace of life and habitation. Ellie wandered for almost six days in this vast peninsula and stated 'I can't see a single leaf of grass, not even dried up the bush. Earth is a hotplate that doesn't even allow for reptile tracks, even the scorpions seem to have abandoned this godforsaken desolation' (Hanif, p. 5). In his quest to find shade and something to eat he found a shabby hut and a pile of ash there. He sifted the ash to look for something 'of nutritional value' but to his utter dismay there was 'nothing'. He also viewed a 'big carter' which seemed to him 'the result of a thousand-pound bomb or a natural water reservoir that [had] dried up' (p. 10). This was the condition of this land that had gone barren with no presence of water and vegetation. Ellie himself proclaimed that there was 'no nourishment under that sand' (p. 58). Water that is considered the vital sign of life was scarce or more accurately to say 'absent' in this land.

Throughout the novel, Ellie termed this place as 'shithole' (p. 108), 'apocalypse' (p. 174), 'an open prison' (p. 177) and 'hellhole' (p. 182). This place was replete with 'annoying stillness' (p. 108). Ellie was disgusted with its 'desolate streets' (p. 26). This whole scenario

alludes to Said's abstract geographical distinctions of Orient and Occident (1977), as the west is blessed to have the symphony of birds and other creatures in their wilderness, but its counterpart is fortunate only to have the sole sound of the screeching alarm. The Orient is projected as a dangerous land and somehow, this binary relationship testifies to the colonial narrative "through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted, and finally brought under control" (1993, 225).

West adopts a somewhat lenient strategy to conserve the wilderness areas falling in their own territory. Though there also arises the outcry of marginalized and forcedly outcast natives, their voices are subdued under the huge proclamations of the sacred act of preservation and conservation. The conservation ideologies take a radical turn in the far-off territories. These territories are inhabited by evil, so it becomes somewhat necessary to be evil to fight with evil. Howard Zinn (2005) expounds on this historical violent demeanour of America where this nation takes this self-imposed responsibility of reformation and civilization upon its shoulders and does not even hesitate to resort to the options of violence and vehemence to accomplish his sacred task. So, for armed combat and conflict, the generation and production of war machinery become a compulsion. As modern "war has lost its well-defined contours" (Munkler, 2005, p. 3) so it diffuses and disseminates to the deeper parts of territory devouring the people and the natural landscapes (Gregory, 2011). War emerges as a significant tool firstly to alleviate boredom as well as to get rid of domestic affairs, secondly for recreation and rehabilitation, thirdly for championing the cause of conservation and preservation and last but not least for advancing capitalism.

Wars are originated under the garb of extinction of evil forces and to make the planet safer for the present and future generations. This is the agenda of America that he has been preaching and propagating under the justification of his intrusion in Middle Eastern, African, and Asian countries. But in reality, these Western monarchs imply this strategic "intervention" only to safeguard their own "national interests" (Kieh, 1992, p. 1). This agenda was also replicated in the said novel when Ellie confirms that he came to bombard this land as it was a 'hideout for some of the worst human scum' (p. 8). And undoubtedly it was the responsibility of Americans to restructure this geographical territory and furthermore 'to take care of that bit of Mother Earth' (p. 9). Ellie claims that he has been taught off and on to never indulge in overthinking 'about your wounds, or your wasting organs, worry about Mother Earth because she really is gonna die' (p. 15). This war machinery transforms the whole natural landscape into "militarized waste-scapes" (Deckard, 2015, p. 35).

As William Cronon (1996) had suggested in his article that the myth of wilderness entails in it the desire to put one's own responsibilities at bay, to yearn for an ideal place lying at the farthest corners of the region just to escape one's obligations. The same ideology was detected in Ellie's obsession to go to missions and take up extra opportunities to fly from his homeland and to avoid his dwindling marital relationship. It contends the idea that there was no need to carry out a mission, but they would do it just for the sake of their pleasure and more probably to spend the time in an alternate reality. This was the depressing state of home affairs that urged him to keep himself busy in changing the "geographies of the world" (p. 165) and to indulge himself in thinking that he is doing a more pious and sacred duty of conserving the planet and fencing the wilderness from any actual harm. As he had professed it time and again that 'the problem wasn't too much time in the briefing rooms, the problem was too much time with Cath' (ibid).

The conception of wilderness comes with the facilitation of elitist's recreation. These areas offer the site of rejuvenation and amusement. The war also provided these opportunities in the form of Hanger built on the refugee campsites. All the area is turned into desolation and barrenness, but the hanger is firmly stood there with all its glory and magnificence. Ellie also regarded hanger as an 'R&R facility' that is 'Rest and Recreation facility' (p. 190). It is a place of siesta for the pilots, relaxing under its domed exuberance. This place is rife with delicious food oblivious to all the wildness and wilderness around. Father Dear also observed the luxurious lifestyle of the hanger during her employment there. He used to recall all the liveliness and comfort in a nostalgic way after its shutting down. He could remember the presence of 'twelve thousand gallons in reserve fuel' (p. 196) while the community outside was deprived of this gold. He stated that 'There were eight types of bread on the buffet' (ibid) oblivious to the hunger outside. Colonel also termed war as a respite in this distant land. The proclamation of war and the subsequent ratification of delicious pancakes allude to the underpinning of recreation and respite under the garb of a horrific war. Ellie also asserted this recreation aspect by saying that 'It was always easier to bomb some far-off place than stay home and unload the dishwasher' (pp. 264-265).

There is no better prospect than warfare to vehemently advance the mechanism of capitalism. This novel also caters for these nefarious designs in an incisively humorous way. Many characters in the novel presented various perspectives on war and capitalism. Ellie while quoting Colonel stated that 'There is a war on and what is a war if not an opportunity, an opportunity to make up those extra points' (p. 6). From a soldier's perspective, war is an opportunity to raise the medals and ranks thus indirectly levelling up one's lifestyle and getting access to worldly opulent pursuits. Ellie also considers war as a prospect because what comes after the war is reconstruction and rehabilitation. White supremacists first destruct the territory, snatch every necessity of life, even tarnish the identity of people, and then do business on it. They send the therapists and psychologists to study the effects of horrible circumstances leashed by them, on the people's emotional and mental level.

The thing which startles is the embedding of war-torn cities into the convoluted fabric of capitalism. The destructed natives also capture the alluring essence of capitalism. Momo is the best example of it. He always thinks about the monetary benefits. The capitalistic tendencies seize the moral values from him when he starts making plans to flourish his Sand Global Project. According to this plan, he prospers the idea of reconstruction after the war and for reconstruction what is required, are cement and sand. And his place is rife with this commodity so he would sell it and make a profit from it. When his older brother gets the knowledge of his self-devised business endeavours, he reprimands him by saying that 'This sand is the earth you walk on, it's like selling your mother,' but he counter-questions him, 'what about all those countries that sell oil? 'Are they selling their mother's milk?' (p. 39).

It is the lure of shining vehicles and uniforms in the desert, that people entrenched in their own inferiority complex, start yearning to have all the bliss of their masters. It is the hunger and depravity that come to work. Albert Memmi (2013) has rightly expounded this very notion that the "deprivations of the colonized are almost the direct result of the advantages secured to the colonizer" (p. 10). In the novel, Father dear and Mother Dear send their beloved child to hanger under the prospect of financial stability but unfortunately find no solace. Instead, they are deprived of their beloved son. It can be rightly claimed that capitalism and deprivations go hand in hand. Capitalism creates a gulf between rich and poor. The rich get 'uniformed waiters serving them food in the middle of an ocean' and the poor

while 'drawing pictures of pitchers and crows and sitting under an apple tree' remain busy in idle planning to 'acquire that yacht'(p. 17). War advances the capitalistic creed. It also provides cheap labour for the smooth functioning of war machinery and to avoid any grease and malfunctioning. War also initiates an endless chain of supplies because 'what makes a business great is not production, not distribution, not HR, but a great supply chain'. It gives the prospects of businesses to flourish because every nook and corner of the war-torn city is filled with the imperial masters' commodities thus giving an impeccable boost to their own industries. Throughout the novel, we do not see a local thing. The whole area is replete with the US and UN supply chain. The people sit on a 'camping chair emblazoned with UNITED NATIONS FOOD PROGRAMME' (p. 107), travel in UN jeep, use the US army knife (p. 122). Momo wears a cap inscribed 'I heart NY' on it and terms it a token of ardent love and superiority as it gives him some kind of satisfaction. Mutt has a 'small sleeping bag with US ARMY SURPLUS NOT FOR SALE inscribed on it' (p. 109). Thus, there is no trace of local culture in the whole region as it has been replaced and wiped out by the imperialist's mark on even the smallest necessity of life. Richard Slotkin (1973) has termed this whole phenomenon as "regeneration through violence" (p. 5) because America reinvigorates its economy via all this carnage and exploitation.

The startling projection of characters as unnamed beings astounds the readers. Name is the identification and a revered aspect of any being. It denotes recognition and one's acclaimed self. This naming criterion segregates one individual from the other. But here all the characters are without name, without identity. They are addressed with the consideration of species such as Mutt or the relations such as Father Dear and Mother Dear. In addition to it, the other criteria to naming are any apparent physical attribute such as Lady Flowerbody because she always smells of fragrant flowers. Only three characters can be said to have names such as Ellie and Cath, thus alluding to their white supremacy. Momo is granted at least a nickname. That's maybe due to his mental and capitalist alignment with the masters and supremacists. This namelessness suggests the snatching of identities and nationalities thus humiliating the human species and vehemently throwing them to the lowest strata of nihilism and estrangement.

The conservation and the sacred cleansing politics never come in isolation. It must be shrouded in some appealing lure that could efficiently conceal the real capitalistic and neocolonial motives in it. The warmongering also came with the same championed beliefs. It highlighted the burgeoning but self-assumed responsibility of the West to clean the world from evil and brutes. To justify the wars, they raised the postulates of conservation as it was mandatory to save these lands from their own natives' exegesis. But to excel the boundaries was not a simple task in this developing world, so there was a compulsion to show oneself as the compassionate ally. America used the political strategy of financial support in favour of economically underprivileged countries just as bait to tend their governments under his feet. The promises of sustainable development were presented to hide the neocolonial power tactics and only to escalate the injustices thus profiting the elites only (Centeno & Cohen, 2013).

To preserve the territory portrayed in the novel, the same techniques were used when people were given lame assurances of progress and development. The description of the related incidents in the novel is an indirect attack on the bogus proclamations of betterment and advancement generated by the white masters. The justification to bring change in non-developed countries is elucidated by the episode of Mutt's brain-frying. Mutt describes the

deadliest day of his life when he got severely bruised and battered by the massive electric shock from the pole that had been planted with a promise to deliver electricity in this farthest impoverished region of the world. As these kinds of gestures had always remained unfulfilled in the past so the labourers forgot 'to earth the pole, as they were sure from their past experiences that this whole pole-wires transformer business was just a showpiece to steal more money' (p. 157). But unfortunately, 'someone had a bout of seasonal goodwill and released the electricity' (ibid) at the same time when Mutt was excreting the urine on the same pole. Electricity struck and his brain got fried. The conversion of an oasis into a wasteland was not an abrupt phenomenon but it was wrapped in a continuous process of sham development and slogans of progress and advancement. Momo suggested that 'They stole it brick by brick. Foundations were dug up and every single bit of concrete, mortar was taken away, steel wires were pulled with bare hands' (p. 13).

5. Conclusion

This research was initiated by the hypothesis that under the garb of much-popularized conceptions of conservation and preservation, America is playing a despicable game to strengthen its own hold in various places. The first research question dealt with the contrasting conception of wilderness, challenging the universality attached to this Euro-American trope. The above discussion reinforced this assumption that definitely Asian wilderness is entirely opposite to its Euro-American counterpart. This trope skillfully conceals the imperialistic brutalities in it. The analysis carved out a new dimension, terming this wilderness trope as an offshoot of neocolonialism and capitalism which under its attire gave the mandate to destabilize a running economy of the land.

The second question dealt with the analysis of the proposition of the myth of sustainable development in relation to this trope of wilderness. The findings suggested that certainly neo-colonial power politics was imbedded in this very trope which somehow legalized and accentuated the plundering of resources, environmental degradation and landscape deterioration of far-off lands thus creating a blood-smeared wilderness in the distant regions of the world. Immersed in his superiority complex and labelling himself as a champion of preservation and conservation, America played a filthy game in the far-off territories of the Middle East and Asia. The Asian wilderness that has been realistically charted out by Mohammad Hanif in Red Birds is startling to the core. The unnamed place presented here is the epitome of Asian Wilderness: barren, desolate, and fruitless. This land is objectified to the level as the humans walking on this land have also turned into inanimate objects. They are nameless beings, walking dead on this barren land. Being preservationist, American has played his part to alter the living territory into a dead land and has preserved this place from any human trammelling as no rational human is left out to advance and progress in these stagnant conditions. Now the starving beings inhabiting this place are dwelling on contaminated waste and have become a materialized being thinking about life in capitalistic strain such as Momo.

References

Anker, P. (2001). *Imperial ecology: Environmental order in the British Empire*, *1895-1945*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Barry, J. M. (2012). *Standing our ground: Women, environmental justice, and the fight to end mountaintop removal*. Ohio University Press.

Barton, G. A., Bennett, B. M., Vision, E. H. F. S. S., & Beattie, J. (1999). Andréassian, V.,'Review: Waters and forests from historical controversy to scientific debate. *Journal of Hydrology*, *291*(2004), 1–27.

Austin, G. (2002). Resources, techniques, and strategies south of the Sahara: Revising. *Science*, *95*, 244-246.

Buell, L. (1989). American pastoral ideology reappraised. *American Literary History*, *1*(1), 1-29.

Centeno, M. A., & Cohen, J. N. (2013). *Global capitalism: A sociological perspective*. John Wiley & Sons.

Cronon, W. (1996). The trouble with wilderness: Or, getting back to the wrongnature. *Environmental History*, *1*(1), 7-28.

Deckard, S. (2015). The land was wounded: War ecologies, commodity frontiers and Sri Lankan literature. *Ecocriticism of the Global South*, 35.

Fanon, F. (2004). The wretched of the earth, 1961. *Trans. Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press*, 6.

French, J. L. (2012). Voices in the wilderness: Environment, colonialism, and coloniality in Latin American literature. *Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas*, *45*(2), 157-166.

Garrard, Greg. (2005). *Ecocriticism*. New York: Routledge.

Gregory, D. (2011). The everywhere war. *The Geographical Journal*, *177*(3), 238-250.

Grove, R., & Grove, R. H. (1996). *Green imperialism: colonial expansion, tropical island Edens and the origins of environmentalism, 1600-1860*. Cambridge University Press.

Guha, R. (1989). Radical American environmentalism and wilderness preservation: A third world critique. *Environmental Ethics*, *11*(1), 71-83.

Hanif, M. (2018). *Red Birds*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Huggan, G., & Tiffin, H. (2015). *Postcolonial ecocriticism: Literature, animals, environment*. Routledge.

Kieh, G. K. (1992). Western imperialism in the Middle East: The case of The United States' military intervention in the Persian Gulf. *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 1-16.

Mellor, L. (2014). The lure of wilderness. In W. Louise. (Ed.). *The Cambridge companion to literature and the environ ment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Memmi, A. (2013). *The colonizer and the colonized*. Routledge.

Minteer, B. A., &Pyne, S. J. (2013). Restoring the narrative of American environmentalism. *Restoration Ecology*, *21*(1), 6-11.

Münkler, H. (2005). *The new wars*. Polity.

Nash, R. (2001). *Wilderness and the American mind*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Nosan, B. (2008). *The trouble with paradise: Exploring communities of difference in three American novels* [Undergraduate thesis, University of Michigan]. Retrieved from https://lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/honors/thesis-archive.html

Parajuli, P. (2001). How can four trees make a jungle? In D. Rothenberg and M. Ulvaeus. (Eds.). *The world and the wild: Expanding wilderness beyond its American roots,* (pp. 3-20). Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Pratt, M. L. (1985). Scratches on the Face of the Country; Or, what Mr. Barrow saw in the land of the bushmen. *Critical Inquiry*, *12*(1), 119-143.

Robertson, T. (2008). This is the American earth: American Empire, the Cold War, and American environmentalism. *Diplomatic History*, *32*(4), 561-584.

Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage.

Slotkin, R. (2000). *Regeneration through violence: The mythology of the American frontier, 1600-1860*. University of Oklahoma Press.

Spanakos, A. P. (1998). The canvas of the other: Fanon and recognition. *DisClosure: A Journal of Social Theory*, *7*(1), 11.

Zinn, H. (2005). The power and the glory: Myths of American exceptionalism. *Boston Review*, *30*(3), 20-22.

Adiga's Vision of Systemic Restructuration: A Deconstruction of *The White Tiger*

Zawar Hussain Hashmi
NUML, Islamabad

Farheen Ahmed Hashmi
NUML, Islamabad

Ayyaz Mahmood
NUML, Islamabad

Keywords	Abstract
• Arvind Adiga, • Deconstruction • Oppression • Postcolonial • Restructuration	*This study is a deconstructive analysis of the plot of Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger from a postcolonial perspective. It has been argued that the author wanted - in the novel - not only to expose the despotic social order but also to offer a formula for its (re)structuration (Giddens, 1990). It has been argued that the author has produced this discourse of resistance not only to show how to challenge but also how to appropriate, restructure and, ultimately, resettle the existing power relations. But the transformation that the protagonist undergoes subverts the authorial scheme instead of supporting it. This self-undermining failure has been traced through strategic reading employing deconstructive techniques as a research method. It has been found in the investigation guided by such techniques that the person, erstwhile oppressed, manages to seize power not for change but as the new master with different guise and, somewhat, euphemized tactics.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Genealogy of the Idea

This paper carries out a deconstructive study of Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*. The attempt has been made to establish that the story is thematically counterproductive. It is premised that the author attempts to exemplify a modus operandi - through the formulaic plot of the story - for the exposition, disruption and substitution of tyrannical social order but the end achieved subverts the end desired. Ironically enough, the protagonist snatches uphold and protect the ideological position that he rose to dismantle. The postcolonial concern of Adiga (Maji 2015; Schotland 2011; Svensson, 2020), against the prevalent exploitative conditions (Gagat, 2017; Pandit, 2017) was to propound a formula for emancipation and empowerment of the powerless in order to establish a new order. As per the authorial intent, Balram was expected to launch a symbolic struggle suggestive of a workable way for the displacement of the unjust to be replaced, in turn, by the just or, at least, more just. However, it has been found that Balram wins in the struggle, not for the desired change but, quite ironically, for the sustenance of the status quo much to the dismay of the reader. He becomes a master in his own turn and starts exercising the power of the capital (Khan, 2019). Thus, the end produced is counter to the end planned.

2. Literature Review

Postcolonial thought is typically concerned with the exposition of binary divide (i.e. 'self' and the 'other') and, subsequently, with challenging imperialistic hegemony and oppression (Ashcroft, 1995) to bring the uneven structure of the binary to equilibrium through mediation (Strauss, 1967). Post-colonialism is not contented with only exposing the tyranny but is also committed to finding a cure for it (Loomba, 2007). Apprehension regarding counter-productivity of postcolonial struggle is also expressed in postcolonial theory. Such a struggle is assumed to yield nothing more than a mere inversion of the binary structure. The result, thus produced, merely privileges the erstwhile under-privileged component of the binary and deposition of the privileged without any alteration in the oppressive principle behind the power structure or relation of the binary in point (Ashcroft et al. 1995). Deconstruction is the method used for the study of a text to see how it, inadvertently, undermines its own position and consequently leads to counter-productivity (Culler, 2014).

The idea, followed in this paper, is an intellectual engagement with the argument propounded in a paper by Mirjana M. Knežević (2015) on the same novel. The investigative framework of the said paper by Knežević is based on a poststructuralist and post-colonialist Derridean concept of binary opposites and Levi Strauss's idea of mediation between the opposite terms of the binary to minimize the tension as an attempt to lead the things towards a solution. According to the author the struggle between opposite terms of various binaries, constitutive of the deep structure of the novel, results in the creation of a locale as a newly created intermediary (and uncertain) space. The locus – thus created - has been viewed by the author as a position founded through (re)settlement as a solution. The current study agrees partially with Knežević's argument i.e. his idea of mediation. Mediation, as being the original intent of Adiga, is accepted hereby but it is, however, contended as not being compatible with (or exemplified by) the end achieved. Authorial intent is seen to have been undermined by the resolution phase of the story. Hence, the achievement – the solution or conclusion provided in the story - is viewed by this study as an exchange of positions, not mediation. Balram has,

according to this study, failed in negotiating new terms for a new social contract and in producing a new social order. The end produced is maintenance instead of mediation. It is viewed as merely a swap and not a reconciliation between the binary terms involved.

Adiga wanted to push the things, in the story, to a new social order through (re)structuration as conceptualized by Anthony Giddens wherein "all areas of personal and political life are increasingly ordered through dialogue rather than pre-established power relations" (Elliott, 2014, 161). The reflexive practices, according to Giddens, result in establishing the "mechanisms of dialogic democracy" (ibid). Achievement of such a social order as being the final agenda of Adiga is evidenced collectively by the available textual, co-textual and contextual clues as discussed hereinafter.

2.1. Guiding Questions in the Light of Literature Reviewed

Following are the fundamental questions raised by this inquiry to be answered by the ensuing debate.

Q1. In what sense does Adiga's real interest lie in making a case for systemic change rather than telling an individual's success story?

Q2. How is the *end-achieved* of the story subversive to the *end-planned*?

3. Research Methodology

This study depends mainly on the propositions of Post-colonialism and Marxism as a broad base for theoretical grounding of the ideological notions involved herein. Anthony Giddens' (1984) concept of structuration has been invoked to underpin critical self-awareness or reflexivity and systemic change. Giddens talks about structural changes at institutional and systemic levels. He argues that in the history of institutions forces of institutional self-awareness emerge as a natural outcome of the evolution. Such forces result in reflexivity within the system leading to the emergence of self-critical forces which ultimately restructure the systems for a shift and resettlement of the order and/or (dis/re)placement of status quo. Adiga's attempt has been evaluated in this theoretical perspective. 'White Tiger' – the hero of the novel – is seen as an emerging force of self-awareness but is unable to replace or even displace the existing order instead he, ultimately, subscribes to it.

Moreover, the analytical design relies on deconstructive strategies to expose self-undermining tendencies in the thematic aspects of the novel. Content analysis of the novel has been carried out through a filter of the selected framework. For this purpose, primary text was used for its close reading and in-depth understanding. The plot of the novel has been the main focus. Balram's struggle for emancipation has been viewed in the background of Fanon's (1963) concept of violent reaction for decolonization after prolonged colonization.

The post-colonial perspective has been used in numerous studies of this novel to explain the relationship between the 'I' and the 'Other' in the internally colonized (Blauner, 1969) Indian Society infected by the worst examples of oppression and exploitation. Adiga obviously follows the Marxist division of the society by dividing people into only two classes i.e. 'Big Bellies' and 'Small Bellies'. He exposes the troubled areas within the ostensibly comfortable

relationship between these classes by defining their principle of coexistence as "eat or get eaten". Balram intimates the Chinese prime minister;

Please understand, Your Excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness. (p. 10)

The basic premise of the study is that Adiga's concern was not only to provide an example of how to rise in India but to provide a complete framework of a new social contract free of oppression and tyranny. Balarm's struggle was expected to provide a successful course of action towards this end but in fact, it did not. Adiga achieved, no doubt inadvertently, an end subversive to his plan. Balram succumbs to *'Kurtz Complex'1* and partakes in the unspeakable rites of perpetrating what he stood up to check. This self-subversive tendency of the novel qualifies for a deconstructive study.

4. Data Analysis

Discussion, guided by the objectives of the study, has been made to find answers to the research questions raised above under various headings in the following.

4.1. Formulaic Plot

The author's vested plan in giving formulaic shape to the plot is clear. It has been done to lead the story to a prescribed end that is the establishment of a truly democratic social order through systemic shift illustrating – symbolically in the fictional world – a possible course of action for change in the real world. Adiga has deconstructed the viciously exploitative design of the existing order of Indian social fabric (Sangeeta, 2015) by exposing domination, aggression and tyranny through binary division of the existing order. The novel is based on a theme-driven plot designed to yield a prescribed end. However, the problem arises when the unfolding of the incidents serves to subvert the theme it was supposed to sub-serve. The incidents lead the plot astray to end up achieving contrary to what was aimed at.

Balram has been presented as a model persona that lives out a form of solution aiming to show how the established order should be reconstituted after the demolition of its existing form (Maji, 2015). He has presented a model of an emancipator's attempt to unsettle the oppressive order of the hegemonic "coop" to restructure it on truly democratic or – at least – more democratic norms. There is authorial design in making the protagonist see through the oppressor's plan, scheme smartly, wait patiently, rebel timely, capture effectively and, then, behave differently after displacing the oppressor from the centre to replace him. A sense of Adiga's plan for setting up a new and better or – most probably - an ideal order is revealed after reading the novel to its end. One is easily carried away by the success of Balram. However, a simple critical look at what Balram becomes after his socioeconomic transition reveals a reversal of Adiga's plans. His failure, in demolishing the "rooster coop" for reconstitution of the existing hegemonic order in non-hegemonic form, is revealed when his deconstructive rendition (Maji, 2015) is subjected to deconstruction in turn.

The enthusiasm, force and power lent to Balram as the symbolic character for emancipation are to make him representative of the oppressed. It signifies the struggle of have-nots as a class and not that of an individual success story (Yadav, 2011). The representational nature

and symbolic value of Balram's character have been debated by a large number of studies. For example, Sangeeta (2015) observes:

> *Some critics may denounce the hasty and haphazard ways of Balram in killing his master and possessing his capitals to rise. It seems that Balram who was on periphery comes to be the centre and this is how on ethical grounds, his action may be said to be too individualistic and Machiavellian. But then none can deny the human elements of protest and desire for social change in Balram's action. (p.3)*

This is the cause of Adiga's interest in making him an emblematic hero of a formulaic plot as the destination of Balram seems to have been pre-determined. The school inspector is made to say while pointing his cane at Balram:

> *You, young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thugs and idiots. In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals—the creature that comes along only once in a generation?" I thought about it and said: "The white tiger." "That's what you are, in this jungle. (p. 22)*

Thus, the end was planned to offer a solution to the troubled relationship of the binaries. But the solution, instead, is an initiation of a new troubled relation inversing the binary link in the one-on-one relation but without any change in the larger social fabric based on oppressive binary structure. Balram undergoes a circumstantial as well as mental or spiritual change. His shift needed him to change so as to present an ideal contrast to the exploiters of the system (i.e. the masters sitting privileged in the existent pattern of binaries). Thus Balram ends up undermining his own stated or anticipated position to the disappointment of the reader. The intended position is undermined by the position achieved. The internal change of Balram transforms him into his ex-master - as a kind of metamorphosis - whom he stood up to eliminate as a symbol of unjust power. Balram, presumably, is more sinister as he carries out the master's plan with complete awareness of the evil that he himself had fallen prey to. Thus, it can be counted as Balram's fall instead of his rise in ethical terms - he stood up to implement after their adequate redefinition. It is a fall from a *rooster coop* to another *rooster coop* different, superficially, in form but not in the essence. The change does not occur in the structural principles of the oppressive and exploitative social fabric determining the loci of various nodes: functioning as the defining spaces of agential possibilities. This point is emphasized because it is the underlying principle that awards discriminatory positions to the entities which the entities (individuals), per se, cannot assume (Benson, 2002).

4.2. Balram's Heroic Villainy

Balram Halwai (later, the White Tiger), a symbolic character and the titular anti-hero (Deswal, 2014), is made to show heroic villainy as part of the author's design. The ironic undertone used by Adiga, in sketching Balram's villainy, is suggestive of the author's intention. It is by authorial design that his virtue and benignity are masked behind his apparent vice and malignity; while his heroism is masked behind his apparent villainy. Balram is an ironic depiction of a character that commits heroic villainy all knowingly and in compliance with the author's deliberate design. This can be found reflected in his confusion with regard to the perpetration of the deeds that he finds very difficult to determine the moral value of. It is especially where individual cases of his deeds can be judged on

conflicting moral standards. For example, he commits murder not merely for the freedom of millions of people but to rescue them from a type of life worse than death. His character is paradoxically heroic. He is not presented as an outright villain so that his metamorphosis may be justified. Therefore, Adiga seems to have been misled in making an Ashok of a Balram.

Balram has probably been used as an instrument by disgruntled Adiga to give vent to his feeling of disgust and extreme hatred against the status quo infested with oppression, injustice, inhumanity and what not. His acute disgust for the opponent's tyranny makes him create a tool tyrannical enough to subdue his most hated enemy. He hates the oppressor because he loves, sympathizes and sides with the oppressed. This hatred drags him to a morbidly hyperbolic reaction which plays a strong role in the creation of a white tiger from Balram Halwi. The character, as a result, is infused with such an amount of devilish energy which leads him, ultimately, to break out of the control of his creator (the author). The White Tiger upsets the plan by producing something quite opposite to the authorial intent.

The world of Balram's heart has been presented in attractive colours as part of the scheme for the ennoblement of his character. He is in no way utterly depraved; Adiga, instead, depicts him in such a light that proves Balram to have no other way except to do what he did for a greater cause. He had to uproot the evil that had roots so deep - in reach - and so complex - in manner - that any attempt to uproot them without collateral damage was found to be impossible. Removal of some healthy parts became inevitable to get rid of the cancerous sore. It makes Balram a case of ennobled villainy. This can be detected in his feelings when he rebels against his granny by not agreeing to marry and by spilling the chicken curry especially cooked for him. It is not only a case created to show the coexistence of vice and virtue but to show the existence of vice for virtue. .

> *"No!" I pushed the plate so hard it went flying to a corner and hit the wall and spilled the red curry on the floor. "I said, I'm not marrying!" She was too stunned even to yell. (p. 52)*

And then next we find expression of virtuous intent behind this villainous reaction:

> *I couldn't stop thinking of Kishan's body. They were eating him alive in there! They would do the same thing to him that they did to Father—... (pp. 52, 53)*

4.3. Systemic Shift as Reform Agenda

Adiga is concerned with the system as a whole and not the rise of an individual. His technique is definitely deconstructively grounded in postcolonial ideological position (Yadav, 2011). He exposes the power vested in ideological structures and involved in controlling, constituting and reproducing its object i.e. *the inferior other* (Yadav, 2011). Therefore, it has been rightly discussed as a symbolic rise of the subaltern that represents the whole population of *dark India* (Chittangadan, 2019). It is reflected in Balram's discourse when he propounds the same while addressing the Chinese prime minister in his letter:

> *Do you know about Hanuman, sir? He was the faithful servant of the god Rama, and we worship him in our temples because he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love, and devotion. (p. 13)*

Adiga's systemic-level interest is clear so, the case presented by him cannot be treated as an individualistic example of breaking the yoke. He wants to envision a land with new social order as he loathes the tyranny of the existing one. He expresses his disgust against the servility that the poor are subjected to when he discusses how he used to wash the dogs of his masters. The worst form of dehumanization is signified by the pungency of the tone that Adiga overloads Balram's words with when he makes him express how he was treated as inferior even to the dogs of the rich. Senior servant of his masters admonishes Balram to teach him how to treat the dogs thus:

> *"Don't pull the chain so hard! They're worth more than you are!"* (Pg47)

He exposes the sinister design of the exploitative social structure but only this does not suffice for him. He sounds keen to present a possible solution i.e., to suggest a way how to challenge and change it. The solution provides a formula to the oppressed against the oppressor**.** Balram announces proudly having achieved the solution while commenting on the motive of killing his master.

> *Yet even if all my chandeliers come crashing down to the floor—even if they throw me in jail and have all the other prisoners dip their beaks into me—even if they make me walk the wooden stairs to the hangman's noose—I'll never say I made a mistake...* (p. 193)

Balram remains successful in exposing and challenging the evil but fails in replacing it with the desired good. He does not become only *'his own master'* but, shockingly enough, master of others as well. He ends up as a tool of power's nefarious design. With this, his basic plan of exposing, resisting and changing oppressive order comes crumbling down. Control of the capital gives him control over others and he differs from the master's technique only superficially. It is nothing more than the colonizer's camouflage (Loomba, 2007). The falsity of his proclaimed difference from the ex-master becomes transparent when his sympathy to his servants is juxtaposed to the way he coerces the parents of the boy - killed by one of his drivers - into accepting the blood-money.

> *"There are twenty-five thousand rupees in here. I don't give it to you because I have to, but because I want to. Do you understand?"* (p. 68)

The agenda of renegotiating terms for a better social contract to constitute a new social order is obvious. Balram stands up to confront existing order characterized by oppression (Haitham, 2013). His symbolic value as *the White Tiger* is to challenge and unsettle the system and not to celebrate his personal success. Balram's struggle was not simply meant to represent the shift of a single individual from the periphery to the centre because it does not complete Adiga's project. It would mean a continuation of the oppression through the exchange of positions by the binary terms. It would be a matter of snatching the voice of the opponent without finding one's own resulting in mere inversion of the binary while keeping its tyrannical structure intact. Adiga's plan, on the contrary, is obviously not the replacement of the beneficiaries in the oppressive design but its demolition for reconstruction on a *truly democratic principle.* That he has such a plan is clear from the tone he sets right from the beginning.

Adiga is interested in problematizing and, then, mediating binary relations to bring them to a position of dialogic equilibrium. He is trying to show a course or, rather, the only course of action available for social mobility to the underdogs (Haitham, 2013). Balram has been

made to act as a character-type of a rebel who uses a modus operandi for emancipation. He symbolizes an anti-oppression force that claims agential power required thereby to carve out his career and direct his own circumstances (Maji, 2015). But this force of anti-oppression, self-contradictorily, perpetrates oppression.

Balram commits the disgusting crime of murdering and becoming a cause of the massacre of his own family. But he has to do so against himself for the greater cause of emancipation. He is definitely so disgruntled with the exploitation and wants freedom at any cost. He seems to have come to the conclusion that enough is enough. It should be now or never whatever the cost. He believes such sins are necessary for the virtue so great to be achieved and that is uplift of the distressed, the much-cherished ideal of freedom, liberty and equality, in summary, reformation of the system at large.

4.4. From Resistance to Perpetration

Adiga's intention is undermined by his rendition. The wild force of resistance turns into a polite power of oppression in the end. His chicanery, in the threatening tone, when he confronts the parents of the boy killed by his driver, serves as clear evidence.

> *"There are twenty-five thousand rupees in here. I don't give it to you because I have to, but because I want to. Do you understand?" (188)*

Yet, the new coercion holds a different face as well as the technique with possibly and temporarily (as long as it is also seen through in turn) a more acceptable way. However, he forces the divorced *self* (because the hero has broken up with what previously was his own class and was covered by 'I') into the disciplined *other* with the erstwhile, abhorred force of capital. The villainous hero falls in Kurtz' style and partakes in the villainy that he had stood up to disrupt and discipline.

The new master exercises the power of the capital with changed strategies. The old imperial power is exercised in a novel manner by the new instrument - after replacing the old - with the result that the mediation efforts (Knežević, 2015) fizzle out and the binary tension remains unresolved. The efforts of Adiga abort and Balram is found trapped by the lure of verisimilitude in the search for real emancipation. The desired end sublimates into a merely utopian dream – failure of actualization. In intellectual terms, the 'rooster coop' is doomed for its absolute relativity and yields him no stable position. Balram comes out of one 'rooster coop' - that he finds his ilk trapped into - and gets trapped into another i.e. colonizer's coop.

> *The last stage in my amazing success story, sir, was to go from being a social entrepreneur to a business entrepreneur. This part wasn't easy at all (180).*

Again:

> *Once I was a driver to a master, but now I am a master of drivers (182).*

The story can be divided into these two phases of social entrepreneurship and business entrepreneurship. The objective of social entrepreneurship is undermined by the objective of business entrepreneurship. It is a kind of reversal. This business entrepreneurship - what he struggled against to expose, disrupt and uproot - is, later, ironically used as survival by Balram.

Balram's decision of selling everything and opening a school for real education sounds hollow if seen in the perspective of his power that he exercises through existent administrative machinery to hush the parents of the boy killed by his driver. It is nothing more than political chicanery and rhetoric of the colonizer (Caprio, 2017) for exploitative gains. The figure that Balram becomes is a story of the sustenance of capitalist control which clearly subverts the author's grand plan that went in Balram's making. It seems as if Adiga has been carried too far on the thrust of intense disgust he had against the exploitation in point. He has probably been misled by the force of his anger. Therefore, the launching pad he used to pitch Balram against the opponent proved a bit too powerful so as to carry Balram far beyond the target orbit.

5. Conclusion

The anecdote of Balram's success is merely an incident of the triumph of capitalist exploitation. Balram's rise does not provide an example of successful disruption and modification of the foundational principle of the system as Adiga had evidently planned. It is clear that such a principle has been exposed but not (successfully) disrupted, displaced and, in turn, replaced. The story better exemplifies an anti-absolutist stance about power as enunciated by Foucault (1991) than systemic (re)structuration consequential upon critical self-awareness or reflexivity as envisioned by Giddens (2013). It shows how an oppressive system can possibly be permissive to internal mobility but it does not serve as an example of a transition resulting in the systemic shift. Balram rises to represent the unprivileged component of the binary to negotiate terms with the privileged one to come to a balance (Knežević, 2015) as a result of mediation. For this, inevitably, Balram had to achieve some vantage ground to qualify for such negotiation. But once he ensconces himself to such a position through the counter design and necessary force, he succumbs to Kurtz Complex1 and partakes in master's nefarious design. This is the point where he loses legitimacy to represent the indigent or inferior component of the binary that he stood up for. Thus, Balram's reflexive efforts do not reproduce reality as propounded by Giddens by coming to a dialogic conclusion as aimed at by Adiga but result in the sustenance of the status quo.

References

Adiga, A., & Petermeier, A. (2010). *The white tiger*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Benson, C. (2002). *The cultural psychology of self: Place, morality and art in human*

Blauner, R. (1969). Internal colonialism and ghetto revolt. *Social Problems*, *16*(4), 393-408.

Caprio, M. E. (2017). Janus-faced colonial policy: Making sense of the contradictions in Japanese administrative rhetoric and practice in Korea. *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies*, *17*(2), 125-147.

Chittangadan, M. (2019). Arvind Adiga's The White Tiger as symobl of subaltern defiance. *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society*, *21*(8), 386-389.

Culler, J. (2014). *On deconstruction: Theory and criticism after structuralism*. Routledge,.

Elliott, A. (2014). *Contemporary social theory: An introduction*. Routledge.

Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and power*. Pearson Education.

Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth: Tr. from the French by Constance Farrington*. Grove Press.

Foucault, M. (1991). *Discipline and Punish: the birth of a prison*. London, Penguin.

GAGAT, N. (2017). Social issues in Arvinda Adiga's The White Tiger: An investigation. *The Achievers Journal: Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture*, *2*(4).

Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Giddens, A. (2013). *The consequences of modernity*. John Wiley & Sons.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2006). (Eds.). *The post-colonial studies reader*. Taylor & Francis.

Haitham, H. (2013). *Discourse of entrepreneurship in The white tiger*. Lehigh University.

Knežević, M. (2015). Mediation and deconstruction of binary hierarchy in Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger. *Facta Universitatis-Linguistics and Literature*, *13*(1), 43-53.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1967). *Structural anthropology*, New York, Doubleday Anchor Books.

Loomba, A. (2007). *Colonialism/postcolonialism*. Routledge.

Maji, S. (2015). The subaltern can speak: A study of Arvind Adiga's The White Tiger. *IJAR*, *1*(8), 351-352.

Pandit, N. (2017). Countering global metaphors of the India growth story through local ones in Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger and Last Man in Tower. *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, *8*(5).

PY, A. K. (2019) Voice from the darkness: Symbolizing the subaltern in Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger. *Research Revie: International Journal of Multidisciplinary 4*(4).

Sangeeta. (2015). A study of Arvind Adiga's The White Tiger *Indian Streams Research Journal*, *5*(2).

Schotland, S. D. (2011). Breaking Out of the Rooster Coop: Violent Crime in Aravind Adiga's White Tiger and Richard Wright's Native Son. *comparative literature studies*, *48*(1), 1-19.

Svensson, M. (2020). Postcolonial literature in Swedish EFL teaching:: A Didactic consideration of teaching postcolonial literary concepts with examples from Arvind Adiga's The White Tiger. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1448810&dswid=7091

Yadav, R. B. (2011). Representing the postcolonial subaltern: A study of Arvind Adiga's The White Tiger. *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, 2(3), 1-7.

Academic Writing and Issues of Identity: A Focus on Texts and Practices of a Postgraduate Student

Nagina Kanwal
University of the Punjab, Jhelum Campus

Ambreen Shahnaz
COMSATS University, Wah Campus

Malik Ajmal Gulzar
Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad

Keywords

- Academic writing
- Identity
- Academic Literacies Approach
- Higher Education
- Systemic Functional Linguistics

Abstract

Writing in English is essential at the higher education level. The present study seeks to find the complexities involved in academic writing at the postgraduate level. The paper aims to explore dominant literacy practices associated with writing and the way writing intersects with identity by focusing not only on the texts but also the perspectives of a postgraduate student. The study demands an in-depth analysis of manifold data collected through different phases; therefore, only one postgraduate student is chosen, and her written narrative, interview, and her academic texts are taken for the study. Academic Literacies Approach and ethnographic method of research are used to look into the studied phenomenon while Systemic Functional Linguistics is used for the linguistic analysis of the academic texts which proves to substantiate the findings. The frequent themes that arose from this research are aspects of identity that the student identify with or reject, and those that she aspires to represent. The findings help to achieve a precise and true understanding of writing at university, the issues of the writer's identity, and those of the issues related to disciplinary and academic conventions. The study reveals the student's concerns about the demands placed upon them by the teachers, disciplines, and institutions broadly which they must conform to as well as the need to adhere to established writing practices and academic conventions in order to succeed.

1. Introduction

Writing is an important component of academic achievement; mastering academic writing can help a student accomplish his or her academic goals, or it can lead to failure. Students earn grades and marks based on their written work, such as written assignments, examinations, academic essays, and academic research, which are used to create their profiles and predict their future academic performance. As a result, writing is an essential component of academic performance. The writing process, on the other hand, is an often-overlooked topic, and the intricacy of its nature is sometimes disregarded since it is viewed as a separate activity rather than being completely interwoven with other elements of a student's academic life.

In Ivanic's tradition, the present article focuses on students' viewpoints, where she highlights the process of writing after collecting student-writers' views and opinions on their writing experiences; and also gets insights into academic traditions that surround their writings (Ivanic, 1998). As a result, it is critical to include the perspectives of key stakeholders like students, who are the active participants in the meaning-making process at universities (Lea & Street, 1998), and to investigate their complex relationship with their institutions' existing literacy practices and discourses when studying academic literacies. Javed, etal. (2018) also stress that students' learning processes must be studied, as well as the impact of the classroom structure on their learning.

The current study explores the phenomenon of writing at university and identity construction as well as student's writing problems by drawing on the Academic Literacies Approach and the methods used within this approach. The paper aims to explore dominant literacy practices associated with writing and the way writing intersects with identity by focusing not only on the texts but also the perspectives of a postgraduate student. In order to take a complete picture the written narrative of the research participant has also been obtained which contains information about her literacy history, which proves much helpful in gaining insights into the phenomenon under study.

The research objectives are listed below.

     i.   To investigate how language constructs identity in the writing process, as well as the impact of institutional aims and academic practices in shaping a student's literate identity.

    ii.   To examine the student's perceptions on academic writing and its challenges.

2. Literature Review

In general, the scholarship on writing employs three major viewpoints to investigate the phenomena of writing in higher education. When it comes to language teaching and learning, the Academic Socialization Model takes an academic language approach. This model focuses on students' assimilation into discipline-based and subject-based discourses and genres. As Lea and Street (2006) argue that in order to succeed students acquire those literacy practices which are associated with their disciplines or subject area community (p. 369). Conversely, in the Study Skills Approach language and literacy are viewed as a set of abilities that should be taught and transmitted to individuals in various situations. It is based on behavioral psychology and sees language acquisition as a cognitive process, with a focus on the language's surface elements such as spelling and syntax and it emphasizes "the institutional nature of what counts as knowledge in any particular academic context" (Lea &

Street, 2006, p. 369). A number of studies (Ivanic, 1998; Barton, 2006; 2009; Lea, & Crème, 2008; Lea, 2009; Lillis, 2001; Lillis, & Scott, 2007; Lillis, & Turner, 2010) explore the phenomenon of writing by adopting Academic Literacies Approach. This approach focuses both on texts and practices and emphasizes the need to comprehend the use of academic literacy practices in the learning process and creating knowledge. Lea's (1999) study on academic literacies and learning in higher education address these while focusing on literacy practices and related issues of writing.

Many researchers have explored students' experiences and the role of context in the learning process (Gibbs, 1994; Mortan et al., 1997); however, the role of language in the learning process is an untouched area. Even if it is done, language issues remain isolated and detached as they are not interlinked with individual and social practices and context that might help in the overall improvement of the teaching process (Lea, 1999). Lillis (1999) looked into the difficulties of gaining entry to higher education in the United Kingdom, focusing on non-traditional students and their experiences in higher education in order to get insights into the norms that regulate students' academic writing. Tahir et al. (2017) argue that the spectrum of education has now widened with the need to train the learner according to global trends.

In Pakistan, numerous researches focus on examining scholarly writing with relation to English language education in Pakistani academic institutions, as well as multilingual learners' efficiency (Qadir, 1996; Hussain, 2000; Shah, 2001; Zubair, 2001; Rahman, 2001; Mansoor, 2005; Haider, 2005; Mashori, 2007; Shamim, 2008; Samiullah, 2011; Kulsoom, 2013; Manan et al., 2017; Riaz et al., 2017). The current study is groundbreaking since it is the first to employ an Academic Literacies Approach to investigate the sample student's writing and identity, as well as her opinions on writing issues.

3. Research Methodology

The study is exploratory-interpretive in nature, and it is a qualitative ethnographic study based on Street and Lea's (1997, 1998, and 1999) study of student writing in higher education, which they named the Academic Literacies Approach. The study demands an in-depth analysis of manifold data collected through different phases; therefore, only one postgraduate student from a higher education institution is chosen, and her written narrative, interview, and her academic texts are obtained for the study.

In-depth semi-structured interviews that elicit information on literacy history and 'talk around the text' are the most common approaches employed in Academic Literacies. The researcher in literacy history obtains autobiographical stories of language and academic literacy acquisition in order to comprehend contemporary practices and determine an individual's life journey in a greater socio-historical context. In semi-structured interviews, participants are encouraged to express their opinions and insights on academic writing in ways that are not pre-determined by the researcher in order to identify students' concerns. 'Thick participation' (Sarangi, 2007) helps to gain insights into institutional requirements in terms of forms of representation, discourses, epistemological framings, and particularly their role in shaping students' identities and learning experiences at higher education institutions when used in conjunction with interviews, written narratives, and textual data.

a. Systemic Functional Linguistics

The writer's linguistic and functional choices, according to Halliday (1973), reflect the social conditions and their impact on his perspective. The text is not separated from its context of usage since SFL text analysis takes into consideration linguistic resources as well as their social, cultural, and ideological implications. The theoretical framework and analytical techniques are meant to reveal the text-context connection. To examine the texts, we used the three Meta functions of Systemic Functional Linguistics: ideational, interpersonal, and textual Meta functions. We have taken five linguistic features, i.e., verb processes; clause structure; nominalization; tense, mood, and modality; lexis, and applied them to the sample writings.

4. Findings and Analysis

Findings are obtained from the written narrative of the research participant as well as from her interview.

a. Case History of the Post Graduate Student

Samia brought up took place in Urdu speaking environment and she started studying English from her mother when was three years old. Her mother taught her the Holy Quran after she learnt Urdu and English language. "So the entire language learning experience I had was with my mum", according to her. In class three, she was accepted into a middle-class private English-medium school. She claims that the language reading and writing exercises there did not help her improve her language skills. As a result, "my mother's lessons served as the foundation for my language learning, which I depended on throughout my academic career."

She liked to read popular Urdu children's magazines when she was younger, but she did not devote much time to reading later in life due to her commitment to her academics, since she was a high achiever who needed to keep her job. Her passion for reading led her to choose English Literature as a major in her Bachelor's degree.

She also works at the International Islamic University in Islamabad as a visiting instructor (English Language Teacher). She describes her undergraduate writing experience as follows: "Whenever I have an assignment due, I feel extremely burdened, but that burden does not motivate me to do it early; instead, I am in the habit of completing it at the eleventh hour. With addition, I do seek my teachers' assistance in writing projects, but before doing so, I attempt to read through the relevant material on my own so that I can spot the areas where I may be having difficulties. Conclusion and recommendation sections are, in general, my issue areas. It's quite tough for me to summarize the situation and provide the suggestions. Even if I do a good job when I do it, it is always a challenging work for me."

Her perspective on students' multilingualism and its link to writing is: "When it comes to being multilingual and how much it helps, my experience has been that it inhibits English writing because thinking in my native language and writing in a second language does not help much".

> She goes on to say more about writing
>
> "When I first started my degree, I anticipated that reading would be a significant challenge for me, but the issues that I have encountered thus far have all been related to writing, particularly during the examination, when I am expected to write a lot and critically examine things in a short amount of time, which is extremely stressful for me and a significant challenge. By and large, my course work experience has been positive, but what stresses me out the most is this examination, which has less time and requires more writing."

Our research participant's narrative displays her academic experience, writing practices, worries, and issues. Multilingualism, according to Samia, is a barrier to successful writing since it makes it difficult to write in English because it is ineffective to think in one's own language and write in a second one. Her case study shows the complexities of academic writing as well as the misunderstanding that exists among student-writers. Samia considers writing in tests to be a tremendous struggle since she is expected to write a lot and critically examine things in a short amount of time. What stresses her out the most is writing in examinations because she has less time and more to write.

b. Findings from the Interview

The following section presents the findings elicited from our research participant's responses.

i. Perspectives on writing and identity

We talk about our participant's perspectives on her writing processes and practices, as well as how her work reflects her sense of self. Certain aspects of her writing she completely owns, while others she does not and wishes to better. Samia not only took complete ownership of the task but also remarked that her "real self" dominated and affected her work automatically, despite how she desired to sound. When we discussed the impression she intended to make with this project, she said:

Samia*: I attempted to present myself as a competent individual, but in the end, my true self emerged, which is to relax and, as a result, not come up with the best of yourself. I would say this assignment accurately portrays me.*

We also discussed academic writing traditions, and she stated that they had become a part of her writing, as well as a part of her learning, allowing her to appear informed.

Me: We observed that you used passive voice sparingly in your project...

Samia: *Exactly, we've always been informed that using personal pronouns in research publications and all things isn't appreciated.*

Me: I can't think of a single time when you've uttered the words "I" or "us."

Samia: I've strictly adhered to that...

Me: Was that something that came naturally to you, or did you try to show off your personality in a more active way?

Samia: It's become second nature to me.

When asked if she opposes it, she says no.

Samia: No, I don't think so. I consider myself to have learned something, therefore I'd say k... I've discovered something]

Her replies occasionally indicate that she has consciously established the persona to which she aspires in her work. Samia answered when asked about the manner she presented herself in this assignment.

Samia: *Whenever I do an assignment, I want to be presented as a knowledgable person, regardless of what I've contributed in this assignment. Even if I'm not working on an assignment or participating in a class discussion, I always strive to sound knowledgeable, and if I don't have knowledge in a particular subject, I attempt to remain mute. The assignment is the same way, if I ever feel like I'm lacking I just skip that part.*

Samia wants to give the sense of someone who knows a lot about the subject; she doesn't want to come across as a novice, which she has attempted to convey in her writing as well.

Me: So, in terms of your identity as an English linguistics student, could you elaborate?

Samia: *I'd say the same thing again: I want to come across as someone who knows what they're talking about. If I use such terminology, I'd be glad to sound like someone who works in the subject of linguistics, such as an educated linguist writing this.*

Samia communicates a sense of complete ownership of her argument when she asserts that her writing style is not influenced by anybody; rather, it is entirely her own and the result of a lifetime of study.

Me: Have any of your teachers had an impact on the way you write? (in both terms in expression or in content).

Samia*: I won't state that my writing style is not impressed by anyone; since I know that whatever I write, I always begin with a background and a general remark. It also follows the rules, such as beginning with a hook and so on. It is my own way of writing; I might have adapted the style from my previous readings, and it is now my own writing style.*

She mentioned this during the discussion of her written work and the parts of her work which she owns because they reflect her own thoughts and feelings.

Samia: *My subjectivity is present; I have analyzed them subjectively, as if no one were present to inform me that this theory is more suited. I just picked it out at random because I was short on time and had to limit myself to just one movie, so I had to locate the things in it and scrutinized it in subjective manner, it was my own idea that this dialogue would be more appropriate and so..*

Students should not be constrained in their writings, according to Samia, because this will limit their thoughts and prevent them from producing high-quality work. She also highlighted the limitations that prevent them from portraying themselves accurately in writing, as they were unable to project themselves in their writing owing to a variety of disciplinary and

academic restrictions. When we were talking about academic writing conventions, she expressed her worry.

Samia: *In some ways, the norms are absolutely suitable; you must be clear and unambiguous in what you're going to do in the initial stages of your writing.... However, we should be given complete freedom in the discussion section, in terms of how we want to conduct our research and how we want to handle our findings. When I was writing my thesis, I believed that if I had been given some freehand, I could have done a better job.*

In response to a question on writing structure and headers, she said,

Samia: *the writing must have the structure, but according to our own unique way; I'm writing in a single paragraph, outlining my goals and significance rather than using subheadings... that my objectives begin here and conclude there, and that the significance begins with the title... Giving headers is childish, but we continue to do so.*

Me: Perhaps that makes it easier for the reader to simply glance at it and...

Samia: Yeah, simply to make things easier for them, I'm now working in phonology, so I did recordings and transcribed them, as well as prepare tables and other things. I didn't see it was much hard, but it was a two-month process. When I did it my way, I centred tables and analyzed them in a single row, and when I approached my supervisor about it, she advised me to split my tables and split my analysis, which made me think we were still there (hadn't improved).

Me: When we're writing something, we have to keep the reader in mind at all times.

Samia: *Although we are given the status of scholars, M. Phil scholars, we are not regarded as such. We're still told what lines to go after, and I'm not one of those people who defy norms. But there are times when I wanted myself to be presented rather than conventions taking me over.*

She has a variety of answers; sometimes she joyfully follows academic traditions, while other times she rejects them and prefers to go her own way. As a result, the participant's responses to her own images were nuanced and diverse.

Me: If you were given the opportunity to rewrite that assignment, would you like to modify it.

Samia: *I'd like to modify a few sections of it, but not all of them. I'm happy with the way I analysed it because it was the only way I could think of. I believe that was the greatest part, and since you've asked about the portions that show your identity, I won't change the analysis. However, several sections, such as the literature review... I would add a little more to this section, such as rearranging everything in a more logical order, and changing a few chapters, such as the first two.*

Me: What do you own and what do you disown in this assignment?

Samia: *As I previously stated, I could have done a better job introducing my idea in the introduction section, and I could have done it in a more professional manner. I do not own this completely, but I do own the analysis section. On reading my analysis part I used to utter, yes, I did a good job.*

c. Resistance to Readers Expectations

The interview with Samia exposes her reluctance to meet the expectations of her readers. Her resistance might be shown in her lack of enthusiasm in learning about her teacher and her expectations.

Me: Whenever you're doing academic writing, whether it's for examinations or assignments, and especially for this one. Do you try to address your readers' expectations?

Samia: *I know in some circumstances and don't know in others. In this case, I didn't know.*

Me: And you didn't even bother to learn about...

Samia: *I didn't even attempt because I wasn't particularly interested in the subject, so I never imagined I'd be able to improve; instead, I just assumed I'd have to get through it somehow or another; I'm well aware of some teachers' expectations, and we do meet them.*

Samia had little interest in the course or in earning excellent grades, which led to a chilly demeanour, and she made no attempt to learn about her teacher's expectations. When I questioned Samia how her readers' ideological positions impact her work and if she tries to negotiate her identity in response, she said:

Samia: *Yes, we manipulate it in some way, but in this assignment, I didn't, partially because, as I previously stated, I was not particularly interested in the course. Second, my teacher is a very knowledgeable person; she is much respectful, but I couldn't assess her expectations well, I was also new to the university. However, I did not know the teacher well in this situation; another factor could be because I never received feedback from her.*

She made the following statement when discussing the difference between the instructor and student expectations, as well as students' confusions about how they were being assessed and graded:

Samia: *When I gave a presentation, I didn't receive any feedback; though I'm told about certain points, but I didn't get any meaningful feedback; I did not have any idea about the areas where I lack and how I might grow, especially in this course. Only one B grade was given to me, and it was in this subject.*

d. Disciplinary Conventions in Writing

When I asked Samia about disciplinary standards in writing, her replies reflected her level of acceptance. She believes that following the standards and achieving success is simple and easy, and that going against the norms that are widespread in our educational system is futile.

Me: You write according to academic traditions because of having no choice?

Samia*: I believe I am a kind of personality who always follows the rules and rarely deviates from them. This is evident in my academic life as well; I choose to study diligently because there are examinations to be taken... I'm sort of following tradition, and the same is true here; I've never considered another choice... because I don't see the necessity. I'm a trend follower rather than a trend maker.*

Me: And, as is the case with our educational system, this ultimately leads to success.

Samia: Yeah, we have to be like that in this system, not over thinking things and just accepting things as they are.

Me: We noted in your written narrative that writing in a second language is challenging for a student, did you have any problems with it in the past or now??

Samia: *I don't think it's as difficult as it used to be after all these years of writing. I believe the area in which I need to improve is my ability to write concisely. I believe I have a time limit while taking the exam, the things that I could have stated in one sentence, I usually write in three, and if I don't write that in three, I generally write very long sentences, which irritates me. This is the area where I believe I can improve. I once read somewhere, "I didn't have time to write the short one, so I wrote the long one." So writing briefly is important; it is critical that you are fluent in at least one language so that you can express the same notion in a few words rather than a few paragraphs.*

When it comes to gaining success, Samia believes that expressiveness is more vital than intelligence.

Samia: I think both, having knowledge and expressing the knowledge are important. You must have the knowledge about the course you have passed as well as you must know how to express it.. So I believe it's the 30/70 relationship: 30 for knowledge and 70 for expression.

The interview with the research participant is extremely enlightening as the responses make us aware of the currents issues of writing and identity and the students get to know about them only when go through this process of identity formation while writing. It also reveals students' inconsistencies and ambivalences in their adherence to prevalent norms and practices, as well as their resistance to and adaptability to readers' expectations and disciplinary conventions, and their views of academic accomplishment.

e.   Linguistic Analysis of Texts

We selected brief excerpts of about 50-60 words from our study participant's assignment and Mid-Term examinations and employed Halliday's five lexico-grammatical characteristics to determine their placement and connection to academic discourse.

i.   Extracts from Samia's Assignment and Exam

Extract A (assignment)

Tannen's Difference Theory was used to analyze cross-sex conversations in Disney's Frozen.

Score: (7/10)

The findings lead us to believe that gendered conversational patterns can accurately portray the gendered identities of anyone conversing with the other gender. Females like to avoid conflict and make concessions on contentious issues, whereas males prefer to show themselves as the superior figure with no faults or weaknesses. (61 words)

(I attempted to include the entire clause, even if it exceeded the 50-word restriction; I was more concerned with including the entire clause than with the word limit.)

Extract B (Exam)

"Why does the problem of 'pronominal neutralization and sexism' bothers Lackoff (1973) in her examination of linguistic imbalances?"

Score: (7/7.5)

(lines 18-26)

"So, according to Lakoff, this is what causes a language imbalance, and it is again due to the dominant portion of society's employment of sexist words in order to preserve their power. They are consolidating their own control under the pretext of promoting equality via inclusiveness". (51 words)

ii.   Clauses and verb processes

The lexical density is calculated by counting the clauses and the number of lexical terms per clause; lexical density of 5 or more is deemed high (Ivanic, 1998). In the examined sentences, the lexical density is 6.3 in extract A, which is fairly high, but it is 4 in extract B, as shown in table 1. Excerpt A is taken from the assignment whereas Excerpt B is taken from exam paper, which leads to the further interpretation that students are more careful in building their identity as academic writers when they have time and resources (they have access to academic scholarship and researches while doing assignments) which is not the case in examinations where they have limited time to pen down their ideas. The high lexical density in excerpt A suggests the student's desire to depict her affiliation to the academic community and her identity as an academic person.

Table 1

Lexical Density in clauses

No. of lexical items		No. of clauses		lexical density	
A	B	A	B	A	B
33	24	5	6	6.3	4

Table 2 shows Halliday's categorization of verbs into distinct verb processes.

Table 2

Verb Processes

Mental	Relational	Verbal	Material
Are inclined	allow, can depict	----	------
	Are, is, has made		

The findings are noteworthy since the major verb processes identified in these passages are mental and relational, with no occurrence of the material verb, indicating the writer's interest in ideas and mental activity, as well as the abstract link between items.

Extract A: Allow, can depict, are inclined, are,

Extract B: Is, has made, are making

The verbs are mostly in the present tense and are definite. Most verb processes refer to mental and relational processes, indicating that the writer is conveying facts, actual circumstances, and relationships among abstract concepts and entities. Academic discourse features the mental and relational verb processes and by employing them in writing the writer is trying to identify herself with the academic discourse.

iii.   Nouns, Nominalization, and Nominal Groups

The abstract nouns indicated in these passages are primarily inanimate nouns that relate to ideas, concepts, and hypotheses. The animate nouns are humans, and they mostly relate to writers and theorists. The 'head nouns,' i.e., the principal subjects or objects of the verbs are listed below.

Extract A: The results, styles, identities, conversation, gender, females, conflict, compromises, points, males, status,

Extract B: Lakoff, society, terms, dominance, equality

Another characteristic of academic discourse is the compression of data and the presentation of it in lengthy nominal groupings. A nominal group, according to Halliday, consists of the head noun, any embedded clauses, and anything that changes it (Ivanic, 1998 p. 267). From both extracts, we determined the longest nominal group, as well as the total number of words and the ratio of lexical terms to total words. Academic discourse is also linked with this style of writing in thick sentences. The clauses that have been identified are as follows:

A: "Gendered conversational styles can depict the gendered identities of anyone involved in the conversation with the other gender". (18 words, 61% lexical words)

B: "It is again because of the dominant section of society who has made these sexist terms prevail in order to maintain their dominance" (23 words, 47% lexical words)

There are 61 percent lexical words in the clause taken from the assignment and 47 percent in the clause taken from the exam paper in the examined clauses from both extracts, indicating that knowledge is compacted together, as is typical of the academic community.

iv.   Tense, Mood and Modality

In each of these excerpts, the present tense is evident, indicating eternal truths and the writers' care for communicating those truths. The passages are also in a declarative tone, which is a characteristic of academic speech in which information and facts are assertively delivered. However, there is just one use of the modalized verbs 'can represent,' which relates to a categorical viewpoint. The following is a list of the tense mood and modality:

Excerpt A: The modalized verb areused i.e., Can depict, present tense, declarative sentences, no interrogatives, no imperatives

Excerpt B: declarative sentences, present tense, no interrogatives, no imperatives

v.   Lexis

Lexis refers to the usage of certain terminologies and lexical terms connected with the academic community. I've selected the vocabulary elements from Samia's excerpts that show her academic affiliation and put them below. She has utilized a variety of lexis related to her subject and discipline.

Extract A: Results, Conclude, gendered conversational styles, depict, gendered identities, inclined, conflicting points,

Extract B: Creates, linguistic imbalance, dominant section, sexist terms, prevail, maintain, dominance, propagating, equality, inclusion, strengthened

The lexis found from the extracts is mostly from the fields of discourse analysis, feminist discourse, and research discourse.

5.   Conclusion and Discussion

Findings from the written narrative of our research participant who is a postgraduate student, her interview and the linguistic analysis of her texts complement each other, but at the same time, they point to the discrepancies found in the writers' sense of their identity, their resistance to academic conventions and their conscious or unconscious adherence to the established norms, which makes more evident the power relationships in academia and what has counted a success in the academic community. Samia has her particular views on being successful in academia therefore, she finds it simple and unproblematic to follow the academic conventions in writing and therefore achieve success, and she claims that defying the rules that govern our educational system is futile. At the same time, she has also raised her concern that students should not be constrained in their writings since this will limit their thoughts and prevent them from producing high-quality work. She has also discussed the constraints which inhibit students' true portrayal in writing as sometimes they could not

project themselves in their writing due to varied disciplinary and subject requirements. She has very strongly voiced out that there are times when I wanted myself to be presented and not the conventions taking me over. As a result, the participant's responses to her self-representation in writing are complicated and multifaceted; she sometimes joyfully follows academic standards, but she also opposes them and decides to go her own way. The results could not be generalized as the study is ethnographic in nature and demanded an in-depth exploration of data. Hence multiple kinds of data are collected from a single participant. However, the results give deep insights into the phenomenon of writing in higher education and related identity issues.

The data from written narratives and interviews help achieve the research objectives. Our research participant's narrative displays her academic experience, the writing difficulties including the challenges faced due to English being her second language and writing in exams as that involves time limitations and the need to write more. Though she happily follows the disciplinary conventions, her responses indicate her resistance to meet readers' expectations and an ambivalent attitude towards her sense of identity portrayed in writing.

Together with this, the linguistic analysis of her texts demonstrates her sense of identification with the academic community, and her positioning is made obvious by the characteristics of her writing. An important characteristic of academic discourse is high lexical density and the mental and relational verb processes; by employing these features in her writing the writer is trying to portray her identity as an academic person. Another characteristic of academic discourse is the compression of data and the presentation of it in lengthy nominal groupings. Both the excerpts exemplify this as there are 61 per cent lexical words in the clause taken from the assignment and 47 per cent in the clause taken from the exam paper, indicating that knowledge is compacted together, as is typical of the academic community. The study of the nominal groups and the lexico-grammatical features all reflect her affiliation and positioning within the academic community. The nouns in both passages are abstract nouns which are primarily inanimate nouns that relate to ideas, concepts, and hypotheses. The animate nouns are humans, and they mostly relate to writers and theorists. In each of these excerpts, the present tense is evident, indicating eternal truths and the writers' care for communicating those truths. The passages are also in a declarative tone, which is a characteristic of academic speech in which information and facts are assertively delivered. The lexis found from the extracts is mostly from the fields of discourse analysis, feminist discourse, and research discourse which also establish the writer's positioning within the academic community. All in all the linguistic study of academic texts exhibit the writer's identity as a member of the academic community, it also highlights the institutional influence upon academic writers in shaping their identities as well as provide insights into the construction of identity in the process of writing.

The reoccurring themes that arose from this study's findings are concerned with the identity that students identify with or reject, as well as those they desire to represent. The findings help to achieve a precise and true understanding of writing at university, the issues of writers' identity, and those of the issues related to disciplinary and academic conventions. The study reveals students' concerns about the demands placed upon them by the teachers, disciplines, and institutions broadly and that to be effective, they must conform to established writing practices and academic conventions.

References:

Barton, D. (2006). Significance of a social practice view of language, litearcy and numeracy. In Tett, L., Hamilton, M., Yvonne, H. (Eds.) *Adult literacy, numeracy, and language. policy, practice and research*. New York: Open University Press. McGraw-Hill Education.

Barton, D. (2009). Roz Ivanic's writing and identity. In Carter, A., Lillis, T. & Parkin, S. (Eds.) *why writing matters. issues of access and identity in writing research and pedagogy*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Gee, J. P. (2010). A situated–sociocultural approach to literacy and technology. In

Baker, A. E. (Ed.) (2010). *The new literacies. multiple perspectives on research and practice.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Haider, G. (2005). *The writing processes of students with learning difficulties in l2th English composition: Protocol analysis* [Doctoral. Dissertation, University of the Punjab, Pakistan].

Halliday, M. A. K. (1973). *Explorations in the functions of language.* London: Edward Arnold.

Hassan, R. (2000). *Modalities in the teaching of writing in English in Pakistan*. [Doctoral Dissertation, The National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad]. http://prr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/handle/123456789//4963

Ivanic, R. (1998) *Writing and identity: The discoursal construction of identity in academic writing*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Javed, M., Tahir, A. & Qadeer, A. (2018). The changing roles of students in the blended elt environment in Pakistan. *Erevna: Journal of Linguistics & Literature, 2*(2), 17-26.

Lea, M. & Street, B. (1998). Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, *23*(2), 157-171

Lea, M. R. (1999). Academic literacies and learning in higher education, constructing knowledge through texts and experience. In Joans, C., Turner, J. & Street, B. (Eds.), *Students writing in the university cultural and epistemological issues*. (pp. 103-124) Amsterdam/Philadelphia.John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Lea, M.R., & Street, B.V. (2006). The academic literacies model: Theory and applications. *Theory into Practice*, *45*(4), 368-377.

Lea, M. R. & Crème, P. (2008). *Writing at university: A guide for students* (3rd ed.). McGraw Hill Open University Press.

Lea, M. R. (2009). Writers and meaning making in the context of online learning. In Carter, A., Lillis, T. & Parkin, S. (Eds.) (2009). *Why writing matters. Issues of access and identity in writing research and pedagogy*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Lillis, T. (1999). Whose common sense? Essayist literacy and the institutional practice of mystery. In Jones, c., Turner, J., Street, B. (Eds.), *students writing in the university cultural and epistemological issues*. (pp. 127-147) Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Lillis, T. M. (2001). *Student writing, access regulation, desire*. London and New York: Routledge.

Lillis, T. & Scott, M. (2007). Defining academic literacies research: issues of epistemology, ideology, and strategy. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *4*(1), 5-32.

Lillis, T. & Turner, J. (2010). Student writing in higher education: Contemporary confusion, traditional concern. *Teaching in Higher Education, 6*(1), 57-68,

Lillis, T. (2009). Bringing writers' voices to writing research, talk around texts. In Carter, A. Lillis, T. & Parkin, S. (Eds.) *Why writing matters: Issues of access and identity in writing research and pedagogy*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Manan, A. & David, M. K. (2014) Mapping ecology of literacies in educational setting: The case of local mother tongues vis-à-vis Urdu and English languages in Pakistan. *Language and Education, 28*(3), 203-222.

Mansoor, S. (2004). The status and role of regional languages in higher education in Pakistan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *25*(4), 333-353.

Mansoor, S. (2005). *Language planning and higher education: A case study of Pakistan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mansoor, S. (n.d.) Language planning in higher education: Issues of access and equity. *The Lahore Journal of Economics*, *8*(2). 17-42.

Mashori, G. M. (2007). *Teaching the writing of English: Exploring the impact of process approach on the undergraduate students of Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur* [Ph.D. dissertation, Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur, Sindh, Pakistan].

Qadir, S. A. (1996). *Introducing study skills at the intermediate level in Pakistan* [Ph. D Thesis, University of Lancaster].

Rahman, T. (1997). The medium of instruction controversy in Pakistan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 18* (2), 145-154.

Rahman, T. (2001) English-teaching institutions in Pakistan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 22* (3), 242-261.

Riaz, H., Jabeen, N. Salman, Y.,Ansari, N., & Mohazzam, A. (2017). A study of higher education reforms in pakistan: key reforms and drivers. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, *54*(2), 79-94.

Sarangi,S. (2007). Editorial: The anatomy of interpretation: Coming to terms with the analyst's paradox in professional discourse studies. *Text & Talk An Interdisciplianry Journal of Langauge, Discourse & communication studies, 27*(5/6), 567–584.

Shah, S. P. (2001). *Creative writing through reading. A strategy to develop creative writing among ninth grade students of o' level* [Doctoral Dissertation, Hamdard University Karachi].

Shamim, F. (2008) Trends, issues and challenges in English language education in Pakistan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *28*(3), 235-249.

Shamim, F. (2011) English as the language for development in Pakistan: Issues, challenges and possible solutions. In Coleman, H. (Ed.) *Dreams and realities: Developing countries and the English language*. Teaching English. British Council. www.britishcouncil.org

Street, B. V. (1999). Academic literacies. In Jones, C. Joan Turner, J. & Street, B. (Eds.). *Students writing in the university cultural and epistemological issues.* (Vol. 8)*.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Street, B. V. & Lefsteain, A. (2007). *Literacy: An advanced resource book.* New York: Routledge.

Tahir, A. Qadeer, A. and Asif, M. (2017). Globalization: Challenges to teacher professionalism and the changing role of Pakistani teachers. *Erevna: Journal of Linguistics & Literature, 1*(2), 36-51.

Turner, J. & Scott, M. (2009). Reconceptualising student writing, From conformity to heteroglossic complexity. In Carter, A. Lillis, T. & Parkin, S. (Eds.) (2009) *Why writing matters. issues of access and identity in writing research and pedagogy.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 151-159

Zubair, S. (2001) Literacies, gender and power in rural Pakistan. In Street, B. V. (Ed.) *Literacy and development ethnographic perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

Citation of the paper
 Kanwal, N., Shehnaz, A., & Gulzar, M. A. (2021). Academic writing and issues of identity: A focus on texts and practices of a postgraduate student. *Erevna: Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, *5*(2), 36-51.

The Relevance of the Genre Approach in the context of the tertiary level students of Bangladesh

Arjumand Ara
University of Asia Pacific, Bangladesh

Keywords	Abstract
- Genre - Writing instruction - Second language - Context - Learners' needs	*The genre-approach to teaching writing, although a more recent approach when compared to the process or the product approach, has received considerable attention in teaching writing. Several factors contribute to its wide acceptance including its strong theoretical underpinning, its focus on students' needs and the context of writing. In case of second language (L2) writing instruction, genre-based approach has strong implications as it clearly states what learners need to learn and provides a logical framework for studying language as well as the context in which the language is produced. At the tertiary level, writing is often deemed as the most important language skill because students at higher learning institutes are mostly assessed through their writing performance. However, for second language learners academic writing may seem to be a daunting task if they do not have prior academic writing experience or if they lack proper linguistic knowledge. For these novice student writers, genre –based writing instruction is often considered appropriate as this approach draws learners' attention on the formal and functional features of the text making them understand why the linguistic features and conventions are used to elicit the desired communicative goals. This article explores the relevance of the genre-based instruction in the tertiary level second language writing instruction of Bangladesh and the ways in which this approach can be integrated in the tertiary level academic writing programs of the country.*

1. Introduction

Since the last two decades, the notion of the genre has received considerable attention and more particularly its application in teaching academic writing. This is an outcome of the research which has given insights into the social purposes, the 'move' or constituent structures of academic texts, linguistic features of spoken and written discourse and also the pedagogical implications of these in the L2 writing instruction (Bhatia, 1993). Thus, the genre approach (GA) provides an appropriate writing pedagogy especially to the L2 writing instruction as it explicitly states what needs to be learnt and also provides a logical framework for studying language as well as context simultaneously providing learners with the resources to "understand and challenge valued discourse" (Hyland, 2007, p.149). The concept of genre is used in different fields. In education, types of literary texts are referred to by the term 'genre'. However, the term also refers to the patterns of different text types that are predictable and recurring in the context of a specific culture (Hammond and Derewianka, 2001). Genres are determined primarily by their social purposes. Same text types are considered under the same genre if they have similar social purposes (Swales,1990). A text of the same genre, apart from the same social purpose, share similar linguistic features, schematic structures and linguistic convention. By schematic structure text organization or the internal structure of the text is referred to while language features include features of grammar and lexis that are needed to translate ideas and information into a text.

Recurring internal structures of the texts of the same genre is one of the salient features of this approach. Bhatia (1993, p. 61) suggested that instructors need to draw learners' attention to the formal and functional features of the text simultaneously to make them understand how and why linguistic conventions are employed to elicit the desired rhetoric effects. It is argued (e.g., by Christie and Martin, 1997) that student learners will not be able to produce a specific type of text successfully unless they are taught explicitly about the linguistic conventions of the text type including its internal structure and linguistic features. Genre-based writing instruction puts focus on the explicit instruction of the linguistic conventions and thus it is considered to be a suitable instruction method for beginner student writers. At higher learning institutes of Bangladesh, the dominant focus of most education programs is writing since students are mostly assessed based on their writing performance. Writing, especially academic writing, is a challenging experience for all learners and may seem like a daunting experience to the novice tertiary level student writers of Bangladesh as the secondary and higher secondary levels of education do not focus on writing different text types. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relevance of the genre approach in L2 writing pedagogy, especially in the context of tertiary education in Bangladesh.

2. Literature Review

As any communication is based on a context, has a purpose and Over the last few decades, EFL /ESL teachers have been drawing on a number of approaches in teaching writing. In the 1970s and also in the early 80s the process and product approaches received much attention from the experts in teaching writing, especially the process approach which predominantly equates writing with linguistic skills, such as planning, gathering information, drafting, revising, and editing. Although the process approach has its advantages for individual writers by raising their awareness of the complexity of the writing process, it gives much less focus

on linguistic knowledge, more particularly on the grammatical and text structure features (Badger and White, 2000).

Consequently, many linguists felt the need for what Hyland (2007, p.149) terms as "more theoretically robust, linguistically informed, and research grounded text descriptions" that would meet the practical needs of the student writers. Genre–based pedagogies addressed this need by viewing writing as a purposeful act and more specifically by analyzing the contextual situation in which writing takes place. Swales (1990, p.58) who defined the genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" pointed out the basic notion that there are some specific rules or conventions for different types of writings that are socially recognized. So, members belonging to the same community can easily recognize the similarities in the texts they frequently use. Drawing on their repeated experience with such texts and by knowing about the readers' expectations, writers are likely to be able to write those texts relatively easily. Moreover, by teaching learners explicitly how such texts are grammatically patterned, they can be taught to see not only how grammar and lexical choices can create meaning but also to understand how language functions when writers differ in their purposes (Hyland, 2007). Hyland (2007) also mentions the following principles that underpin all genre-based teaching and suggests that these can be translated into a genre-based syllabus.

- Directed towards a listener, writing can be considered as a social activity.
- Learners' needs form the basis of writing instruction.
- Writing instruction needs to have clear outcomes and expectations.
- Teaching and learning writing can be termed as a social activity as it involves some developmental steps that are scaffolded by the teacher and the peers.
- Learning to use language is involved with writing instruction.

3. Research Methodology

The study will use the secondary research method. It will critically analyze the different features of the genre pedagogy using the existing data. The study will also answer the question how GA can be integrated in the language programs of the tertiary level of Bangladesh.

4. Data Analysis

The relevance of the genre approach to second language writing pedagogy can be justified on several grounds. Perhaps the strongest justification comes from the research insights. Writing research reveals that learners need to get exposure to different genres of writing other than narrative writing and they need to practice them (e.g., Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Langer, 1986; Perera, 1984; as cited in Reppen, 2002). Poynton (1986) experimented on the types of writings elementary grade students practice, highlighting the significance of making students realize the various purposes of writing. The study reveals that metalinguistic awareness helps students to manipulate information and thus achieve different purposes through writing. Truong (2017) conducted an exploratory study to investigate the perceptions of first-year English major students of Vietnam on the genre-based approach to writing focusing on writing letters. The study revealed that students showed an increased awareness of the type of genre.

More recent studies have explored the different aspects and applications of genre-based instruction and showed considerable positive outcomes. Han and Hiverb (2018) in their study involving longitudinal cluster analysis found that students' motivational level for writing tasks increased through genre-based instruction. The students also revealed the increased capacity of self-regulation and sustention of self-efficacy. Almacıoğlua and Okanb's (2018) study showed an overall improvement of students' writing performance through genre-based writing instruction. Recent research also showed EFL students improved skills in writing short essays and revealed the potential advantageousness of genre-based writing instruction (Douangmala and Widyantoro, 2018). Sirisuda and Wisut (2020) conducted a study to investigate the effectiveness of genre-based instruction in the development of both linguistic features and performance in a writing task. The study involved 44 undergraduate Thai students who lacked competence in writing skills.   They concluded by stating the effectiveness of a genre-based approach to the development of EFL writing competence. After twelve weeks of instruction, the students showed significant improvement in the use of language and rhetoric organization.

Thus, Genre-based writing instruction also allows students to reflect on the purposes of communication in specific social contexts and form an idea of the appropriateness of a communication style. In other words, this exploration of context helps learners to understand the purpose of a text, its internal structure, grammar and vocabulary features which are governed by linguistic conventions (Hammond and Derewianka, 2001; Hyon,1996). Christie and Martin (1997) also suggested the benefits of the genre approach for learners by pointing out that it not only pulls together language, content relating them with contexts but also offers teachers a strategy of showing learners explicitly and systematically how writing works to communicate. Genres are culture-specific which L2 learners may not be aware of. By going beyond syntactic structures, vocabulary, and composing, helps students to make sense of how the texts to be produced are structured and the reasons behind the conventions of such texts (Hyland, 2007).

Again, the strong advocates of the genre approach, more particularly Hyland (2007), think that genres can have important implications for teaching L2 learners writing in the classroom both in terms of theory and practice. Hyland also thinks that the genre approach enables teachers to design their courses with texts that match the professional, academic or social writing needs of the learners.

Genre-based approaches can also prove to be advantageous in the assessment of second language writing as they take into account the basic principles which Hyland suggested (2004, p. 163-166). The following table summarizes the principles Hyland (2014) suggested.

Table-1

Basic principles of Genre-based approaches

Explicit	clearly stated criteria required for assessment and feedback are provided
Integrative	teaching and assessment are integrated
Relevant	writing instructions are relevant to learners' writing goals
Competency	learner competencies and genre features are specified
Preparedness	learners are assessed only when they are completely ready for it

Adapted from Hyland (2004, p. 163-166)

According to Hyland (2007), since genre-based approaches give learners explicit ideas of what is required, they help to link teaching with assessments. Since students know what teachers give importance to in writing and what precisely they expect from students, they are in a better position to know how they are going to be evaluated and the things students need to do in order to succeed. This, as Hyland (2007) further points out, gives students on one hand stronger motivation and confidence to write and on the other gives teachers an advantage to identify students' problems in writing, giving them the opportunity to give precise feedback and also to decide whether they need to give any further remedial to help them improve their skills.

The following table is an adaptation of Hyland's (2004) summary of the main advantages of the genre pedagogy:

Table 3

The advantages of genre pedagogy

Explicit	makes clear what students need to learn to acquire writing skill
Systematic contexts together	gives a logical framework to help learners to focus on language and
Needs-based needs.	makes sure that course has objectives and contents based on students'
Supportive and creativity	provides teachers scope for scaffolding learners' knowledge building
Empowering are valued	gives access to the patterns and likelihood of variations in texts that
Critical that are valued	gives students the resources to understand and challenge discourses

Awareness- raising   increases instructors' awareness of texts to help students write confidently.

Motivating and boost motivation   provides support first and then gradually removes it in order to alleviate writing anxiety

(Adapted from Hyland, 2004, pp.10-14)

a.   Relevance of the genre-based writing instruction for the tertiary level ESL writing classes of Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, most of the students are taught in Bengali, their native language (except for two papers in English) at the secondary and higher secondary levels and they hardly engage in any academic discourse in these two levels. Although Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been applied for around two decades at these two levels, teachers show their reluctance to promote CLT (Hamid and Baldauf,2008). Students' grade, to a large extent, depends on their ability to memorize without internalizing the content.

It is only at the higher level and especially at the private universities where the medium of instruction is English, they are introduced to academic writings of different genres like report writing, academic essays, writing formal letters, etc. These students are normally unprepared for putting together a coherent piece of academic writing that meets the international standard. Recent studies have shown that the tertiary level EFL learners of Bangladesh lack minimum writing competence (Afrin,2016; Mustaque, 2014) as their writing skills are "seriously flawed" (Shamsuzzaman and Everatt 2013, p.71). These EFL learners lack sufficient knowledge to write standard essays and paragraphs and there is a growing emphasis on the need to carry out more research to explore the writing problems of these student writers and to find proper solutions to the problem (Mustaque, 2014). Thus, in the higher learning institutes, a writing approach that is effective in meeting these students' writing needs has to be addressed very strongly.

After considering the above-mentioned advantages of the genre-based pedagogies in L2 instruction, we can attempt to justify its implementation in the education system of Bangladesh. The principles of the genre-based syllabus that Hyland (2007) mentioned are highly relevant in the case of the Bangladeshi education system. Here (as probably in many other countries where English is a non-native language) at universities and also, later in the professional life, students need to produce writings of different genres such as report writing, informal and formal letters, memos and so on. In private universities since the medium of instruction is English, students also need to write assignments and give presentations. Unfortunately, there is a marked disparity between students' needs and the contents of the secondary and higher secondary level syllabuses as these do not include any genre-based writing instruction (Hyder and Chowdhury, 2012). As in these two precursors of tertiary education, students do not get introduced to writings of different genres, suggestions can be made to adopt the genre-based instruction at the tertiary level. The following section discusses the ways to implement genre-based writing instruction in the tertiary level ESL classes of Bangladesh and why and how the implantation will help novice student writers to overcome their problems.

b. Implementing the genre-based writing instruction at the tertiary level education in Bangladesh

The student writers of the tertiary level in Bangladesh are mostly novice writers lacking experience. Following the genre-based instruction, students can be instructed to analyze the rhetorical structure of the contents of a specific text, so that they can identify the common patterns. When students become aware of these patterns and linguistic conventions, it may help the novice student writers to form a type of background knowledge that they can activate in a similar future learning situation (Kim, 2012).

As at the tertiary level, students majoring in different disciplines need to learn English for specific purposes (ESP), the 'move' or constituent analysis can be extensively adopted to describe the rhetorical patterns of a genre. Studies (e.g., Swales 1990) reveal that a particular genre uses a conventional genre structure or in other words a sequence of moves each of which has a particular function in the communicative process. Analysis of this conventionalized organizational structure of a particular genre, according to many researchers (e.g., Swales, 1990; Hyland, 2004) can be of considerable help to the tertiary level L2 learners in the classroom. This analysis can also help to find out the salient text features like the use of tenses, modality, etc. Gustafsson (1975; cited in Bhatia,1993) after analyzing syntactic aspects of the legislative genre found that legislative documents normally have more subordinate devices (e.g., relative or adverbial clauses) than any other genre. Swales's (1990) CARS ('creating a research space') model or its slightly different adaptation can be used extensively by the practitioners to find out the rhetorical construction of different kinds of academic report writing (Dudley-Evans, 1994).

Again, one of the major problems of Bangladeshi student writers is the lack of confidence and motivation in writing. The classes here are teacher-centred and students take teachers as the 'knowledge givers' and tend to rely on them for instructions. To solve this problem, teachers can adopt the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC) of the genre approach to writing. In TLC construction of new knowledge happens when learners collaborate and reflect on the ways to form new knowledge. In the context of Bangladesh, the application of TLC can help novice writers overcome the initial mental blocks they are likely to face when they start a writing activity. The shared knowledge of the group members of linguistic features, content and ideas will enable students to shed off their feelings of isolation also.

The ESP pedagogy also focuses on how genres form what Swales (2004) calls "constellations". The idea is that genres are not found in the real world in isolation. Therefore, if a full array of genres is dealt with in a given social context, it can prove to be useful in tertiary L2 writing instruction (Hyland, 2007). Hyland further mentions that some genres can often be found in a predictable order and if teachers can instruct them to students, they will be familiar with the language resources they need to communicate. The following figure illustrates linear events of genre sequence normally needed for job seeking.
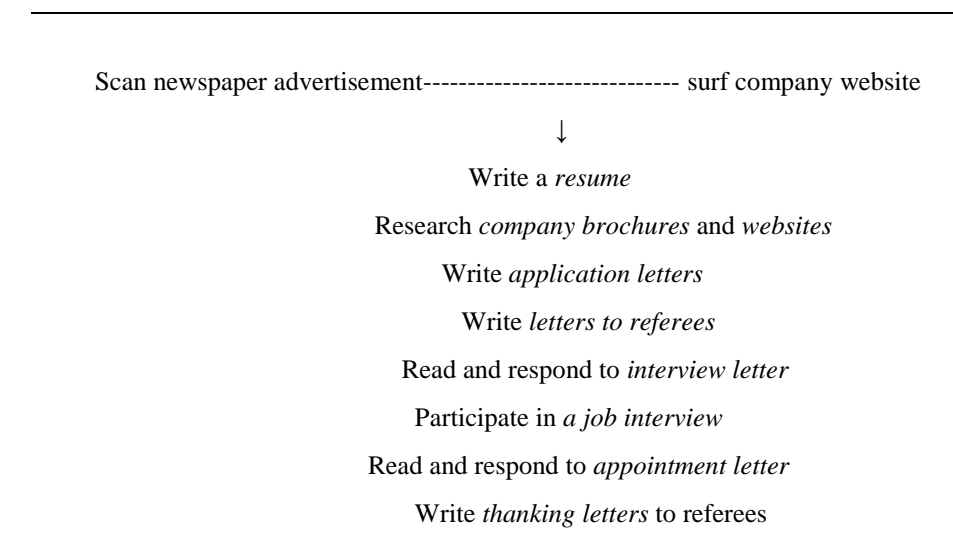
Scan newspaper advertisement---------------------------- surf company website

↓

Write a *resume*

Research *company brochures* and *websites*

Write *application letters*

Write *letters to referees*

Read and respond to *interview letter*

Participate in *a job interview*

Read and respond to *appointment letter*

Write *thanking letters* to referees

Figure 1: A linear sequence of genres for job seeking (genres in italics) (Hyland, 2007)

c.   Criticisms of the Genre-based Writing Instruction

Genre approaches to second language writing instruction in the classrooms have been subject to criticisms, especially by the proponents (e.g., Dias and Pare, 2000) of the 'New Rhetoric" approach to the genre. It has been argued that writing is always an integral part of the context that brings about it and so it should not be learnt in the classroom situation which is unauthentic. However, it should be remembered that the Bangladeshi or most such L2 learners hardly get opportunities to learn writing in naturalistic settings. It is true that a classroom cannot replicate the real-life situation, but formal learning takes place in the classroom and in the case of L2 writing instruction, GA actually helps learners to discover and follow the conventions that are compatible with their academic and professional writing needs.

The acceptance of genre as a teaching tool is also not uncontested. Swales (1990) cautions that although prototypical structures exist, students should not imitate blindly the rigid generic structures. In fact, the prescriptive nature of the approach has been strongly criticized by the adherents of the process approach (e.g., Dixon, 1987) claiming that it inhibits the writer's creativity and freedom of expression and some even got to the extent of calling in a "recipe theory of genre" (Freedman, 1994, p. 46, as cited in Hyland 2007). To solve this problem, students should be introduced to varied examples of a particular genre and they should also get familiar with the current rhetorical situation. Moreover, learners should be encouraged to think critically by reflecting on the finer features of move structures. Flowerdew (2000) suggests a suite of exercises that will help students to focus on how the

content is organized by dividing the text into move structures based on finer features. The table that follows is based on Flowerdew's (2000) suggestions on exercises on project reports. Teachers can devise such exercises on other genres to help students examine and analyze the key features of the text.

Table 4

Types of exercises in analyzing move structures.

Type of exercise	Activities	Purpose
Reconstructing a text	Groups of students are given a set of jumbled paragraphs and they reconstruct a text by noticing the salient move structures	To help students identify move structures.
Comparing texts	Students are presented with a variety of examples (e.g., the introductions of report). Students are then instructed to compare a number of examples, find out the move structures, and give their opinions on the organizational dissimilarities, and how the move structures are included, excluded or embedded.	To help learners notice the different move structures.
Locating content	Students are provided with possible move structures from Swales' (1990) list for discussion sections. Students are also provided with examples of texts with similar move structure or/and brief glosses.	To encourage students examine the type of information presented in each sub-section of the Result Analysis.
Relating content in different sections	Students are instructed to use the sub-headings of the activities for clues. Then they are asked to locate items in the result analysis that were mentioned before in the scope move of the Introduction. They are then instructed to comment on any dissimilarities.	To help students realize how important a text's relationship is with other text for the purpose

		of understanding a genre.
Identifying the problem-solution pattern	Students are asked to fill in a flowchart representing the chain of issues and incomplete responses in the introductory paragraph.	To help students identify the pattern of problem-solution
Creating a topic for discussion	Students are asked to 'talk around' the topic.	To create less text-based lessons and also reduce teacher-centeredness.
Language focus	Students examine how the vocabulary has been used for the organization of discourse. They locate expressions which present casual relationships. They also identify typical phrases used to make deductions.	To provide students with the clues for decoding the moves.

5. Conclusion

The paper has made a tentative attempt to show the theoretical as well as practical relevance of the genre approach to the instruction of second language writing, especially in the context of Bangladeshi students. There are considerable justifications for adopting the genre approach as the major institutional alternative to the process approach, as it provides L2 learners with the opportunity to undertake writing in an informed way especially by knowing not only the linguistic features of a particular academic text but also the conventions of that specific academic context which are imperatives for L2 learners coming from very different academic and cultural background to know. In practical terms genre approach also seems to fit well in the Bangladeshi EFL context as these students are teacher dependent yet very good at following a model because of their long tradition of rote learning. Albeit, the approach has its limitations as it may turn out teaching into a template approach preventing students from thinking critically. The teacher educators need to keep this in mind when implementing it in the curriculum and design it in such a way that it combines both discipline-specific writing instructions and some elements of critical thinking.

References

Almacıoğlua, G., Okanb,Z. (2018) Genre-based approach to writing instruction for students at an english language and literature department. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics,4*(1), 71–100

Afrin, Shagia. (2016). Writing Problems of non-english major undergraduate students in Bangladesh: An Observation. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 04*, 104-115. doi:10.4236/jss.2016.43016.

Badger, R., White, G. (2000). Product, process and genre: Approaches to writing in EAP [Electronic version]. *ELT Journal, 54*(2) ,153-160.

Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analyzing genre: Language use in professional settings*. New York: Longman.

Christie, F., & Martin, J, (Eds.) (1997). *Genre and institutions: Social processes in the workplace and the school*. Cassell: London

Douangmala, P., Widyantoro, A. (2018). The use of genre-based approach instruction to improve students' ability in writing short-essays. *International Journal of Science and Research 7*(5).

Dias, P., & Pare P. (Eds.) (2000) *Transitions: Writing in academic and workplace settings*. Hampton Press, Cresskill, NJ.

Dixon, J. (1987) The question of genres. In Reid, I. (Ed.). *The place of genre in learning: Current debates*. Deakin University Press: Deakin, Australia.

Dudley-Evans, T. (1994) Genre analysis: An approach to text analysis for ESP. In Coulthard, M. (Ed.). *Advances in written text analysis*. London: Routledge.

Flowerdew, L. (2000). Using a genre-based framework to teach organizational structure in academic writing. *ELT Journal, 54*(4),369-378.

Han, J., Hiverb, P. (2018) Genre-based L2 writing instruction and writing-specific psychological factors: The dynamics of change. *Journal of Second Language Writing. 40*, 44–59.

Hammond, J. & Derewianka, B. (2001). Genre. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 186-193). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hamid, M. O., Baldauf, R. B. (2008). Will CLT bail out the bogged down ELT in Bangladesh? *English Today, 24*,16-24. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000254.

Hyder, M.Z., Chowdhury, T.A. (2012) Repositioning of CLT from curriculum to classroom: A Review of the English language instructions at Bangladeshi secondary schools. *International Journal of English Linguistics, 2*(4), 12-22.

Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Learning, 16*(3),148-164.

Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Kim, M. (2012). Genre based approach to teaching writing. *Asian ESP Journal, 8*(3), 33-39.

Mustaque, S. (2014) Writing problems among the tertiary level students in Bangladesh: A Study in Chittagong Region. *Language in India, 14*, 334.http://www.languageinindia.com/jan2014/shakiladissertation.html

Poynton, C. (1986). Writing in the primary school. In Painter, C. and Martin, J. (Eds.) *Writing to mean: Teaching genre across the curriculum.* Sydney: Applied Linguistics Association of Australia.

Reppen, R. (2002). A genre-based approach to content writing instruction. In Richards, J. C. & Renandya, W. A. (Eds.). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 321-327). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Sirisuda and Wisut (2020). The impact of genre based instruction on efl learners' writing development. *International Journal of Instruction*, *13* (1)*,* 1-16.

Shamsuzzaman ,M. , Everat, J., and McNeill, B. (2013). An investigation of the relationship between instructors' background and teaching of second language writing in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Innovation in English Language, 3* (1).

Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research genres.* Cambridge University Press: New York

Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge,UK: Cambridge University Press.

Truong, T., N., T. (2017) Teaching writing using genre-based approach: A Study at a Vietnamese university *Language Education in Asia*, *8*(2), 192-212.