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Representation of Females in *Pride and Prejudice* & *Bride and Prejudice*

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Abstract

This paper examines application of 'us' and 'them' by considering it a postcolonial representation of binary opposition in the two films: Joe Wright's "Pride and Prejudice" and Gurinder Chadha's "Bride and Prejudice". It explores the notion of Postcolonial theory that has partitioned the female class of both selected movies into divergent sections. Generally, though not particularly, these two films present the notion of 'us' and 'them' but in a developed form that has been referred to as the lower and the higher classes and are more valuable in their role of constructing the Postcolonial atmosphere. However, keeping in mind the nature of research, qualitative content analysis is chosen as a research method with the close reading of Joe Wright's "Pride and Prejudice" and Gurinder Chadha's "Bride and Prejudice" including and by applying Said's notion of 'Us' and 'Them' as a theoretical framework. With such an application, visual and auditory elements including content, Indian tradition of hospitality and pecking order appear as the binary attributes of 'us' and 'them'. The paper is concluded by showing the attributes of 'Us' and 'Them' which are assigned to the female class in both selected movies.

1. Introduction

The present study discusses illustration of *us* and *them*, restricting the notion to feminine characters. The motivation for the study is derived from Edward Said's *Orientalism* that would be referred time and again throughout this paper. Said's ideas about edifice of binary of *us* and *them* is suitable for this study as his views on how positive characteristics are assigned to *us* and numerous traits are fixed into the minds of Orientals to create a negative impression of *them*. The notion of "us" signifies the Western class with a high status and on the other hand 'them' presents the oppressive class that, basically, are the Eastern with their inferior attributes. Edward Said explains this notion of 'us' and 'them' with reference to his theory of 'Orientalism' in which 'the outcome of Orientalism is the building on a binary opposition between Occident and Orient' Niazi, and Ghaforian, (2011). It determines this research endeavor quite substantial in the given context where the individuals of developing countries are still wobbling from the effects of colonization.

Films are considered as a source of entertainment in which the viewers are taken into a realm which is far away from reality and the viewers are provided an opportunity to escape into a world where they can get rid of harsh realities of life. This source of communication is the most effective and strong source to facilitate the people that's why they desire to watch movies as their prime preference According to Turner (2006), cinema positions itself as a social practice between the story, scenes and characters and the viewers as well. Large volume of work has been done in connection with colonialism. In this respect, ideas of Said, Chakravorty Spivak and Bhabha are not new for the learners and investigators of academia. This has paved a great way to the research in literature with specific concern to manipulative representation of different genders in numerous societies. Said in his book *Orientalism* writes about the 'Middle East being constructed as the 'Orient' by French intellectuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' (Said, p. 40).

The present endeavor focuses on two films which have been discussed with post-colonial perception. One of these was designed by British director and the other by a British citizen, who possessed his relationship with an Indian lineage and was born in Africa. This reality independently initiates a plethora of perspectives on the depiction of characters and storyline of selected movies. For particular purpose of the study, scholars chose the up-to-date version of the movie directed by Joe Wright. The present research concentrates on investigating the manipulative role of languages, and it attempts to tackle with Said's idea of the division of female society into *us* and *them*. According to the postcolonial perspective 'us' refers to the Western norms and traditions that are superior whereas 'them' highlights the inferior attributes of the Eastern culture. Since the parameters of this study are confined with regard to time and space, one objective and hence one research question suffice to highlight this research.

1.1. Research Objective

- To determine the traits allocated to feminine gender when they are portrayed as *us* and *them*?

1.2. Research Question

- What traits are allocated to feminine gender when they are portrayed as *us* and *them*?

2. Literature Review

Edward Said's notion of Othering motivated the critics and scholars to present different opinions. In this regard, numerous scholars have discussed this notion as a creation of communal identities whereas several others highlighted the matters of group socialization. Similarly, some others probed the formation of whiteness versus blackness, especially in terms of racism. Edward Said presented the same idea which studies relative gender roles of diverse groups of societies. In this way, the major objective of current study is to investigate and examine the stated role of women with theory of Othering in two selected movies. Making this type of inquiry, the objective is to examine Said's hypothesis of Othering that can create a clear-cut distinction between the assigned traits to both the *white* and the *brown* female classes.

Keeping in view, Said's theory of Othering, it is pertinent to mention that understanding of power relations with respect to the discourse produced in postcolonial era performs a crucial role. Significant assemblage of literary intellectuals including Moosavinia, Niazi, and Ghaforian (2011) illustrate Said's view of Othering in a particular matrix. In this regard, they highlight importance of correlation between knowledge and power which facilitates Orientalists and European officials to reimpose colonialist supremacy. Moreover, they differentiate between two different classes by classifying them as *us* and *them* where the former belongs to the West and the latter correlates with East. There are numerous categories that signify these binaries, formulate a distinction, like natives and non-natives, whites and blacks, Indians and Anglo-Indians, familiar and stranger, civilized and uncivilized, European and Asian, the *us* and *them*, and the Self and the Other (Ghaforian, 2011).

Dervin (2012) focused on the idea of reconceptualization of identity and culture which represents formation of stereotypes including the self and the other which make differences. He elaborated significant role of Othering with respect to distinct ethnic identities. He highlighted the matter of lower classes portraying the traits of ruling class which again determines the attention on exhibiting the accolade between upper and lower classes. Further, he highlighted the impacts of racial identities exerted on individual psyche. The disparity between stereotypical identity and the self is fairly noticeable in the endeavors of Dervin. Though, his argument orbits around common matters of two distinct sections of society as well as on the gap between two natural factions i.e. men and women.

Dervin's (2012) investigation evidently signifies variance between the concepts of culture, identity, self and Othering. Bringing the ideas of Moosavinia (2011), and Dervin (2012) into consideration, it confirms his accord that significance of discourse to constitute social identities is reasonably common. His theory cites manipulative ways that are analogous to present research and hence, identifies the role of discourse in establishing various identities. Nevertheless, what is the most noteworthy fact in Dervin's (2012) presentation is that he significantly encompasses the entire classes of a society. On the other hand, the distinctiveness of present research is that it is delimited specifically to the depiction of

women and not any other class biological or sociological one. Further, he views the ethnic individuality as an ascription of the accumulation of attributes to the specific populations.

Jovchelovitch's (1999) claimed that the notion of truth about human world lies in the form of representation. In other words, there is no other sense of truth on human world without its linguistic manifestation. The fusion of Dervin's concept distinguishes the peripheries of identity creation. For example, visual or tangible, is a demonstration in the shape of an idea or image. Simply, it can be said that Dervin (2012) presented the idea of representation used in establishing social identities which is apposite to this research study. In addition, distinct characteristics of the same character related to various groups, makes a distinction between higher and lower social strata of the same character. Selecting female characters, especially the character of Elizabeth, present research study investigates two different racial and social backgrounds, the one as British and the other as Indian.

Rojas (2012) presented evaluation of five different film versions of *Pride and Prejudice*. Moreover, *Bride and Prejudice* (2004) was directed by Chadha, and the association of all these to the novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. Rojas (2012) adaptation theory in her thesis focused on three significant sections including start, middle and end of the novel and highlighted the fact how issue of class and society had been represented through the characters. Wenzelova (2010) evaluated Post-colonial Rewriting of Master Texts using Said's theory of Othering focusing on egalitarianist and colonist viewpoints of slavery, mental health of women, and financial, racial and personal issues as well.

As a result of analysis, it was found that the notion of *othering* existed between female and male social classes. Male class was dominant and had the power of dealing with female class. Moreover, life standards of female class presented them as a lower human being which did not need the subtleties of care and could be dealt with any way. Such concept of Othering showed a difference between both the classes, separating them into two different categories. One such class was represented as *us* and the other as *them*. But again, in the research of Wenzelova (2010) the gap of studying the presentation of female class is to represent this presentation in terms of binary oppositions.

This research study probes to demonstrate the single most perspective of Said's theory which would be supportive for the learners to comprehend his views about the idea of Othering, especially on the notion of *us* and *them*, hence, illustrating the traits which are given to feminine gender. This endeavors to probe into the investigation of films which not only provide enjoyment, it also comprises in-depth thoughts and considerations for researchers of discourse studies. Major aim of such study is to examine and create awareness regarding the concept of Othering in feminine gender based upon the selected films.

3. Research Methodology

This study investigates the postcolonial representation of binary opposition in the selected movies. Keeping in mind the nature of research, qualitative content analysis is chosen as a research method with the close reading of the selected movies. Said's notion of 'Us' and 'Them' has been used as theoretical framework to explore the attributes of 'Us' and 'Them' which are assigned to the female class in both selected movies.

The current study uses qualitative Content Analysis, a research methodology applied for individual interpretation on the content of literary text data through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This technique is mostly used to analyze the qualitative data. Among major social sciences analysts, it is a trustworthy method which helps researchers representing a systematic and independent means of describing and defining any social phenomenon (Stemn, 2020). Qualitative content analysis (QCA) is consisted of inductive and deductive ways of evaluation. Both these ways of analyses are comprised of three phases including preparation, organization, and reporting of results. In deductive preparation phase, the investigator accumulates appropriate required data for application of qualitative content analysis. Second phase is organization stage which incorporates open coding, creating categories, and abstraction (Elo & Kyngäs, 2014, p. 109). On the other hand, "In deductive content analysis, the organization phase entails classification matrix advancement, whereby all the data are evaluated for subject matter and coded for correspondence to or illustration of the recognized groups (Polit & Beck, 2004, p. 212). In the reporting phase, results are portrayed by the subject matter of the classifications unfolding the occurrence utilizing a designated methodology (either deductive or inductive). QCA is comprised of subsequent phases containing data collection method, selection stratagem, assortment of apposite element of examination, reliability of organization phase in content analysis study, reporting phase from the viewpoint of content analysis dependability, reporting results, reporting the analysis process (Polit & Beck, 2004, p. 212). These steps have been followed in the current study depending upon the theoretical framework of Edward Said (2003).

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The study investigates the hypothetical intuitions from Said's opinions regarding 'othering' in *Orientalism*. In *Orientalism*, Said has explained notion of "us" and "them". *Us* according to Said, defines the Western class and their superior status whereas *them* explicates the inferior class of the Eastern region. Said refers this notion of *us* and *them* with the concept of 'colonialist and colonized' where he says that "the other is everything that lies outside of the self. The self is the familiar (Europe, the West, *us*) and the other is strange (Orient, the east, *them*)" (Niazi, Ghaforian, 2011). Elaborating the idea of Europeans and the Orient, Said pronounces that the Europeans, primarily the British and the French, fashioned the idea of Orient through their debate. The Orient has continually been a manipulative structure constructed as a binary to Europe. It has never been a substantial or real but always a manipulative entity. Said divulges that it is incredible to comprehend European society without examining treatise because discourse is a formidable source of generating individuality.

So, Said's notion, throughout his presented theory, revolves around binary oppositions of masters and slaves where the discourse has played a vital role in the construction of Othering. Said illustrates that identity creation is an intentional procedure through several discursive patterns. This intentional development forms the binaries of master and slave. One is the ruler, possessing all the rights of authorities and power as dominant, while others are slaves deprived of all privileges like subordinate distinction. Thus, discursive power also makes a difference among the different patterns of female class. Following the authority of discourse presented by Said, following study aims to make a distinction between the representations of females in both the movies.

4. Data Analysis, Discussion, and Interpretation

The researchers have selected the movies, “*Pride and Prejudice* and *Bride and Prejudice*” for analysis by converging on Said’s beliefs involving the notion of *us* and *them*. In this respect, text of the selected movies has been utilized as a discourse to be examined relatively with particular significance to female class. Conversations, movements, background setting, costumes and some other chosen characteristics, are going to be focused in order to represent Said’s arguments about ‘us’ and ‘them’. The special focus has also been on contextualizing different interpretations and conversations by the specified characters. “They can be measured as to how accurately they tell the truth about reality” elaborates McKee, during his views regarding analysis of any discourse (McKee, 2009, p. 16). Nevertheless, the main objective of evaluating these two movies is to explore the accolade of *othering* in female class. The current study answers the set research question by using Edward Said’s concept of ‘othering’ with the help of content analysis.

As stated earlier, this work has focused on depiction of female gender as *us* and *them* both in the selected movies. These two movies are Hollywood performances where Kiera Knightly played the role of white Elizabeth in the relevant movie while Aishwarya Rai played the identical role as brown Elizabeth in the concerned movie. The females in the former film are representative of ‘us’ as are superior in their certain characteristics and on the other hand, the women in the latter film refer to ‘them’ as they represent “a binary opposition between Occident and Orient” (Moosavinia, Niazi, Ghaforian, 2011, p. 15). These movies display females as representative of different ranks which is distinguished by deploying theory of othering presented by Said.

Visual elements enhance the expression of beauty or sign and symbol managed in a film including the subject matter. Here, the discussion, is delimited to dresses containing bonnets, garlands, elegant gowns, scarves and their flair of wearing costumes. Then, it includes the demonstration of food in addition to natural location or setting; and fashion with Indian ritual of welcome and pecking order. The function of costume design is to provide physical and emotional support to every actor through clothing. The costumes of female characters expose their different status. This is what Edward Said refers as “an uneven exchange with various kinds of power” where a distinction is visible between dresses of the orients and of the occident (Said, 2003).

In film making, the setting of physical location is of prime importance because it precisely connects to its worth, budget, funds, and reserves. It is related to geographic environment of a place. In this respect, *Wright’ movie was set* in England and Chadha’s film, had been set in India. Distinct locations represent different appearances and status. Certainly, the notion of *othering* comes into existence with difference of physical location and setting. For example, Nether-field and Pemberley in Derbyshire, Hertfordshire in England and Amritsar Goa and Chandigarh in India show the same scene, but these locations establish different standards for each class. The current research explores concept of othering in female characters with the help of physical location and setting by concentrating on exactly how female gender is characterized in various parts of the world, for example, in England and in India. This also gives value to the female class, that is assigned to them in their families and society through the representative movies.

One important instance of Physical location is the house of Elizabeth Bennet, which is replete with pendulous lamps, photographs of various scholars, nightlight lanterns, natural landscapes, inventive work on fixtures and various kinds of relics. There are balconies and hallways, distinct rooms involving feasting room, warehouse, resting room, drawing room, lobby, library, and back garden. This house was furnished by Mrs. Bennet with all sorts of equipment essential for a happy and enjoyable life. There are flowery green plants in the house particularly in the window of the library. This decoration was also appreciated by Mr. Collins, "What a superbly featured room". The lavish setting and location of Bennet's house creates an environment of aristocracy. A comparison between Lalita and Elizabeth's residence marks a boundary of 'us and them' between both the heroines. One is good and educated with her lavishly living standards but the other is nasty and uneducated because of her poor living standard.

One of the chief aspects of hospitality among the females is emphasized in the ball parties. Darcy's entrance, for instance, culminated display of demonstrating superiority of upper class where Elizabeth was designated the role of a host. Female viewers are familiarized with a pin drop stillness. The notion of distinctive mode of female generosity is presented in the form of greeting the guests. Invitees are greeted in a splendid style whereas the modesty of embracing in *Indian movie* is fairly dissimilar.

Pecking order is applied for countenance of supremacy among different characters. This term has been drawn from the feeding pattern of the chicken. For example, the moment when chickens are provided with food, one who is stronger, picks the food first, but then other chicks relish their food. This premise is associated to supremacy of one group on the other because of the fact that authority and dominance of one over other exercises power and control. According to Edward Said (2003), we cannot explore discourse (as it is a powerful source of creating identity) without determining the supremacy of power.

According to Said (2003), the norms of Oriental behavior are considered to be inexplicable and through the pecking order, it can easily be investigated. Female characters of determine value and significance of persons portrayed in both movies. In *Pride and Prejudice*, it has been presented in an entirely different way. In this respect, the role and character of Mrs. Bennet portrays true picture as she looks excited Lydia's marriage but does not express worries on the circumstance that the younger daughter is getting married before the elder daughter. Similarly, on the elopement of Lydia, the family swings with pleasure which shows no objection on their part for elopement. In spite she comments "Lydia married and at 15 too! Ring the bell, Kitty. I must put on my things and tell Lady Lucas. Oh, to see her face. Tell the servants they will have a bowl of punch." Mrs. Bennet's style of conversation exhibits that traditional values of the white people give freedom to their children not restricting them to the limitations of patriarchy. On the contrary, Lalita did not have such kind of freedom.

Auditory fundamentals contain binary structure of *us* and *them* with the help of discourse. It encompasses content which is language consisted of dialogues, lexicon, and selection of key words. The most essential characteristics of acoustic components are comprised accent, facial expressions, conversations, and lexicon. To examine the depiction of female gender as *us* and *them* in both the films, the outstanding group of dialectal is alienated into two diminutive groupings of vocal communiqué and facial appearance that substantiate the reader to examine discrepancy contour between higher and lower sections of female society.

The manner of discussion of Mrs. Bennet - her dialogues and accent - is distinct from those of Mrs. Bakshy's. For example, Mr. Collins recommends Elizabeth Bennet, Mrs. Bennet's accent is purposefully persuasive. It is important to mention that she communicates genuinely in the vernacular of high-level although her conversation orbits across marriage and appearances. While in Chadha's movie, though the influx of Mr. Kholi at Mrs. Bakshy's house, there transpires the identical conversation but with unique accent, way of talking and, words and phrases being emphasized. Mr. Kholi intends Lalita Bakshy that she refuses, her mother Mrs. Bakshy enhances assertive and out of self-control expressions.

The transformation between the accents of Mrs. Bennet and Mrs. Bakshy is obvious. One expresses in an enforcing accent and the other as unrefined and disparaging. Facial manifestations of the actors in Wright's movie are entirely dissimilar from the facial representations of the actors introduced in Chadha's movie. The characters have facial expressions like appealing, alluring, blissful, delightful, thrilled and beaming while the accessible facial expressions of the characters in latter movie are signs of tedium, discomfiture, foiling, revulsion, melancholy, distress, annoyance, fatigued, disgrace and misperception. The chosen characters, Mrs. Bennet and Mrs. Bakshy, both acquire various facial representations just because of their diverse societal and financial milieu. For example, Mrs. Bennet, with her three daughters, Lydia, Marry and Kitty sets out to Nether field to bring Jane back from Mr. Bingley's palace with glamorous and intriguing makeover manifestations. She begins discussion with Mr. Darcy, Mr. Bingley and Miss Caroline Bingley with a fantastic admiration and reverence. This makes obvious that Mrs Bennet communicates with great qualities and constructive attributes which lift up her social position as *us*.

We have significantly different scenario in Wright's film comparing to Chadha's film. In this respect, Balraj asks Mr. Bakshy to allow Jaya to have company with him to Goa. The purpose of Mr. Bakshy's defiance with Balraj was to make him joyful. Consequently, Mrs Bakshy approves dual facial expressions, Mr. Balraj is associated with good facial expressions whereas bad ones relate to Mr. Bakshy. Mrs. Bakshy's dialogues evidently designate her facial expressions as flirtatious and seductive style. She has been portrayed with crafty facial expressions to represent her as degraded woman belonging to lower social status.

A dialogue is a conversation to exchange and communicate on different issues and it includes two or more characters of a book, novel, drama, or a film in which they discuss societal, dogmatic, and economic ones. The dialogues of Wright's film are different from those of presented in the other movie that includes such dialogues which are neither too long nor too short rather effortlessly appropriate to juncture. Every uttered dialogue assists in story advancement and discloses the character's role and her life. However, dialogues of Indian movie are not well defined. Moreover, everybody becomes quiet and requirements to attend to the letter. Mrs. Bennet. She elucidates the entire situation in just one verdict without giving any ingredient to others.

'Us and them' strategy is noticeable in the differences of discourse forms among the female characters of both the selected movies. In Indian movie, vocabulary substances are used for the determination of offering a preeminent life model of the Europeans. In this regard, Mr. Wickham asks Elizabeth of negative intentions of Mr. Darcy, but Elizabeth is disconcerted and senses consideration for Darcy. Darcy was represented as negative character although negative words have not been used words. Therefore, Elizabeth as representative of English

women one never levels any charge against anybody without proof. In Wright's movie, Darcy talks about crowded roads of India as "Jesus, Balraj, where the hell have you brought me? He basically expresses negative words for crowded roads of India due to the reason that there were street vendors' uproar, hollering and the car horns which are blown relentlessly. The lexical items "mayhem" and "bedlam" used possess negative connotations in the sense that 'Mayhem' is a state of violent disorder as it is seen in Indian movie visibly. Likewise, the word 'bedlam' was expressed to signify a place full of noise. The word, 'hell' was also used for India which is an indication of a bad place. This type of word selection shows that British are always loaded with positive and polite vocabulary items.

This is use of language which makes conversation more effective, and the use of ironic words is also significant that stain the periphery of 'us' and 'them' in both the movies in a noticeable manner. In this respect, Wright's film shows that when Mr. Bingley comes to the residence of Mrs. Bennet everybody performs logically and welcomes him with respect and honor. A warm welcome was given to Mrs. Bennet and discussion was started in a decent way. "How very glad we are to see you, Mr. Bingley! There are a great many changes since you went away. Miss Lucas is married and settled. And one of my own daughters too, you will have seen it in the papers though it was not put in as it ought to have been. Very short, nothing about her family". In this way, words choice in Wright's movie is eminent and remarkable as compared to the selection of words in Indian movie.

Tone of a characters is believed as an important feature in language and literature teaching, writing and speaking. Discussing patterns of tone, primary indispensable features of argument were noted and engrossed on in both the movies. Both of them hold features of such tone patterns which enable them diverse from each other. Males' attitude towards females in Wright's movie is completely diverse from the insolence of males concerning female characters of Indian movie. Moreover, pitch is another characteristic of tone that symbolizes higher and the lower currents of reverberation. Pitch is also the focal point of conversation in equally verbal and scripted discourse of language and literature. The female tone in Wright's movie is trustworthy than the tenor of ladies in Indian movie. In Wright's movie, for example, Mr. Darcy, Mr. Bingley and Miss Caroline Bingley get here to the assembly apartments in Meryton Village throughout the ball late at night and Mrs. Bennet forces Mr. Bennet to go and establish the girls with the principled guests immediately. "Listen Mr. Bennet you must introduce him to the girls immediately". Mr. Bennet did not state a single word and supports his wife's authority peacefully and courteously. She directs her spouse in a reliable tone. Her voice seems with a higher pitch as matched to her husband's, and she nearly obliges him to conform her instructions. Mr. Bennet is depicted as silent when contrasts with his wife because of her strong grip on her extended family members that promotes her place in her family and societal position in society. Similar to this, the tone in Indian movie is completely distinct. Time and again Mrs. Bakshy beseeches, "It's too, too much tension for me now. She is happy to let us all be ruined". This is an indication of her low-pitched voice exhibiting the fact that she possesses no significance within the household, and as a result, most of her commands at home are ignored by others.

5. Conclusion

The current research work is qualitative in nature, primarily relying on content analysis and it concludes that 'us' is always used as positive and 'them' strategy is used to portray others as negative. In this way, people and countries of west belong to 'us', so they are represented positive whereas eastern people and countries are 'others' for westerners and are portrayed negatively and vice-versa. Objective of the study was to reveal attributes allocated to feminine characters when they are presented as '*us*' and '*them*'. The notion of 'us' and 'them' which is focus of current research with special reference to female characters, is an significant component of discussion producing its modified mini-categories with their dynamic applications. Throughout current research, these small categories have been examined as important and helping assets in order to reveal demonstration of Edward Said's notion. After rigorous analysis of both the movies, findings of study are as follows:

The notion of 'us' and 'them' which was based upon: the visual and the auditory parameters - representing female gender as 'us and them' that allots them higher and lower social statuses. In this respect, in Wright's movie, the feminine gender has been portrayed intentionally with optimistic characteristics which validates that they belong to higher strata of society while ladies of Indian movie have been portrayed comparatively as less mannered and besmirched individuals who are acquiescent yet discourteous; therefore, displaying a cognizant effort to exhibition their lower social rank in the society and inside their own families.

Next segment of the analysis was related to content and style which encompasses costume, food, and physical location. Expression of costume, food, and physical position such instances are scrutinized that explicitly draw a difference line between higher and lower segments of society. Costumes, as demonstrative of the graphic, used by the ladies of Wright's movie are entirely diverse from the costumes of female characters of Indian movie in the sense that English ladies circumvent see-through garbs. On the other hand, Indian ladies attire them deliberately that describes their attitude as being worldly and marginally vulgar. Similarly, nourishment items, used by both female sections also vary from one another. Correspondingly, fashion contains friendliness and nibbling order. Hospitality and pecking order perform a critical role in recognizing symbol of female gender as 'us' and 'them' in both movies. Supplementary, the major heading of aural has been specified into two sub- headings as content and style.

To conclude, based on analysis it can be asserted that both these movies are different regarding their nature, mode, and status to a large extent. The accessible imageries, adverts, and setting engrave a limit of discrepancy that categorizes the English Elizabeth as *us* and the Indian Elizabeth as *them*. Similar matter has been found with rest of the female characters, including the mother, sisters and friends of Elizabeth.

5.1. Recommendations

Both the selected movies based upon related novels can be selected and analyzed separately by applying 'us' and 'them' strategy. Moreover, Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA can be used to investigate the discursive structures embedded in the textual form of both the selected works. Comparative analysis can be made to

highlight literary, linguistic and discoursal similarities and differences between the two works of art.

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A Corpus-Based Genre Analysis of the Linguistic Specificity of VC Messages on the Websites of Universities in Pakistan

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Abstract

The present study makes an attempt to study the use of language and its linguistic specificity in the Vice-Chancellors' Messages given on the websites of the public and private sector universities in Pakistan. A sample corpus of the Vice-Chancellors' messages on the websites of the universities is compiled. To analyze the text of the corpus, this research has quantitatively analyzed the text of the Vice-Chancellors' messages available on universities' websites. Ken Hyland's model of Specificity of language is used for the analysis of the corpus. The data is categorized under various linguistic/lexical categories which helped in grouping specific lexical items that are used in these messages. To find out the linguistic specifics of the Vice-Chancellors' messages, corpus tools i.e. Antconc has been used. The analysis showed that various lexical items occur frequently in the Vice-Chancellors' messages. This includes the frequent use of self-mentioning, hedges, directives, reporting Verbs, and lexical bundles. Further, it concludes that the frequent and abundant use of the above linguistic items is integral for the successful communication of the universities' aims and objectives in Vice-Chancellors' messages.

1. Introduction

The aim of universities' websites is to advance the universities' mission, brand, and messages to core constituents i.e. applicants, students, employees, donors, and visitors, etc. In higher education information on websites plays a pivotal role in customer and community service. Jeffries (2015) found that 76% of people feel it convenient to read messages from the websites, 52% people prefer reading text messages from the universities' websites, and even 7% considered it as a good way for an organization to get their attention. It is a core business, communication, and promotional tool for universities in providing information and services to the local, national and international public. Vice-Chancellors' message on a university website plays an important role in providing information regarding the overall manifesto of the university to the campus community and general public. In this research, the linguistic specifics of the Vice-Chancellors' messages on the websites of the universities in Pakistan are analyzed and the important functions performed through the linguistic specifics are identified.

1.1 Concept of Specificity in Writing

Specificity in the language is a feature that differentiates different entities/nouns/referents which is specific to a given context (Hyland, 2008). This idea affirms that every language use has some linguistic features and these features vary in different situations. This becomes the basis for disciplinary specificity given by Hyland (2008). He asserts that specificity is a vital concept in exercising English for academic and specific purposes. He called specificity a tool that highlights specific features of academic writing. He worked on disciplinary specificity and found peculiar differences in soft and hard disciplines. The use of language in a particular group for a specific purpose has certain specific conventions. That is the reason every discourse community has its specifics of communication and has become so much of interest due to its relationship to the concept of genre analysis (Hyland, 2008). For instance, Halliday (1989) worked on the specifics of written and spoken language and found that written language has a larger number of nouns, lexemes, and an impersonal tone compared to the spoken language. Hyland highlighted the specific features of academic writing across disciplines i.e. sciences and arts and asserted that writers use certain familiar structures that the reader of the specific genre will expect. He compiled a corpus consisting of 1.5 million words of research articles from 8 disciplines, 4 million words of students' dissertation, and data sets of interviews of 30 academics and analyzed the disciplinary variation based on citation practices, and the use of reporting verbs, hedges, self-mention, bundles, and directives. The results of the corpus analysis showed that teachers need to teach students the conventions that are specific to respective disciplines to prepare them in their academic studies.

1.2. Statement of the Research Problem

In every language use, written or spoken, linguistic items, words or phrases hold a meaningful relationship. Every genre and text type i.e. essays, editorials, letters, applications, journals, etc., have their specific linguistic features; that need to be identified and described. Vice-chancellors' messages on their respective university websites serve important functions and seem to have specific linguistic features. This research study aims at analyzing the most commonly occurring linguistic items and identifying their functions in the welcome addresses of Vice-chancellors on their respective University websites.

1.3. Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to identify the specific linguistic and lexical features along with their functions in the Vice-chancellors' messages on their university websites. The secondary objective is to explore whether the Vice-chancellors' messages can be categorized as belonging to a specific genre based on their linguistic and lexical features.

2. Literature Review

Hyland (2007) asserted that genre-based pedagogies are useful as they can help ESL learners in writing effectively. Experts in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) stress the needs of learners and genre-based language description for designing courses in ESP. Hyland (2002) talked about disciplinary variation and asserted that students must be taught the specific literacy skills of every discipline. Scholars incorporate various advanced methods to genre analysis and have also shown a keen interest in the analysis of web genres. Chandler (1997) described e-communication as a genre of writing by analyzing e-text messages and identifying their conversational or interactional functions. Askehave and Neilsen (2005) worked on the European industrial country website by applying Swales's' model and identified the structure, content, requirements, contacts, discourse community, and the promotion of the organization. Yang (2013) studied the promotional nature of university websites by compiling a corpus called "About Us" and by identifying the keywords that promoted the university in the corpus using 'wordsmith' a corpus tool. Villanueva, Dolom, and Belen, (2018) worked on web-based genre analysis by compiling a corpus of 41 university websites and analyzing the genre at three levels as the identification of moves, keywords in context, and concordance lines.

Computer technology and corpus-based studies have made a great impact on language learning research. Conrad, (2009) and Romer and Wulff (2010), by studying the keywords, concordance, cluster list, the use of demonstrative pronouns, and the frequency of the words across disciplines in the Michigan corpus illustrated the usefulness of corpus-based comparative analysis of texts in students' academic writing research. Wu, Geqi & Zhu, Yongsheng. (2015) compiled a sample corpus of 90 research articles (45 in English and 45 in Chinese) and explores the construction of authorial identity in English and Chinese research articles by examining the frequency of and roles performed by self-mention markers. Hedges as one of the particular features of academic writing has been the subject of research in corpus linguistics. Hyland (1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998 & 1999), Salager-Meyer (1994), Vande Kopple and Crismore (1990), and Varttala (2001) have studied the significant role of hedging in academic writing and research articles; Whereas, Stubbs (1986), Coates (1987), Horman (1989) and Nittono (2003), have also studied the use of hedges in the context of casual and oral discourse. Reporting verbs in academic writing have also been studied in detail by Charles (2006), Zhang (2008), and Bloch (2010).

In EAP, a significant amount of research is conducted on the use and functions of lexical bundles. Lexical bundles have been referred to with different terms by researchers for instance, "lexicalized sentence stem" (Pawley & Syder, 1983), "cluster" (Scott, 1997), "N-grams" (Stubbs, 2005). Vidacovic and Barker (2010) studied lexical bundles to show that conventionalized lexical bundles mark the proficiency of writers. Chen and Baker (2010) illustrated that with the increase of language proficiency the use of lexical bundles also increased. Likewise, Staples, Egbert, Biber, and McClair (2013) manifested the proficiency

levels of L2-English writers with the use of lexical bundles. Pang (2010) and Salazar (2013) compared the use of lexical bundles in research articles by native and non-native writers. Whereas, Pan, Reppen, and Biber (2016) compared the use of lexical bundles in Telecommunications journals by native English with non-native English academic professionals. Previous studies on lexical bundles mostly focus on one discipline. Salazar (2013) identified lexical bundles in the published articles of biology and biochemistry, Qin (2014) studied lexical bundles in the academic papers and published articles of applied linguistics, Grabowski (2015) analyzed lexical bundles in the corpus of written English pharmaceutical discourse, and Pan et al. (2016) studied the lexical bundles in Telecommunications journals.

In Pakistan genre-based linguistic analysis of the use of language in different domains has recently got the attention of scholars and researchers. Though, at the moment there is a scarcity of research in this area, yet, some useful studies have been conducted in recent times. For instance, Mudasser (2017) conducted a corpus-based analysis of the politeness strategies in the acknowledgment sections of Ph.D. dissertations in Pakistan. Khattak and Shehzad (2018) also studied the specificity of academic verbs and showed the common patterns of the use of academic verbs in the introduction section of the Ph.D. dissertations in the field of English studies in Pakistan. Whereas Ahmed, Yousaf, and Habib (2018) linguistically analyzed the ideational functions in the legal discourse of the Panama case verdict in Pakistan. The current study is significant in the sense that it has identified the linguistic specificity of the frequent use and functions of self-mentioning, hedges, reporting verbs, and commonly occurring lexical bundles in the website messages of the Vice-Chancellors of different universities in Pakistan.

3. Research Methodology

The study has utilized corpus-based research methodology and is therefore quantitative. The data was collected from the websites of HEC recognized universities in Pakistan by the Purposive Nonrandom sampling technique (Dolores & Tongco, 2007). The data consists of 150 Vice-chancellors' messages posted over a period of six months on the websites of different universities i.e. private and public sector in Pakistan. To ensure the authenticity of data a way back, machinery i.e. Archive.org was used, where the collected data from the particular time period was saved. For analyzing data, the 'specificity model' by Hyland (2009) was used. Keyword lists of the lexical specificity given in Hyland's (2009) i.e. self-mentioning, hedges, reporting verbs, and lexical bundles were generated and their frequencies, and collocations were analyzed via software Antconc (3.4.4). After the analysis, the data is interpreted and discussed with reference to the findings of different sample studies in each of the above mentioned lexical category.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

Detailed analyses of the data along with a discussion of the results are as follows:

4.1. Self-Mention

Self-Mention is the first category as per ‘Lexical Specificity’ by Hyland’s (2009). This category indicated that a writer mentions himself/herself in the writing by utilizing certain pronouns with the help of which he intrudes in the text and thus builds a relationship with the arguments made in it and also with the intended readers of the text. For Wu *et al.* (2015) ‘Self-mention’ is a powerful rhetorical strategy for constructing authorial identity in research articles and proposes that researchers’ authorial identity can be considered in three aspects i.e. the detached, the individual, and the collective self; depending on the self-mention devices employed in writing.

Table 1

Self-Mentioning

Pronoun	Person	Frequency	% of Pronouns used in the corpus
We	First person(plural)	404	32.7%
You	Second person	297	23.4%
I	First person(singular)	289	21.6%
Them	Third-person	73	5.92%
Us	Third-person	73	5.92%
They	Third-person	61	4.94%
Me	First-person	35	2.83%
Mine	First-person	1	0.08%

Note. The above table represents the frequencies of the types of self-mentioning pronouns used in the text of Vice-Chancellors’ messages.

The pronoun “we” has the highest frequency among the other pronouns. A detailed analysis of the concordance of the pronoun “we” in the corpus revealed that its explicit use with certain nouns and verbs has coupled the position and the claim of the writer, e.g. ‘*we owe to education everything that we have achieved in the journey of life*’, ‘*we, as an enlightened clan, are expected to convert challenges into opportunities*’, ‘*we solicit the help of communities and Government and urge them to join hands with us*’. This first-person plural pronoun is used to show the shared feelings of the writer of the text and the readers.

These shared feelings are expected to have a positive impact on readers through persuading and convincing the readers of what has been communicated in the message. The use of 'we' help the author to generalize whatever they say to the reader. This gives the reader a sense of solidarity which makes them respond to the text as it is directly addressed to them thus perform the function of representing 'collective self' in the writing (Wu *et.al*). Besides, there is the frequent use of the first-person singular pronoun "I". The percentage of the use of "I" shows that it is also a frequently used pronoun e.g. *I wish* best of luck for everyone' *I look* forward to welcoming you all at the institute' *I pray* for your bright future and success in every walk of life'. These examples show that the pronoun 'I' is used by writers to show an authentic perspective to readers. It is used by the writers to show a personal connection to the readers. Emotional bondage is generated between the speakers and writers with the use of first-person pronouns and performs the functions of representing 'individual self' (Wu *et.al*).

Another pronoun used in the welcome addresses of the vice-chancellors' messages is a second-person pronoun "you" which is used frequently in the corpus. This pronoun is used for addressing the readers directly. The second person "you" has three cases. In subjective and objective cases, it carries the same form "you" but in possessive cases, it takes two different forms e.g. "your and yours". The corpus analysis revealed that it has the second-highest frequency with 21.6%. The frequent use of "you" in the text shows the addressee's involvement in the message e.g. *'you are invited* to visit our campus', *'you will be* provided with a detailed orientation to help you to get started with your studies', *'you and your dreams* are important to us, let's materialize them together'. These examples show that the use of the second-person pronouns is also evident in the corpus and its use is preferred in the Vice-chancellors' messages to involve and engage readers in these messages and perform the functions of 'collective self' in the writing (Wu *et.al*).

The pronoun 'them' has the third-highest frequency in terms of its occurrence in the corpus e.g. *'I am proud of them'*, *'credit goes to this esteemed institution that has given them the best* education, professionalism, and moral values', *'we solicit the help of communities and government and urge them* to join hands with us', *'they should* take an interest in their studies and activities', *'they are highly* qualified and have a knack to meet the challenges', *'they always* make us proud'. These also perform the functions of 'collective self' in the writing (Wu *et.al*). According to Hyland (2009) self-mentioning in a text gives a writer the ability to claim their work and show the author's own opinion to the readers thus reveals the personal position of the author. The analysis of the self-mentioning in the corpus of Vice-chancellors' messages has shown that first and second-person pronouns are commonly used in these messages. The first person (plural) 'we' is used 32.7%, first person (singular) 'I' is used. 21.6% %, while the second person 'you' is used 23.4% in the corpus. Thus, the use of these pronouns refers to the important functions of individual and collective self in writing the Vice-Chancellors' messages on university websites.

4.2. Hedges

Hedges are the second category as per the 'Lexical Specificity' model proposed in Hyland (2009). According to Hyland (1998), hedging is a communicative strategy employed by writers to enhance or reduce the degree of confidence in the truth of statements, mark the writer's attitude towards the audience along and have rhetorical, interactive, and communicative importance in academic discourse. Lakoff (1972) explained hedges as "words or phrases whose job is to make things more or less fuzzy". Salager Meyer (1994)

identified that Hedges illustrate tentativeness and flexibility in the level of claim the writers intend to make. Hedges are linguistic devices that show uncertainty and hesitation in language use and show politeness and indirectness in conversation. Hedges involve tense and aspect of the sentence and show the level of certainty of the writer with the claim they make. Writers use hedges to achieve some rhetoric effects because these serve different purposes in the text e.g. to reduce the effect of another academic opposing claim, to go with the widely accepted and conventionalized format of academic writing, and to use different politeness strategies in conversation making it more productive for the readers. These hedges are used by the writers to reduce the abrupt response of readers and the risk of opposition. The use of hedges can be understood as a politeness strategy. The use of hedges in writing allows the writer to be less direct and develop a kind of writer/reader relationship. Writers use hedges in their writing to show that the claim they are making is not 100% proven.

Table 2***Hedges***

Hedge	Frequency	%age in corpus	Hedge	Frequency	%age in corpus
That	355	37.1%	May	25	2.61%
Will	220	23.03%	Look	23	2.40%
Can	70	7.32%	Should	20	2.09%
Would	47	4.92%	Must	16	1.67%
Believe	33	3.45%	Possible	16	1.67%
About	32	3.35%	Sure	11	1.15%
Like	32	3.35%	Virtual	10	1.04%

Note. The above table shows the frequencies and percentages of the commonly occurring hedges in the Vice-Chancellors' messages.

The above-given Table shows the occurrence of 'That' with the frequency of 37.1%, 'will' 23.03%, 'can' 7.32%, 'would' 4.92%, 'believe' 3.45%, 'about' and 'like' with 3.35%, etc. respectively. The analysis of the corpus reveals that the corpus contains a large number of hedges. For Hyland (2009) the soft disciplines i.e. Social Sciences and Humanities make frequent use of hedges in their writing as compared to those in Science and Engineering. Along with Hyland's disciplinary specificity model, the present corpus of Vice-Chancellors' messages has illustrated frequent use of hedges which shows similarity to soft disciplines. In this way, Vice-Chancellors' messages can be grouped in soft disciplines

according to Hyland's findings. It can also be inferred that Vice-Chancellors' messages make frequent use of hedges to interact with the readers in a polite way.

4.3 Directives

The third category as per Hyland (2009) is directives. The directives in English grammar are sentences that guide the reader to perform an action. Derivatives generally contain a high proportion of imperative sentences and they usually begin with action verbs. These usually include inviting, commanding, suggesting, pleading, requesting, expressing a wish, and permitting, etc. In English, directives are expressed in two ways i.e. imperatives and obligation modals. These two types of directives are analyzed and discussed in two separate tables.

Table 3

Modal Auxiliaries

Modal Auxiliary	Frequency	%age in corpus	Modal Auxiliary	Frequency	%age in corpus
Will	220	34.2%	Must	16	2.49%
Have	216	33.6%	Shall	16	2.49%
Can	70	10.96%	Could	7	1.09%
Would	47	7.32%	Ought	3	0.46%
May	25	3.89%	Might	2	0.31%
Should	20	3.11%			

Note. The above table shows the frequencies of frequently used modal auxiliaries in the corpus.

The modal auxiliary 'Will' has the highest frequency and percentage i.e. 34.2%. The use of "Will" serves different functions: writers use it to make sentences that refer to the future, show ability, willingness or commands, etc. The second frequent modal auxiliary in the corpus is "have" with a frequency of 33.6%. This modal is used to create different tenses e.g. present and past perfect tenses. It is used in affirmative and negative statements and also for showing the possibility and probability of something. Another frequently used modal auxiliary is "can" having a frequency of 10.96%. "can" is used to express ability, possibility, and consent.

Table 4
Imperatives

Imperative	Frequency	%age	S.no	Imperative	Frequency	%age
Make	70	12.36%	42.	Advice	2	0.35%
Provide	63	11.1%	43.	Close	2	0.35%
Develop	49	8.65%	44.	Copy	2	0.35%
Program	32	5.65%	45.	Mix	2	0.35%
Find	27	4.77%	46.	Receive	2	0.35%
Center	26	4.59%	47.	Request	2	0.35%
Study	25	4.41%	48.	Route	2	0.35%
Open	22	3.88%	49.	Stimulate	2	0.35%
Prepare	18	3.18%	50.	Adopt	1	0.17%
Process	17	3.0%	51.	Attend	1	0.17%
Facilitate	15	2.65%	52.	Balance	1	0.17%
Assure	14	2.47%	53.	Collaborate	1	0.17%
Post	12	2.12%	54.	Consolidate	1	0.17%
Train	11	1.94%	55.	Determine	1	0.17%
Clear	7	1.23%	56.	Disseminate	1	0.17%
Follow	7	1.23%	57.	Exercise	1	0.17%
Act	6	1.06%	58.	Feed	1	0.17%
Establish	6	1.06%	59.	Flag	1	0.17%
Plan	6	1.06%	60.	Formulate	1	0.17%
Assume	5	0.88%	61.	Furnish	1	0.17%
Implement	5	0.88%	62.	Inform	1	0.17%

Maintain	5	0.88%	63.	Initiate	1	0.17%
Requisite	5	0.88%	64.	List	1	0.17%
Search	5	0.88%	65.	Manage	1	0.17%
Secure	5	0.88%	67.	Measure	1	0.17%
Separate	5	0.88%	68.	Multiply	1	0.17%
Add	4	0.706%	69.	Note	1	0.17%
Apply	4	0.706%	70.	Observe	1	0.17%
Carry	4	0.706%	71.	Operate	1	0.17%
Direct	4	0.706%	72.	Review	1	0.17%
Evaluate	4	0.706%	73.	Schedule	1	0.17%
Line	4	0.706%	74.	Select	1	0.17%
Participate	4	0.706%	75.	Sign	1	0.17%
Rate	4	0.706%	76.	Survey	1	0.17%
Report	4	0.706%	77.	Test	1	0.17%
Assist	3	0.53%	78.	Obtain	1	0.17%
Batch	3	0.53%				
Corporate	3	0.53%				
Perform	3	0.53%				
Require	3	0.53%				
Write	3	0.53%				

Note. The above table represents the frequencies of the imperatives used in the text of Vice-chancellors' messages.

An imperative is a grammatical mood that expresses or directs action. The use of imperatives affects another verb and verb phrases in the sentence. Imperatives are verbs indicating a command or obligation. In an imperative mood, the base form of the verb is used to direct certain actions and it always starts with the verb indicating instructions.

Imperative voices can be affirmative or negative. Hyland (2009) asserts that imperatives direct their readers in three different activities e.g. textual, physical, and cognitive.

4.4 Reporting Verbs

Reporting verbs is also one of the important features in academic writing. Charles (2006), states that reporting verbs in writing enable a writer to mark his/her responsibility towards the statement made by referring to the source in support of their claim. Hyland and Milton (1999, p. 147) claimed that the “appropriate use of reporting verbs will provide maximum interpersonal and persuasive effect” and play important grammatical functions in writing statements in academic writing (Hyland, 1998). These functions of reporting verbs are divided into three basic categories i.e. research acts, cognition acts, and discourse (Hyland, 2000). The fourth category as per the Hyland’s (2009) model of Linguistic Specificity is reporting verbs. Academic writing makes use of reporting verbs to report on the work done by others. Reporting verbs are used in present and past tenses according to the discourse it represents. It uses the past tense when reporting the events from the past and uses the present tense when the event continues. The following table shows the frequency of the use of reporting verbs in the Vice-Chancellors’ messages.

Table 5
Reporting Verbs

Reporting Verb	Frequency	Percentage in the Corpus
Develop	49	42.6%
Find	27	23.4%
Study	25	21.7%
Report	4	3.47%
Say	4	3.47%
Claim	3	2.60%
Demonstrate	2	1.73%
Show	1	0.86%

Note. The above table shows the frequency of the reporting verbs used in the corpus.

The analysis of reporting verbs in the present study reveals that different reporting verbs are used frequently in the Vice-chancellors’ messages e.g. develop, find, study, have a frequency of 42.6%, 23.4%, and 21.7% respectively. According to Hyland (2009), writers

in social sciences use verbs like “suggest, argue, discuss”, while writers in natural sciences use verbs like “discover, show, analyze”. The differences among different disciplines show that reporting verbs have different shades of meanings. In academic writing, when writers interpret and report the findings of others, they need to use a variety of reporting verbs. . According to Hyland (2009) soft disciplines, i.e. Humanities and social sciences use reporting verbs that are different from reporting verbs used in hard disciplines. In this study, the reporting verbs used are similar to those used in hard sciences i.e. ‘find and study’ to make their statements more potent and effective. The frequent use of reporting verbs in Vice-Chancellors’ messages similar to those used in hard sciences makes these a specific linguistic feature of this type of writing.

4.5 Lexical Bundles

The fifth category as per Hyland (2009) is lexical bundles. The English language has certain commonly occurring expressions which are referred to as chunks or bundles and these are called lexical bundles. Biber and Conrad (2009) defined lexical bundles as the frequently re-occurring sequences of three or more words that have a statistical tendency to exist together in discourse. Lexical bundles can act as the main building blocks of a discourse. Biber, Johansson, Leech, and Finegan (1999) define a lexical bundle as, “a recurrent sequence of words which appears across texts in the same register and help shape distinctiveness of the register”, whereas, Biber (2006) also defines lexical bundles as “the most frequent recurring sequences of words in a given register”. One can differentiate between various types of these bundles based on their structural patterns and functions in discourse. Several researchers (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2004; Biber, 2006; Hyland, 2008) have also shown that lexical bundles vary in their discourse functions (e.g., expressing stance, discourse organization, or referential meanings). According to Biber and Hyland (2006 & 2008), there are four types of lexical bundles in a particular discourse, and these are the Verb phrase component, Noun phrase components, Prepositional phrase/clausal elements, and other longer clausal structures. The present study has focused on identifying lexical containing three- or four-word clusters in the corpus. The following table shows their frequencies in the corpus.

Table no 6

Three Words Cluster

3 Words	Fr eq.	%a ge	3 Words	Fr eq.	%a ge	3 Words	Fr eq.	%a ge
as well as	47	1.1 5%	welcome to the	14	0.3 5%	in the field	10	0.2 4%
one of the	46	1.1 2%	of the students	13	0.3 1%	is committed to	10	0.2 4%
of the university	45	1.1	the needs of	13	0.3	of knowledge	10	0.2

		0%			1%	and		4%
of the country	43	1.0 5%	to the university	13	0.3 1%	Pakistan x s	10	0.2 4%
in the country	33	0.8 0%	universities of the	13	0.3 1%	role in the	10	0.2 4%
the university is	32	0.7 4%	academic excellence and	12	0.2 9%	teaching and learning	10	0.2 4%
of higher education	29	0.7 1%	education in Pakistan	12	0.2 9%	teaching and research	10	0.2 4%
national and international	28	0.6 8%	education in the	12	0.2 9%	the faculty and	10	0.2 4%
the university of	27	0.6 6%	i welcome you	12	0.2 9%	the field of	10	0.2 4%
the development of	26	0.6 3%	invite you to	12	0.2 9%	to be a	10	0.2 4%
in order to	25	0.6 1%	of our students	12	0.2 9%	university in Pakistan	10	0.2 4%
the university has	25	0.6 1%	our students to	12	0.2 9%	vice chancellor of	10	0.2 4%
of the art	24	0.5 8%	part of the	12	0.2 9%	we believe that	10	0.2 4%
state of the	23	0.5 6%	university has been	12	0.2 9%	we need to	10	0.2 4%
of the world	21	0.5 1%	challenges of the	11	0.2 6%	you will be	10	0.2 4%
welcome you to	20	0.4 9%	education and research	11	0.2 6%	you will find	10	0.2 4%
look forward to	19	0.4 6%	i invite you	11	0.2 6%	a number of	9	0.2 2%
the quality of	19	0.4 6%	in the region	11	0.2 6%	a part of	9	0.2 2%

higher education commission	17	0.4 1%	is one of	11	0.2 6%	am confident that	9	0.2 2%
higher education in	17	0.4 1%	of academic excellence	11	0.2 6%	economic development of	9	0.2 2%
to meet the	17	0.4 1%	of excellence in	11	0.2 6%	education commission HEC	9	0.2 2%
the challenges of	16	0.3 9%	of the best	11	0.2 6%	excellence in teaching	9	0.2 2%
university of Peshawar	16	0.3 9%	of the leading	11	0.2 6%	highly qualified faculty	9	0.2 2%
development of the	15	0.3 6%	since its inception	11	0.2 6%	in the world	9	0.2 2%
faculty and staff	15	0.3 6%	the fact that	11	0.2 6%	of the most	9	0.2 2%
of higher learning	15	0.3 6%	the government of	11	0.2 6%	over the years	9	0.2 2%
the country and	15	0.3 6%	the university x	11	0.2 6%	quality of education	9	0.2 2%
university x s	15	0.3 6%	be able to	10	0.2 4%	shaheed benazirbhutto	9	0.2 2%
the higher education	14	0.3 5%	i am confident	10	0.2 4%	socio economic development	9	0.2 2%
to welcome you	14	0.3 5%	in higher education	10	0.2 4%	students and faculty	9	0.2 2%

Note. The above table represents the frequently used three words cluster of lexical bundles in the corpus.

Table 7

Four Words Cluster

4 Words	Fr eq .	% ag e	4 Words	Fr eq .	% ag e	4 Words	Fr eq .	% ag e
state of the art	23	1.59 %	In the place of	6	0.41 %	I am proud of	5	0.34 %
i invite you to	11	0.76 %	pleasure to welcome you	6	0.41 %	to keep pace with	5	0.34 %
the University of Peshawar	11	0.76 %	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto city	6	0.41 %	to the development of	5	0.34 %
in the field of	10	0.69 %	since its inception in	6	0.41 %	top universities of the	5	0.34 %
is one of the	10	0.69 %	socio economic development of	6	0.41 %	universities of the country	5	0.34 %
the university x s	10	0.69 %	to meet the challenges	6	0.41 %	university of engineering technology	5	0.34 %
higher education commission HEC	9	0.62 %	to welcome you to	6	0.41 %	we are proud of	5	0.34 %
i am confident that	9	0.62 %	universities of the world	6	0.41 %	welcome you all to	5	0.34 %
i welcome you to	9	0.62 %	welcome you to the	6	0.41 %	you for your interest	5	0.34 %
one of the leading	9	0.62 %	will be able to	6	0.41 %	a wide range of	4	0.27 %

as well as the	8	0.5 5 %	and extra- curricular activities	5	0.3 4%	and humanity at large	4	0.2 7%
higher education in the	8	0.5 5 %	as well as in	5	0.3 4%	are proud of our	4	0.2 7%
i look forward to	8	0.5 5 %	be a part of	5	0.3 4%	as the vice chancellor	4	0.2 7%
of higher education in	8	0.5 5 %	economic development of the	5	0.3 4%	at the same time	4	0.2 7%
one of the best	8	0.5 5 %	for your interest in	5	0.3 4%	chartered by the government	4	0.2 7%
one of the most	8	0.5 5 %	forward to welcome you	5	0.3 4%	Co-curricular and extra	4	0.2 7%
the challenges of the	8	0.5 5 %	higher education in Pakistan	5	0.3 4%	curricular and extra –curricular	4	0.2 7%
the higher education commission	8	0.5 5 %	in the development of	5	0.3 4%	education commission of Pakistan	4	0.2 7%
as one of the	7	0.4 8 %	in the fields of	5	0.3 4%	excellence in teaching and	4	0.2 7%
by the higher education	7	0.4 8 %	it is indeed a	5	0.3 4%	for the development of	4	0.2 7%
development of the country	7	0.4 8 %	look forward to welcome	5	0.3 4%	for the quality of	4	0.2 7%
seat of higher learning	7	0.4 8 %	of Pakistan it is	5	0.3 4%	forward to welcoming you	4	0.2 7%

to the university of	7	0.4 8 %	of the country and	5	0.3 4%	great pleasure to welcome	4	0.2 7%
with the support of	7	0.4 8 %	of the country in	5	0.3 4%	higher education commission of	4	0.2 7%
a large number of	6	0.4 1 %	of the country the	5	0.3 4%	humanities and social sciences	4	0.2 7%
and look forward to	6	0.4 1 %	role in the development	5	0.3 4%	in one of the	4	0.2 7%
benazirbhattu city university	6	0.4 1 %	since its establishment in	5	0.3 4%	in this part of	4	0.2 7%
by higher education commission	6	0.4 1 %	that you will find	5	0.3 4%	institutions of higher education	4	0.2 7%
by the government of	6	0.4 1 %	the development of a	5	0.3 4%	is a matter of	4	0.2 7%

Note. The above represents the frequencies of four words cluster of lexical bundles in the sample corpus of Vice-Chancellors messages.

The above Tables exemplified the types and structure of lexical bundles used in the present corpus. The first Table illustrates the three-word lexical bundles and their frequency. There are certain three-word lexical bundles used commonly in the corpus e.g. as well as, one of the, of the university, of the country, in the country with a frequency of 1.15%, 1.12%, 1.10, 1.05%, and 0.08% respectively. The second Table shows the frequency of four-word lexical bundles in the corpus. Here the dominant bundles are state of art, I invite you too, in the field of, with the frequency of 1.59%, 0.76, and 0.69% respectively. Based on their frequent use, they are divided into two categories e.g. primary lexical bundles and secondary lexical bundles. The lexical bundles used more than 5 times are commonly used bundles and referred to as the primary lexical bundles of the corpus e.g. as well as, one of the, of the country, state of the art, I invite u to have the frequency of 1.15%, 1.12%, 1.10%, 1.59% respectively. The bundles used less than five times, are regarded as the secondary lexical bundles e.g. all the best, all across the, we are proud of, having the frequency of 0.09%, 0.07%, and 0.23% respectively.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the study show that the linguistic specificity of this style of writing contains the frequent use of *self-mentioning* ('We', 'you' and 'I') that according to Wu *et al.* (2015), displays the authorial identity, mark solidarity of the writer with the readers, and perform the functions of reflecting the individual and collective self in writing. *Hedges* ('that', 'will' and 'can' etc.) that according to Hyland (1998), mark writer's attitude towards the audience, communication with the readers in a polite manner and represent the importance of courteous language in the messages of the Vice-Chancellors on university websites. *Directives* ('will', 'have' and 'can' etc.) to illustrates the usefulness of the message in terms of readers' interest in a suggestive manner and the possible impact of it in future prospects and to direct the readers in three different activities i.e. textual, physical and cognitive (Hyland, 2009). *Reporting verbs* ('Develop', 'Find', 'Study' and 'Report') to maximize the interpersonal and persuasive effect of the Vice-Chancellors messages and dominantly perform the function of developing cognition of the readers (Hyland, 2000). *Lexical bundles* of three and four words in abundance that according to Biber and Hyland (2006 & 2008) show the high-level language proficiency and expert mode of writing such messages by the Vice-Chancellors on the university websites. The frequency of the use of the above linguistic items manifests that the Vice-Chancellor's messages on the website of the universities play a very important function in conveying the manifesto of the university and is therefore written in a formal academic language. The findings of the study indicated that the keywords used in the text present a positive image of the university, and that the language of the Vice-Chancellors messages on websites is communicative, informative, and also promotional in nature.

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New Literacy Studies: A Study of Literacy Practices in Middle Class Youth of Southern Punjab, Multan

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Keywords

- Brian Street
- David Barton
- Literacy Events
- Literacy Practices
- Southern Punjab
- Survey
- Case Studies

Abstract

This article aims at unveiling literacy practices of the middle class youth of Southern Punjab, Multan in order to assess the nexus between literacy, social class and culture. The study shows Pakistani youth acquire a range of literacies depending upon the situation they are in. The literacies thus acquired help shaping their outlook and worldview. The most prominent literacies as mentioned by the participants include: academic literacies, family literacies, oral literacies, social media literacies and Islamic literacies. Drawing on Street's Ideological Model of Literacy 'literacies' are explored to evaluate to what extent literacy practices may serve as tools for worldview and ideology formation. This theoretical exploration is complemented with a small scale survey with ten participants (5 females and 5 males) and two case studies. The case studies address if/to what degree Pakistani youth have appropriated socio-cultural literacy practices to function as self-reflective instruments. Young men and women between 18 to 24 years of age belonging to Southern Punjab, Multan participated in the study. Findings indicate that literacy practices can – and do – serve as ideology and worldview shaping tool.

1. Introduction

This study seeks to determine the potential ideological function of literacy practices beyond serving as the ability to read and write. In order to achieve this end, middle class youth of Southern Punjab, Multan has been focused on. Street's (1984, 1995) ideological model of literacy states the same interconnection between literacy, ideology and culture. According to this model of literacy, literacy always serves to impart ideology and requisite social values to the individuals. Social institutions (i.e. academic institutions, family, mosque etc.) have the most important role to play in this regard. Despite the growing interest in literacy studies in Pakistan, literacy as an example of the social practice has received little research attention in this regard. This study redresses this research gap in two steps. Drawing on Street's (1984) and Barton's (1994) concept of literacy studies, Southern Punjab's – specifically Multan's – literacy practices are explored to evaluate whether social literacies may serve as spaces for national, social, cultural and political opinion formation. This sort of research is really needed because common people of Pakistan do not really understand the difference between literacy and schooling.

The traditional idea about schooling and literacy corresponds to Street's (1984, 1995) Autonomous Model of Literacy (henceforth AML) which relates literacy to the ability of reading and writing. Street (1995) believes that this idea is based on faulty premises. It is actually Ideological Model of Literacy (henceforth IML) (see Street 1984, 1995) which has far reaching implications and provide backbone to the literacy imparting programs of a country. The working of ideological model of literacy makes the individuals what they are supposed to be. They develop a concept of (ideological) 'self' and ability of 'self-reflexivity' (Both AML and IML are defined in following sections of the paper). Thus, Cairney and Ruge (1998) are compelled to proclaim that "both theoretical and cultural knowledge of how to use cultural linguistic and sociolinguistic information" is needed to develop the literacy in the individuals in true sense of the word. Taking all these issues into consideration, this study aims to find the answers to following research question:

What are the dominant literacy practices of middle class youth of Southern Punjab Pakistan?

In order to find answer to this question, let get an idea about New Literacy Studies.

1. Literacy and New Literacy Studies

Literacy seems to be a common word and is part of our everyday vocabulary. Generally literacy, schooling and education are considered synonymous and are defined likewise, i.e. in almost similar terms. Actually defining literacy is not that easy because they are so many concepts associated with the term. UNESCO (1999) has provided a comprehensive definition of literacy which incorporates various theoretical insights related to literacy. New Literacy Studies (henceforth NLS) presents an untraditional outlook about 'literacy' and takes it as a social practice. NLS relates the literacy to time and space and identifies dominant and marginalized literacies in a given social set-up (see Gee 1991 and Street 1984). For example in Pakistani context, religious literacies are dominant and secular and liberal literacies are marginalized. Related to the idea of literacy as social practices are literacy practices and literacy events (see Heath 1983). Before proceeding further, let us define literacy practices and literacy events. Heath (1983: p. 93) defines literacy event as

“any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of participants’ interactions and their interpretive processes”. Some of the examples of literacy events are given by Barton and Hamilton (1998): “writing in some notebook or register, talking to someone about such writing, reading a map, telling a story, reading weather patterns etc”. The ways literacy events are utilized by a particular culture can be termed as literacy practices. Simply put, literacy practices are what people do with the literacy. Adapting Barton’s conception (1994), following characteristics of literacy practices can be identified:

- Literacy practices can be individual (e.g. how an individual utilizes literacy in her/his own peculiar way)
- Literacy practices can be social structures (how a social group utilizes literacy).
- Literacy practices are abstract values and rules such as beliefs, and models disseminated through literacy events.

1.1. Autonomous and Ideological Models of Literacy

As a result of researches in NLS, Street (1995) came up with the ideas of Ideological Model of Literacy (IML) and Autonomous Model of Literacy (AML). AML equates literacy with the improvement in cognitive skills of the illiterates and links literacy with better economic prospects. This can be taken as a sort of cultural appropriation of literacy, and universalization of Western conception of literacy (see Street 1995). ILS on the other hand relates literacy with socio-cultural practices and declares that homogenization of literacy is based on faulty premises. Thus, ILS assumes that the nature of literacy depends upon sociocultural conditions and resultant needs of the people.

2. This study

2.1. Defining middle class

Since, the representative sample of this study comprises middle class youth of Pakistan, it is imperative to define middle class of Pakistani society. According to a fairly recent estimate made by daily newspaper The News in 2017 the estimated lowest income of a middle class family in Pakistan stands at 50000 PKRs and the population of Pakistan’s entire middle class stands at 50 million (see Adil 2017). This study also adheres to this definition of middle class of Pakistan.

2.2. Research participants

In order to carry out this research, an open-ended questionnaire was distributed among thirty students of the Department of English, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan. Out of them only ten students showed willingness to participate in the study. Out of these ten respondents, two (one male and female) showed keen interest in the study and give detailed and comprehensive answers to the questions. Therefore these two were selected as case studies for this research.

3. Data analysis

3.1. Literacy types

The data reveals that literacies could be categorized into different types depending upon distinct domains and/or social institutions where they occur. The few of the broader categories of the literacies which were identified in the current research include:

1. School literacies
2. Home literacies
3. Literacy: a leisure Activity
4. Oral literacies
5. Media literacies
6. Religious literacies
7. Social Media literacies

In the present study, the terms ‘literacies’ and ‘literacy practices’ have been used interchangeably because the concept of ‘literacies’ actually alludes to different ‘literacy practices’ which assume different shapes according to time and place.

On following pages, all of the literacies mentioned above will be discussed in detail with reference to our two case studies. Owing to ethical considerations, full names and addresses of the participants have not been revealed.

3.2. Case studies

MD (Male)

MD is a Masters student of English literature (4th semester) at Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan. Unlike other respondents, he took interest in the study and shared detailed information about his literacy history. He provided extended answers to the questions given in the questionnaire. MD belongs to the lower middle class of Pakistan. He father owns a cloth shop and is a religious man. When asked to explain briefly about his family, MD wrote:

My father is a hard worker and open hearted man who bore great losses but never lost heart. My mother is a house-wife. She is highly skilled in her household affairs.

(Throughout the article, the actual words taken from the respondent’s handwritten notes are quoted).

ST (Female)

ST is a BS (English) 8th semester student at Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan. She filled in the questionnaire with great interest and provided detailed answers to all the

questions. She told, she loves writing diary and keeping a record of important incidents of her life. She believes diary writing is a very fruitful way to improve and enhance one's language skills. ST belongs to a family of upper middle class in Pakistan. Her father runs a business and brother is associated with Pakistan Air Force. Her parents started living in a separate family system after spending twenty years in a joint family house. So, sharing her experiences and observations of a joint family system ST stated:

“I remember when I was little, we used to live in a joined family house. We were fifteen cousins. There was always hustle and bustle and a kind of festivity in the house. Of course, you have to go through difficult times too when you live in a joint family”.

In the following sections of the paper, different types of literacies will be discussed with these two case studies.

a. Academic literacies

According to International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English in the United States (2006), middle and high school teachers must teach their students how to improve their literacy (i.e. reading and writing) skills in addition to their course contents. Unfortunately, school teachers in Pakistan do not make a concerted effort to help students enhance their knowledge and language skills (see Hashmi et al 2019). In the current report, both respondents claimed that no attempt was ever made at their schools to fulfill their expectation regarding quality educational. They said that their mentors never taught them anything other than the content of their course books, which they believe does not follow international standards. Their teachers never suggested a book or gave a talk on a subject other than the course book. According to ST:

“Sadly, I do not possess an awesome educational history. At Rajanpur, the region I come from, there were no high quality educational institutes. Consequently, I did my matric from a government high school a public sector institute. Teachers were first class but this is not the same when it comes to their proficiency in English.... They never suggested me anything or any book that was not included in our syllabus. Some instructors made no effort to finish the syllabus”.

Correspondingly, MD is of the view:

“In Schools, teaching methodology encourages cramming. Our educational system lacks resources and skill”.

MD and ST mentioned following literacy practices dominant at their academic institutions:

- Reading course book
- Written Class Work
- Cramming the lesson

They further reported that at high school, learning activities are impacted by teachers and peers. Many students prefer to share schooling activities with peers and are compelled to study as a result of peer pressure. MD recollected memories about peer pressure during his academic career.

“I started reading good books because one of my friend always mentioned great names like Ishfaq Ahmad, Bano Qudsiya, Stephen Cohen etc. He recommended me to study Stephen’s seven habits of highly effective people and Dawn newspaper. I don’t remember any other friend reading or recommending others some good books”

Similarly, ST commented:

“My friends always recommended me to read some good stuff. One of my friends recommended me to read Bano Qudsiya’s Raja Gidh and Ishfaq Ahmad’s Gadariya”.

b. Family literacies

In literacy development of children, family and the home environment have a great role to play. Rogers, Marshall and Tyson (2006) observe how families play the most significant role in the failure or success of the students at school (cited in Lee, 2009). Cairney and Ruge (1998) are of the view that home literacies are dependent on school literacies to a large extent. And the latter appears to have a noticeable impact on the former. They identified four objectives of literacies at home and classroom, which are:

- Establishing and maintaining relationships
- Getting and disseminating information
- Pleasure or self-expression
- Skill development

b.1. Establishing and maintaining relationships

Generally, people in their lives establish and maintain various social associations, connections, and relationships. MD believes that at home, parents not only play a vital role but also influence the literacy practices of children. Bedtime stories are one of such literacy practices, which he believes, serve to bring mother and child closer to each other and to strengthen their relationship.

- “Bedtime stories (very helpful in maintaining a gentle bond between a mother and her child). Then he said that he started reading religious books at home to make her father happy.
- “‘TAUSEEF’ and ‘SIRAT-UN-NABI’ are the books that my father likes and suggests me to read. Literary practices are also a source of bringing friends together and maintaining a good relationship among them both at school and home”.
- “My only best friend recommends me different books to read. Other friends never suggest any book to read and explore”.
- “My father taught me how to offer prayer. I practiced it with one of my friends.. I learned it at a very young age”.

ST also talked about oral literacies which she got from her parents. Her parents taught her in a very good way how to maintain various relations in a joint family system:

- My mother taught me to take care of others' feelings and to respect others. She rigidly prohibited me from hurting anyone, as she said that "this life is too short, and don't waste it in hating others".
- (I have learned from my Dad) respect your relatives. Always help and love them and never expect anything from them.

ST always remains connected with her Mom. To show, what this relationship with her mom means to her, she contributed a passage on mother-child relationship from Mirza Adeeb's book "Matti ka Diya".

"My mother protected me whenever my father punished me. One day, I wonder what would be the reaction of my father if my mother ever hit me. I decided to disobey my mother. I did not pay any attention to her when she asked me to purchase some yogurt from the Bazar. While eating meal, when she gave me some gravy, I demanded more. She asked me to sit on a stool to eat lunch. I disobeyed her again and spread a sheet on the ground and ate on it. My tone was rude. I was pretty sure, my mother will smack me today. But to my amazement, she took me in her arms and said: Dilawar, my beloved son, is everything fine? What bothers you my child? I burst into tears at that moment".

b.2. Literacy for pleasure/or self-expression

Literacy not only gives expertise and the wisdom but also provides opportunities to rejoice. Both MD and ST use their learning skills not only to satisfy themselves but also to express their feelings and emotions. Expressing his interest in writing poetry MD said:

"I write Urdu poetry for expressing my feelings. This gives me happiness and I feel satisfied. I continuously write about the things I feel connected with. I want to investigate and reinvestigate the sensations of this worldly life and the life hereafter through reflection and occasional meditation".

Discussing how his literary practices in teenage aided him to relieve his suffering and bitterness, he said:

"Pubescent proved out to be a turning point in my life. I was hopeless and in exasperation, I was in search of some emotional writing that would help me come out of depression. Stories of victorious and gratified people were my focus of interest."

ST shared similar experience. She resorts to diary writing for relief whenever she is in pain and stress:

"I write down my feelings and emotions in my dairy, whenever I am in pain and miss my home, but on the very next day when I feel good I tear that page off my diary. I don't want anybody know how I feel about them."

b.3. Accessing or exhibiting information

It may be pertinent to address this and the subsequent section fall under already discussed section 'academic literacies'. However, literacy as a means of accessing and dissemination information is being examined here as it is also included in Cairney and Ruge's (1998) four objectives of literacies. According to Oxford wordbook of English (2005) 'to literate' means possessing knowledge and proficiency. As it is the commonly consented meaning of

the term literacy, our respondents also believe the same. They report that following literacy practices at school and home are the most significant tools to get and disseminate information:

- Reading textbooks,
- Perusing journal articles
- TV and
- Internet

Remarking on the usage of Internet MD informed:

“I access the website to introduce myself to popular news trends and up to date information....”

Stating on his favourite TV show he said:

“Most of the stuff telecast on sports and National Geographic channel is appreciated by me. Because these TV channels express how nature toils and makes us toil”.

Likewise, ST added:

“(My parents) demand that I read newspapers every day. My dad suggests me to read the paper daily and remain up-to-date and aware of current affairs”.

b.4. Skill development

The respondents believe that it is a misconception that getting a degree will ensure them a bright future and a good job. They added, our young people seem to have no proper sense of direction, as far career planning is concerned. Thus, ST remarks: “I don't know how beneficial my degree can be. I joined Department of English because I could not get admission in a medical college. Now, I plan to do CSS after having completed my degree. I don't know whether my degree would help me to prepare for the CSS exam or not.

Similarly, MD disclosed that he is not getting education for developing any technical skill. He rejected the idea of association between knowledge and employment opportunities stating: “Education is not for obtaining some post. Rather I think education is something which brings about spiritual and moral transformation in a person”

c. Oral literacies (Oracy):

Walter J. Ong in his book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982) speaks about the alteration of oral culture to written culture. He talks about how, when and why written words are used in communication and in the transition from orality to literacy how basic shift happens in an individual's thought. In Pakistan, due to oral culture different social and cultural customs and inherited values are passed on to young generation through the verbal communication. This research confirms that different experiences, life principles and beliefs of the people are received from parents or grandparents in the form of advices, anecdotes and social practices. hb has learnt a lot from his parents. Though his guardians are traditionally literate, they have been giving best conceivable social preparing and information to their son. Recollecting the values and life standards he has been learning from his mother since his childhood ,he commented:

“My mother does not have bookish information. She possesses real knowledge about family and home management. My mother keeps on advising me how to move within the society”.

Similarly, MD has learnt a lot from his father as well:

“My father teaches me, never give up, never resist taking challenges and keep your mind free in whatever circumstances you are in”.

Our other respondent ST also shared some interesting details about oral instructions and training she got from her parents:

“I have learnt from my elders to respect others. They continuously instruct me: Never expect anything from others. Leave everything to Allah”.

d. Islamic literacies:

The research participants provided valuable feedback regarding the role of religious literacies in their lives. Following religious literacy practices have been listed by the respondents:

- Learning how to offer prayers
- Practicing how to recite Holy Quran
- Reading stories from Holy Prophet (PBUH)’s life
- Reading sayings of Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his companions

Given below are the extracts from the questionnaires of both the respondents giving us an idea about their Islamic ways of living.

MD:

“When I was in 5th class, Molvi Sahib taught me how to recite Holy Quran. I am still weak in recitation. Holy Quran tells the tales showing us the path if righteousness. As far as Namaz, my father taught me how to offer prayer. I practiced the rituals with one of my friend.

ST:

“Alhamdulillah, a Qari Sahab taught me how to recite the Holy Quran. I completed my first recitation of Holy Quran at the age of six and a half. The Qari Sahab occasionally put his turban on my head and called me Imam. This was his technique to teach me how to offer Namaz. Once I read in a book Allah loves his worshippers and loves when they raise their hands for dua”.

e. Media literacies

In the words of Silverblatt (2001) media literacy includes a range of literacy practices involving visual and verbal media. For example print media, film, photography, radio, TV etc. Now let us have a look at the media consumption in our two case studies:

MD:

Now let us have a look at the media consumption in our two case studies:

MD:

“I like comedies because they entertain me. TV ads are also very interesting nowadays. I would like to share a quote from a TV Ad: “I have weak memory thereby am not able to see the forms only shadows which most of the time dwell in my heart and mind”.

ST:

“I like to watch moralistic and Islamic stuff on TV”.

f. Social Media Literacies

Social media platforms are one of the most effective literacy event in this age of computer-mediated communication. Social media discussions offer as much literacy practices as face-to-face discussions or even more than face-to-face discussion. Much research has been done on the language of social media (see Zappavigna 2012). However, most of these are concentrated on participation, observation, recording and interviewing (Lindlof and Taylor 2011). Social media literacies are unique in the sense that they provide us the material which discloses people’s understanding of and feeling about the world and construction/perception of reality around them. The resourceful research must be ready to pay close attention to the most effective way in which literacies are imparted to the people on the social media. The same was confirmed by the research participants in this study. The participants told that they consider social media platforms as spontaneous expression of the literacy practices that derive from the specific configuration of the context categories within certain literacy events. Sharing the sort of social media literacies, the respondents gave varying responses:

MD did not share any particular literacy he acquired from the social media but he admitted that he loves to post comments on the Facebook:

“Posting Jokes and funny anecdotes is my hobby. A majority of people on the Facebook look opinionated and rigid and I don’t want to bother them and myself with serious comments”.

ST on the other hand wrote down two of her Facebook posts in the questionnaire. One of them is joke and other one is philosophical:

Sardar to Patha: ye sent message kia hota hai. Pathan: Khocha tum to bilkul akhrot hai. Sent message hota hai sent wala message.

4. Conclusion

Summing up, this study though limited in scope provides a clear idea about literacy practices of Pakistani youth. Different reasons embedded in a given sociocultural milieu give rise to preferred literacies and literacy practices. Though, AML can be observed at the surface level of instruction but IML is always in operation subtly behind this visible surface veil. In the case of this research, it can be observed that school literacies do serve to provide traditional Western literacies (i.e. AML) to the children. But it is IML which complements the goals set by AML. This is so, because a particular literacy practice assumes certain temporal and spatial significance. Moreover, literacies do not remain stagnant. They keep on changing and fluctuating within changing times and spaces. For example social media platforms were unheard of some fifty years ago. Now, Facebook and Twitter are so powerful that they have changed the dynamics of accessing and disseminating information in Pakistan.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire: Literacy Practices

Section 1: Background Information of the Respondents

Name:

Academic Qualification:

Age:

Gender:

Nationality:

First Language:

Place of Origin:

Give a brief introduction of your family background.

Section 2: Literacy Practices of Respondents:

- **Part 1**

1. What sort of books do you like to read?
2. What sort of things do you like to write? What particular writing practices please you?
3. Did you learn anything from a book or short story?
4. Did you acquire any job/particular skill/future planning related literacy?
5. Are you satisfied with the content of textbooks you studied at school?
6. Would you please share the procedure of instruction at your schools and colleges?
7. Do you believe the teachers should provide some information other than textbooks in the classrooms?

- **Part 2**

1. What is the most important thing that you learnt from your mother?
2. What is the most important thing that learnt from your father?
3. Were you habitual of bedtime stories in your childhood? Do you like this activity? If yes, why?
4. Did you develop reading habit in your childhood? If yes, what did you read?
5. Did you develop reading habit in your adolescent/ teenage? If yes, what did you read?
6. Did your parents ever recommend you to read anything? If yes, what particular thing they did they recommend?
7. Did you siblings/ cousins recommend you anything to read? If yes, what particular thing did they recommend?

- **Part 3**

1. Did you learn how to offer prayer? When and from whom?
2. Did you learn how to recite Holy Quran? When and from whom?
3. Did you recite Holy Quran regularly?
4. What particular thing/book was recommended to you by your Moulvi Sahib/ religious instructor?
5. Why did you learn from that?
6. What role did you parents play in your religious education?
7. What role did you family traditions play in your religious education?

- **Part 4**

1. Do you like to go for netsurfing/ facebook/ chatrooms? If yes, what sort of conversation do you like to have?
2. What sort of social media messages do you like to send and receive?
3. Share something you posted on a social media platform?
4. Did you learn anything from some television program?
5. Share some important TV program/show/character/ movie that you like the most. And also state why you do like it?
6. Did anything that you watched on TV or in movies prove out to be beneficial for you in your personal life?
7. Share some particular thing that you watched on TV and got benefited from it.

Appendix 2

A brief introduction to respondents

Sr. #	Names of Respondents	Academic Qualification	Gender	Nationality	First Language	Place of Origin
1	ST	BS (English) 8 th Semester	Female	Pakistani	Urdu	Rajanpur
2	MH	BS (English) 6 th Semester	Female	Pakistani	Urdu	India (Delhi)
3	ZS	BS (English) 6 th Semester	Female	Pakistani	Sirayeki	Multan
4	LT	BS (English) 8 th Semester	Female	Pakistani	Punjabi	Shorkot
5	UV	BS (English) 6 th Semester	Female	Pakistani	Punjabi	Bahawalpur
6	MD	MA English (4 th Semester)	Male	Pakistani	Sirayeki	Multan
7	MI	MA English (4 th Semester)	Male	Pakistani	Sirayeki	Multan
8	FA	MA English (4 th Semester)	Male	Pakistani	Sirayeki	Jehaniyan
9	MZ	MA English (4 th Semester)	Male	Pakistani	Punjabi	Multan
10	M N	MA English (4 th Semester)	Male	Pakistani	Sirayeki	Multan

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Discursive Practices of Pakistani Press through Headlines in Shaping up Political Realities

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- Ideology
- Headline
- Discursive practices
- Reality construction
- Media

Abstract

Post-structuralist theorists think that linguistic capabilities are applied to construct identity as well as ideology, power relations, creation of knowledge and knowledge reproduction, and relations within and outside community; thus, it produces various sorts of reality versions indicating that reality is, by and large, socially constructed. Linguistic power is generally employed with the help of institutional along with organizational mechanism and hegemonic control. As a matter of fact, political discourse has this power, along with other subtleties of power, quite in contrast to the power of discursivity acquired by media; predominantly, print media carries an extensive space for the discursive construction. Pakistani media has acquired prominence as well as freedom in past years. Consequently, people have become more media dependent for opinion making; particularly, educated class, which is considered as an opinion maker, depends on newspapers. This study provides a way to understand and develop meaning making process in the representations of political eventualities. This study generates an awareness that linguistic choices employed in reporting the political ideologies is very powerful tool to affect the thoughts of readers, and, therefore, print media contributes in generating diverse opinions in Pakistani society.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Headlines are rich source to get a concise concept about the cultural structure. This is because the headlines are self-sufficient and can convey the meaning alone, without any description or explanation. The text is strongly reliant upon the recognition and intelligence of audience about the issues, field, and cultural set patterns (Foucault, 1983). Therefore, it relies upon the cultural values; which implies that the “meaning-deduction” is difficult without having a depictions or models of reality; that are rampant in the society. For example, the abbreviation PM refers to the Prime Minister. But the usage of this abbreviation helps to bring the audience in their own national framework and they have to assume it as the PM of their own country.

The role of Pakistani media in the set forth angle needs an adequate investigation to develop better understanding of authoritative influences, political associations and ideological familiarity, along with their controlling character in the previous. The political scenarios have been influenced a lot by the media practices, using various means and normative terminologies from media, prejudice, and authority. Apart from them, many other contribute to produce a nepotistic perspective.

By keeping this perspective in mind, political narrations and speeches are presented with different techniques to sublime to their political agendas. The present study focusses on identifying how these political speeches are framed, and who benefits the most out of it. It is due to the sole reason that the newspapers are frequently giving paramount space to political discourses.

This study helps to conceptualize the part of news papers’ headlines in the affecting of politically influenced process with the help of linguistic tools, and it intends to give insightful understanding of the embedded practice of newspapers (Thompson, 1995). This study also helps to expose the mediatized discourse in Pakistani newspapers’ headlines so as a place can be facilitated to develop more productive attitude towards media discourse.

1.2. Research Questions

Here below are the research questions for the study:

1. What are the discursive practices involved in presenting the political discourse of political leaders in Urdu newspapers in Pakistan?
2. How are leading Urdu newspapers influencing and constructing the discourse of Pakistani political leaders in headlines?

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Headlines are very crucial and contextual as they presuppose a specific amount of information that is relevant to a particular society. So, if you are unaware of the current social and cultural norms and trends, you won’t be able to easily comprehend the headlines easily. Theorists have been mentioning various theories of news. Most of them have features of news schemata, and they are labeled as types of media discourse.

Bell examined the ideological dimension of news in the press. He further elaborated it with a methodical analysis of how the news may “misrepresent” or “mis-represent” the events. He summarizes an already done study of climate variation coverage, in which, the reports were sent back to the professional sources with an appeal to point out the accuracy level. The reports concluded that only 29% of the stories were undeniably accurate, 55% of them were faintly inaccurate and 16% completely inaccurate (Bell, 1991, p. 217).

2.1. Maneuvering through News

One characteristic makeover is exaggeration, which can be taken as the same general category as overgeneralization, as we recognize it from pigeonholes and preconceptions or “extreme case” formulations in dialogues. News discourse can also be named as rhetorical (Cook, 1998). As rhetoric deals about how the information (meaning, content) is highlighted or de-highlights—for several motives. The reason of this can be to put emphasis on the bad features of out-groups or the good characteristics of in-groups.

- **News values:** Either the event is geographically closer or not; it is given a higher value of news if it indicates to “our own” people or if “our own” people are in them.
- **Topics:** Here ‘us’ can be called as the virtual roles that are present in all o kinds of news stories. And If in a large variety of political, social and economic subjects, the reporting of ‘Them’ inclines to be confined to a few subjects and themes, violence, crime, cultural conflicts.
- **Perspective:** a specific perspective in the description of news events. “Our” perspective appears to be the main umbrella for different ethnic skirmishes, issues of integration, and wide-ranging cultural differences.
- **Formats, order and foregrounding:** News schematics outline their complete plan and direction, like the discrepancy among Headlines, Leads, and other categories. They boost up the negative action of ethnic minorities or other non-European and this news are placed in the top Headlines. Apart from that, they are also dispersed all over the order and categories of reports.
- **Style:** Style is a specific pattern such as the assortment of words, sentence structure and other flexible expressions of primary subjects and local semantics.
- **Rhetoric:** Rhetorical figures, like the metaphors, euphemisms and hyperboles have a certain emphasizing and sometimes de-emphasizing impact on the news.

Nationalist ideologies also have a great impact on news and news making. There is a certain leaning, particularly when journalists express about “foreign” events or about situations of wars, riots, attacks and international competitions (Bourdieu, 1991). It is common that these situations are not covered in terms of being a conflict, instead they are discussed as the strongly polarized subjects (Tamkeen Z., Zafar U. S., & Huma B., 2017). They always put “us” into good ones and “them” as being bad ones, so far, if “our” country and “our” soldiers are in a conflict or war. (Zelizer & Allan, 2002)

The same thing also applies to patriarchal ideologies like sexism or male dogmatism. The implications of sexist ideologies are split into two: the optimistic self-descriptions of males (e.g., as solid, self-governing, autonomous etc.). Hence, metering the opposed identities,

the distinctive activities of men vs. women, dissimilar customs and morals, and diverse resources that define the position of men as a powerful entity in the society.

2.2. Unpredictability of Ideologies

Discourse usually does not express the direct ideologies, because context models may slab or adapt (mitigate or amplify) core ideological dogmas, when language users adjust to the condition, the spectacles, and so on. This also elucidates why ideologies are not always obvious in particular situations (Van Dijk, 2008a, 2008b).

A comparative study was done by Ahmadian (2015) on a critical comparison of *Los Angeles* and *Tehran Times*. The subject was focused on the negotiations and the terms discussed in Iran Newspaper. Hamid concluded that the two headlines taken from the rival newspaper, accused one another's behavior, very openly. *Tehran Times* was focusing on the news that Obama is changing his mind, every time; while the title news of *Los Angeles Times* focused on the deceiving characteristics of Iran. The both news channels were focused to show their positive-self representation and negative-other representation. Instead of mirroring it, they create a new reality. Therefore, all the news is captured from a certain angle.

Grue (2006) did a Critical Discourse Analysis of a film review in a newspaper. He assessed and described the expansive structures which have an impact on films. These structures give a new shape to the existing films. He gave the following conclusion that, "a shift has taken place in the field of film reviewing from essayistic to taxonomic discourse" (Grue 2006: 52). Grue further elaborated that this shift has a determining relation to the film discourse. And this shift is generally caused by the fluctuations in the film reviewing field.

Some few authors took the newspapers of Cameroon from the CDA Perspective. Fornkwa (2015) took the state's budget and did a discourse analysis of all the news and articles regarding it. He selected five news articles from four different newspapers in the country. They were: *Cameroon Tribune*, *The Post*, *Cameroon Daily Journal* and *The Median*. His research showed that the pro-government newspapers (Cameroon) and the private ones had a strongly incompatible ideology. Cameroon was using very optimistic and praising words to persuade the readers about the budget that it was comprehended to boost up their standards of life. Some of these expressions were including the names of different big projects like the *Motorway of Keribi-Edea*, *Douala-Yaounde motorway*, *ring road* and *the second bridge of wouri*. Now, what private newspapers were showing was completely clashing. They took the budget increase with a completely opposite view. They think that the budgetary rise will uplift the misappropriation done by officials in higher ranks. Fornkwa (2015: 16) hence concludes that journalists have a certain power and control over this genre-use. And this control helps them to regulate the thoughts of their readers, which (in this case) depends upon their political orientation.

In Pakistani scenario some researchers have attempted to unveil the hidden practice of print media. For example, it has been explored that Pakistani print media for the sake of commercial gains uses idealization, temptation, objectification, exploitation, and persuasion as discursive strategies to meet their hidden agenda (M. Akbar K., M. Ramzan M., & Shazia R. D., 2017).

2.3. Theoretical Underpinnings and Method of Investigation

Ontologically speaking, this study takes the idealist supposition that there is no absolute reality; in fact, reality is constructed through interpretations and representations by social players (Blaikie, 2010). Epistemologically, this study is based on the constructionist paradigm in which it is considered that social enquiry is always subjective; hence, it is always influenced by contextual awareness and previous experiences. Therefore, this type of study reflects the investigator's view (Blaikie, 2010).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been chosen as a methodology due to the nature of this study. The main theorists who have overwhelmingly contributed in the critical study of discourses are Van Dijk (1988, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1998a, 1998b), Wodak (1995, 1996, 1999), and Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1999). They all propagate and elaborate CDA as an area of study that focuses its emphasis on written as well as spoken manuscripts to expose discursive elements of biasness, inequality, power and hegemony.

Among the above-mentioned theorists, Van Dijk's approach to CDA seems more appropriate for the present study due to its emphasis on discourse of headlines and news reports through micro along with macro structural analyses.

According to the model proposed by van Dijk, microstructure means analysis to identify the semantic relations among various textual elements. This relationship can be analyzed among syntactic, lexical, propositional and many other rhetorical components of that text. Moreover, features like direct/ indirect reporting or quotations, to give factual look to the news items have also been studied.

According to Van Dijk the headline and the leads define the key information in the cognition of reporters, and on that ground they express the news item. Headlines are different from the rest due to the fact that they generate greater impact on readers' memory and acceptance. If they have diverse information/knowledge or set of beliefs, they will get less influence of the media construction of what is important and what is not. Similarly, Van Dijk (1988) points out that the news schemata, which he terms as superstructure schema, are arranged ensuing a pattern that is comprised of:

- (i) a summary that contains headline and the lead;
- (ii) a story that tells the situation consisting of episodes and backgrounds;
- (iii) consequences that includes closing remarks and conclusions.

The above-mentioned parts of a news item are arranged in terms of how relevant they are; therefore, even a common information contained in headline matters. Van Dijk (1998) believes that to make transparent research to identify ideological dichotomy in discourse, researchers should analyze it through certain tools and parameters: first of all, one needs to examine the context that may be of political, social or historical implications of that particular conflict. Secondly, one should analyze power relations, various groups and issues complicating the situation; besides, s/he should consider Us versus Them positioning in the discourse. Next is to unveil the presupposed and the implicit concepts in discourse. Lastly, one should examine formal structures that include lexical choice and syntactic structure. By applying the above-mentioned model, a researcher may find his/her proper way to (de)emphasize polarized views of various groups.

The present study has applied the above mentioned points as a foundation for analysis of data. The data for this research is made up of 50 newspaper headlines collected from 3 newspapers of different publications published between June 25, 2018 and July 25, 2018. The newspapers used for this study are *Express*, *Jang* and *Dunya*. The number of headlines from each newspaper is 17, 11 and 22 respectively.

3. Analysis of Data

The analysis has been done in three sub sections. The first examines the lexical choice and the second discursivity in headlines to report the general election campaign during 2018. The third sub section presents the ideological differences manifested through words in the headlines to address how expressions shape readers' thoughts. Out of 11 main headlines published about the election related discourse in *Jang*, eight headlines were of Mian Nawaz Sharif or his party, PML-N, three were of Imran Khan or PTI, and there was no main lead story about leaders of Pakistan Peoples' Party, Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari or Asif Ali Zardari despite. *Express* newspaper gave 17 headlines regarding political activity in one month, and out of them, the newspaper selected 8 statements of Mian Nawaz Sharif, 8 statements of Mr. Imran Khan and only one of Asif Ali Zardari for main headlines. *Dunya* newspaper divided 22 of its headlines in all three parties by giving 12 headlines to Mian Nawaz, 8 to Mr. Imran Khan and 3 to Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

3.1. Lexical choices in Headlines of Newspapers

3.1.1. *Dunya* Newspaper

- *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif*

The lexical choices selected for Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif clearly depict the image that he is under stress and institutions including those who matter in the government formation are trying very hard to not let his party come in power again. For example, the uses of words like *qabl iz waqat dhandli*, *party wafadar*, *jail*, *intakhabat main takhir*, *bardasht* etc. carry a very important direction to generate impact upon the minds of the readers who were about to vote one of parties contesting election. Some headlines have been used to generate a feeling of sympathy in the hearts of the reader by choices words to show him a very strong person.

- *Mr. Imran Khan*

The lexical choices selected for Mr. Imran Khan evidently depict the image that he is aggressive, proactive and preparing to launch a rigorous campaign to win election. The choices also indicate that he has made his mind to enter into power corridors. For example, the uses of words like *mulkger ehtajaj*, *N league zumadar*, *iqtadar*, *partian nakam*, *shafaf intakhabaat* etc. indicate a very significant clue to generate impact upon the minds of the readers who were about to vote one of parties contesting election. Some headlines have been used to generate an impression that all the parties are corrupt by choices of words to show him a righteous person.

- *Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari*

Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has been given very less space in the main headlines, three out of twenty two, but the choices of lexical items are very significant in terms of providing him support in connection with the past of Pakistan Peoples' Party and its leadership. In this way, the new leader can get some advantage to be relevant to the present political situation. The choices are indicative of meaningful terminologies like *Zia Musharaf baqiyat*, *muqabala*, *mukhalifeen*, *sabaq sekhana*, *hum*, *Pakistan ke saath* etc. Though the space given to PPP is limited, yet the linguistic support in terms of nouns, adjectives and verbs portray them very relevant and powerful leaders who are ready to face challenges as they have faced in the past.

3.1.2. Express Newspaper

- *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif*

The lexical choices selected for the headlines in *Express* newspaper for Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif portray as if he is struggling to manage things on many fronts, and institutions including those who matter in the government formation are against his party; therefore, hurdles are being created in election campaign. For instance, lexical choices like *dhandli*, *kulsoom ki bemari*, *majboori*, *election se qabl*, *aain torney wala*, *woot ko izaat*, etc. carry a very important direction to generate impact upon the minds of the readers who were about to vote one of parties contesting election. Some headlines have been used to generate a feeling of sympathy in the hearts of the reader by choices words to show him a very strong person.

- *Mr. Imran Khan*

The lexical choices selected for Mr. Imran Khan in headline of *Express* newspaper strongly portray that he is proactive, forceful and uses threatening expression for his opponents. He has been portrayed by the newspaper in headline by choosing the words like *zaalmoo ko jail*, *Allah ne hakomatn blackmail nahi ho ga*, *choot boltey rahe*, *neutral empire*, *shukrane ke nafal*, *corrupt hokumat*, *naam ECL main dalna* etc. and this lexical selection for Mr. Khan indicates a very significant clue that he is ready to win elections. This perspective of reporting generates an impact upon the minds of the readers who were about to vote one of parties contesting election. In few headlines, he has been portrayed as a person who has already won the elections and now he is establishing his future line of action.

- *Mr. Asif Ali Zardari*

Mr. Asif Ali Zardari has been given very less space in the main headlines, one out of seventeen, but the choices of lexical items are very significant in terms of providing him support by setting headline: *Nawaz Sharif ne mulk tabah ker dia*, *hum mulk ko buhran se nakalain ge*. In this headline, the term *tabah* and *buhran* are very significant portraying him very loyal to the soil of the land. Though the space given to PPP is limited, yet the linguistic support in lexical choices is very important.

3.1.3. Jang Newspaper

- *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif*

The lexical analysis of headlines published in Jang during one month of election campaign during June 25, 2018 to July 25, 2018 is very interesting and different from the rest of the newspapers. It is almost one sided reporting in the sense that out of 11 relevant headlines regarding political scenario in Pakistan, 8 headlines carry Mian M. Nawaz Sharif's statements. The close analysis of lexical choices reflects the impression that he is the only leader in Pakistan having courage to stand against the odds and who is suffering due to establishment. The discourse in those headlines is very interesting. Lexical choices like *atamy technology ki bunyad, dhamake k sehra, kush log, multawi, tehqiqati commission, riyasat ke baqi satoon, bunyadi haqqooq etc.* portray that all the institutions were working against him; and he is being penalized due to being righteous leader. The most interesting headline is: *chief justice mera case mungwa ker phanci dedain ya jail bhajj dain*. A very strange terminology has been devised through lexical choice giving the image that he is innocent and he is being teased through various ways.

- *Mr. Imran Khan*

Jang has picked only three statements of Mr. Imran Khan though he spoke at various occasions in public gathering and gave very important political statements. The choices are to undermine his public impression by selection of themes and lexicons. Vocabulary used by Jang to depict his statement is important, for example, *shikayat, nainsafi, karkun, scandal, kitab ki ishaat, election jeetna etc.* Just to elaborate or explain one word to understand the trick the newspaper has used is the use of *scandal* in headline. It refers to very exploited position of him due to black mailing by his ex-wife, who had written a book against him to defame him. This headline has just given a hint to that issue to revive things in the minds of the readers.

- *Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari*

Jang newspaper has not selected any of the statements of Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari nor of his father, Asif Ali Zardari. Not to mention at all, gives a clear indication that they are not relevant. In critical discourse analysis, this phenomenon has a peculiar importance; therefore, not to mention doesn't mean that it was just omitted it has deep meanings.

Data show that the above mentioned key lexical elements have been used in Pakistani newspapers to portray political impression of political parties near general election 2018. The use of vocabulary like nouns, adjectives, auxiliary verbs and action verbs that causes publicity, sell political slogans, enhance credibility, and suggest more democratic values, is very common in almost all the newspapers.

3.2. Discursive Underpinnings in Headlines

Headlines in the newspapers selected for the present study have been analyzed how media has produced them for public. Specific examples of newspaper headlines that create

discursivity in the discourse regarding political leaders near the election to influence general public are as given below.

3.2.1. Dunya Newspaper

- *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif*

Dunya newspaper has given maximum space to Mian Nawaz Sharif in terms of number of headlines, its subtlety of discourse, selection of topics to be given as headlines and placing of arguments in which his stance could be more easy and forceful to the public. All the topics selected for headlines show the impression that he is pro-democratic and the whole system is against him; therefore, he has to fight against all the odds for the sake of public and he is giving sacrifices in this war of principles. The headlines picked up topics like *his wife's illness, working of institutions against him, court cases that are unjust, imprisonment, pre-poll rigging against him etc.*

- *Mr. Imran Khan*

The overall impression of Mr. Imran Khan generated through the headlines has been modified in terms of selection of arguments and placement of discourse. Placement of arguments shows that he is eager to win the election even at the cost of his ideological stance against corruption. One of his statements shows a very sharp contrast with that of his opponent published in the same headline: *intakhabat main aik minute ki takheer berdasht nahi: Mian Nawaz Sharif and inakhabat waqat per hine chahain: Imran Khan*. The tone of Nawaz Sharif is aggressively presented and that too in a negative sentence, while Imran Khan's tone is mild and suggestive. The NS tone is emotional for his followers while tone of IK seems a message to those are managing elections.

- *Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari*

The portrayal of Mr. Bilwal as well as of his father, Asif Ali Zardari, is powerful and aggressive though they were given space only in three headlines out of twenty two. It means that the newspaper has its own priority list and they are also playing the role of power player in this political game. However, the discourse selected for representation has very meaningful and powerful connotations. For example, *Mukhalifeen ko sabaq sekhain ge, Benazir bhi kisi ki beti thi, muqabal Zia Musharraf baqiyaat se ha*. The newspaper has presented their most powerful arguments in the headlines through which they can attract their voters.

3.2.2. Express Newspaper

- *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif*

Express newspaper has tried to create balance in one month by giving surprisingly giving equal number of headlines, eight each, to the two rivals: Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Mr. Imran Khan. However, the discursivity lies in the selection of topics and nature of angles set to build arguments to create impact in the minds of the readers.

Political dynamics are evident in the statements; most of them are the actual sentences spoken by the speaker. But discursivity can be observed in each headline. One headline shows that pre-poll rigging is going on and public should stop through protest. In other words, it's a call to stop what's happening around; it's a feel of distrust on the system. In another headline, the ideology of atomic blast that occurred twenty years ago, has been used to reply the present corruption charges. Discursivity can be identified in the argument that it was an offer to the state and not to the person. The newspaper has given favorable space to the speaker in the selection of arguments.

- *Mr. Imran Khan*

The discourse selected for Imran Khan in the headlines also gives a favor in terms of creating impact on the readers. Some of them are as follows:

- Allah ne hakomat di to zalmoon ko jail main dalain ge*
- Naey purine ke baat nahi, election lerhney ki science janney walo ko hi ticket dain ge*
- Bajli buhran ke zamadar N league ke wazeer e azam hain, 5 saal qoom se choot bolte rahe*

The discourse generated in headlines tells the popular sentiment of the party workers; therefore, these statements supported to build the argument of the party. Most of the headlines give the feel that they are going to win the elections.

- *Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari*

There is only one statement taken as main headline in Express newspaper to reflect the political stance of Pakistan Peoples' Party and that too of Mr. Asif Ali Zardari and not of the Chairman. The main headline is as follows: *Nawaz Sharif ne mulk tabah ker dia, hum mulk to buhran se nikalain ge*. This statement is a clear cut an election campaign telling the masses that the conditions in the country is not good, and they will take it up from the crisis.

3.2.3. Jang Newspaper

Newspaper Jang has given 11 main headlines for political coverage, and 8 have been selected from NS's statements and only 3 from IK's statements. The specific analysis is as under.

- *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif*

The selection of statements and the formation of those statements in catchy phrases and their placement with the help of black color in headlines is very prominently portrays that Jang newspaper has compromised its impartiality. The selection of syntax is also very much significant in headlines. Here are few examples:

The discourse set in headlines indicates that various elements are against democracy, which means that he wants election. The arguments tilt towards generating personal and emotional feeling in favor of NS.

- *Mr. Imran Khan*

There are only three main headlines in Jang carrying statements of IK. Only controversial issues were given place in lead stories. Two are as follows:

- a. Kitab ki ishaat ya scandal se party ko nuqsan nahi hoga*
- b. Agla election jeetna ha, ticket usko dain ge jo uski science janta ho*

The first leading headline has taken a discourse that has personal connotations, and it is a weak point of the speaker. Though it is a euphemistic expression, yet it has pointed out towards a negative impression of IK's personal life. The second shows that he is desperate to win election at every cost.

- *Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari*

Jang newspaper has not selected any of the statements neither of Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari nor of his father, Asif Ali Zardari.

3.3. The Ideological Differences

Ideology is built through lexical choices; the choice used in headlines can unveil ideological positioning of a newspaper. The words can also shape the kind of ideology readers conceive in their minds after reading the headline. The processes through which words have been employed determine the types of mental construct among readers. Linguistic choices employed are either consciously or some time unconsciously principled and hence, are systematic as well as ideologically positioned. To address and analyze concepts or thoughts of identity, Us vs Them dichotomy come into consideration, and these terms are generally employed by rivals specially in media to present opponent's negative and their own selves' positives to the audience.

Facts from data show that Dunya newspaper headlines during election campaign carry words and develop discourse of their own choice and most often favored a specific ideology. They use connotative words and phrases to set a specific discourse. To develop a discourse, the headlines have been made by commenting over leaders' statement. In many cases, passive expressions have been used. All the expressions help individuals construct an image with preferred ideological settings. For example, *Benazir bhi kisi ki beti thi*, carries a complete set of ideological beliefs. To understand this, a complete history of PPP needs to be read and understood.

Express newspaper again used ideological rich vocabulary to influence readers' mind. For example, *corruption*, *5 billion dollars*, *shukraney ke nafl*, *neutral empire* are highly rich in ideological connotations favoring to build a specific set of approach in the minds of the readers.

Jang newspaper in its headlines has shown this tendency of incite ideological concerns, and the tilt particularly in favor of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, is very much obvious. Syntactical techniques including generalization, passivization and US vs THEM dichotomy can be identified in headlines. A large number of lexicons portraying negative ideology about the opponents were identified.

4. Conclusion

Present study was carried out through critical discourse study of Pakistani Urdu newspapers' headlines depicting political discourse during election campaign of 2018. The data for this research is made up of 50 newspaper headlines collected from 3 newspapers of different publications published between June 25, 2018 and July 25, 2018. The newspapers used for this study are *Express*, *Jang* and *Dunya*. The number of headlines from each newspaper is 17, 11 and 22 respectively.

The findings reveal that all the newspapers used high sounding lexical items like adjectives and modals along with metaphors to condemn political leaders and state institutions to instigate readers. Besides, lexicons manifesting tension have been found in all newspapers. These seem to present the political bifurcation and polarization among the public regarding political issues due to the hegemonic control.

The tendencies to highlight negative 'them' reflect that every newspaper stresses on political rivalries to be presented instead of presenting their problem solving ideologies and conviction to give solutions to the problems to take country to the progressive side. They have not employed soft language anywhere to reduce tension; no use of rhetorical questions to address long standing issues through political struggle. They construct a negative identity of political institutions to a great deal. No statement could be identified in main headlines of the esteemed newspapers having country wide readership to develop ideologies related to national dialogue, inclusiveness, unity and integration. All the political actors have been presented, though they willingly approach to be so, in headlines showing incompatible ideologies.

The certain very serious concerns regarding the ideology of representation were also identified during the study. It was the imbalance of providing equal space in the newspapers. Jang newspaper has shown its clear inclination towards giving generous space to Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in contrast with the other political leaders. Moreover, the ideology represented through black color in key statements by NS or critical allegations on other leaders particularly Mr. Imran Khan, shows the biasness in the political representation. Though other newspapers were not exception, yet it was given an impression of fair place in the representation at least in case of Mr. IK; however, the representation about the PPP has been of less significance in all the newspapers.

Summarily, Pakistani Urdu newspapers have been an indispensable source to impart information. However, linguistic choices they have employed in reporting the political ideologies during the election campaign of General Election 2018 is very powerful to affect the thoughts of readers, and it has portrayed in generating diverse opinions in Pakistani society. These could have implications for pedagogy as students could be taught the power of words in portraying and shaping ideologies. Some of the issues raised in this study can definitely be helpful to both linguistic students and media persons dealing with reporting

and editing. The study is a linguistic contribution to investigate dynamics of elections. A lot more work can be done on many similar linguistic dimensions like pragmatics and sociolinguistics about the political ideologies in newspapers so as to increase the validity of the work.

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Appendix

DUNYA Newspaper



ادارے کمزور سال اقتدار میں رہنے والی پارٹیاں کا عمران خان
 قبل از انتخابات دھاندلی کا آغاز ہو چکا ہے نواز شریف؟
 کسی شہر میں طویل لوڈ شیڈنگ فم فم انگراں حکو نواز شریف
 ٹکٹ صرف پیرنی وفاق اور کوئلے کا الیکشن میں کی تاخیر بدست نہیں
 ووٹ کو عزت کا مطلب ہے گو عمران گو نواز شریف
 انتخابات ایک گھنٹے کی بھی تاخیر قبول نہیں؟ وقت گھونے چاہئیں؟
 آج کا دن تادمی حکومت مدت پوری کرایا ہے نواز شریف
 اسدنی کی گفتگو، مہم عملے کی تہک جانے کیلئے قومی کمیشن بننا چاہیے
 بی بی کوٹہ میں کھڑا کرنا مہنگا بیڑے کا بیڑہ بھی کسی کی بیٹی تھی؟
 اسدنی کی کتابت پر قومی کمیشن بنایا جائے نواز شریف



EXPRESS Newspaper





JANG Newspaper





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Eating with More Sense than Taste

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- Aesthetics,
- Alexie,
- Native American Literature,
- Style,
- Tribalism

Abstract

The Euro-American conception of literature with its roots in Greek-o-Roman tradition has maintained its focus on pleasure as purpose and universalism as the necessary amplitude of creative imagination. Sherman Alexie, contrarily, believes in tribalism and considers commitment as a prerequisite of great art. His aesthetics of resistance in his poetry and fiction demonstrate a great range of experimentation violating the traditional rules of Euroamerican literary canon. His work is meant less for pleasure and more for a political challenge to the Euroamerican history of genocidal violence against Native American history and culture of tribalism. This conflict between Euroamerican and Native American civilizations runs throughout his work and his style and approach are informed by this purpose. This article on his 'aesthetics of war' studies the purposeful nature of his art for which he employs inexhaustible fund of stylistic weapons. The postmodern approach to literature favors Alexie's celebration of indigeneity and political commitment instead of universalism.

Eating with More Sense than Taste: Sherman Alexie's Aesthetics of 'War' for Native American Survival

... I am the

Kind of man who makes rules for himself ...

(Alexie, 1996, p. 50)

1. Introduction

Sherman Alexie is an aggressive postmodernist Native American, Spokane, Coeur d'Alene short story writer, novelist, poet and scriptwriter who writes with the consciousness of the proud burden of his responsibility of tribalist commitment. As a 'warrior' of tribalist representation and of the 28000-year long history of Native American civilization facing genocide since contact, he demolishes all literary traditional principles of creative writing because wars are fought often desperately (Alexie, 1996, p. 24). In his postulation of creative purpose, pleasure is a subsidiary to the political purpose of representation. To borrow his own culinary metaphor, he has to "eat / with more *sense* / than *taste*" (Alexie, 1996, p. 44). Insistence on rules, forms and genres imply that they are fixed givens as 'objective' standards and artists are to submit their 'subjectivity' to them but postmodern inquiry doubts all objectivities. This article explores Alexie's position on the 'purposeful' function of literature which conflicts with the traditional view of literature.

2. Literature Review

The traditional approach to literature stresses form, and pleasure ensuing from it, ignoring the socio-political purpose of literature. D.W. Lucas (1968) interprets Aristotle's catharsis as a pleasurable relief which is "the consequence and justification of tragic pleasure" (p. 275). The function of tragedy falls at the end only as a consequence of the plot, the way it develops and leads to joy. In Horace's *Ars Poetica*, the essential spirit of poetry, says Abercrombie, is something that is enjoyed (1979). Murray and Dorsch (1965) observed that Longinus' sublimity is characterized by a work's or author's ability to "amaze and transport an audience, overwhelming them with its irresistible power ... the depiction of scenes which can exceed the bounds of credibility" (pp. xlvi, xlvii). Sidney (2005) too focuses on the delightful enchantment of poetry: its basic function is to set "words ... in *delightful proportion*, either accompanied with or prepared for, the well *enchanted still of music*" (p. 131, emphasis added). To enhance pleasure, Dryden (1967) wants to modify imitation, a poet's basic function, because, he thinks, a bare imitation does not suffice to *excite the passions*, and *move admiration* (p. 6, emphasis added). This focus on pleasure comes down to Wordsworth and Coleridge (2003) who were concerned with the adaptation of rustic language for the "*purposes of poetic pleasure*" (p. vi, emphasis added). Then in the 20th century, despite its epochal shift, the form became all the greater concern especially for imagists – and by implication the practitioners of vorticism and futurism as well; they were mutually inter-assuring – for whom poetry should be "objective, [with] no slither" (Ayer, 2004, p. 2). T. S. Eliot's (2017) conception of the classic is based on the principles of 'maturity' of civilization, of the language and of the creative mind summed up

in such ‘formal’ characteristics of expression as objective correlative and unification of sensibility; style is a motif of his essay “What is Classic?”(p. 59).

Niall Lucy (2000) notes Friedrich Schlegel’s observation that “all poetry is or should be Romantic” (p. 11). It suggests that poetry – and by implication all literature – has to go beyond any fixity of rules and regulations to sustain its originality. It is in terms of the rejection of traditional fixities that postmodernist writing transgresses genre boundaries to challenge the established authority of arbitrary forms. Ralph Cohen (1998) observes that the term ‘genre’ does not appropriately characterize postmodernist works (p. 11) because it is “a set of expectations” between the text and the reader (Culler, 1975, p. 255). Cohen (1998) traces the roots of this assumption from Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism*. Maria Corti (1978) associates these expectations with various features of addressee because every genre addresses the expectations of a certain audience and class in specific conditions (p. 18). Alexie’s works – poetry and fiction – are boldly postmodernist in their challenge to the traditional genre structure. The focus of this article is not genre structure in particular but the postmodernist approach to genre provides a rationale for all creative deviations that Alexie employs to wage and sustain his war through creative works against Euroamericanism. Amongst modernist theorists, only Bakhtin (1986) allows discontinuous structures and multiple discourses (p. 45) Culler observes that postmodern novels are “unreadable” because they flout the aesthetic contract of conventions but Cohen thinks texts remain readable despite flouting of conventions: genres being interrelated always give some basis for readability because, Cohen (1998) paraphrases Culler, “of the basic human capacity for ordering disorder” (p. 295). Lucy (2000) characterizes postmodernist art as “lack[ing] beauty (form, genre) in so far as it does not conform to a communal ideal of art as such” (p. 9). This observation is partly applicable to Alexie’s work: he does not follow the communal (Euroamerican traditional) ideal of art but it is rich in aesthetic beauty. And ‘communal ideal of art’ too must vary from community to community; it is ideological violence to suggest and impose one community’s ideal as mandatory for all communities. Alexie’s deliberate avoidance of genre classification demolishes literary hierarchies with rich aesthetic appeal and this approach is also in line with Native American orature which has traditionally been a blend of song, speech, narrative or ceremony with “quite porous genre boundaries” (Poeter & Poemer, 2005, p. 4). The ‘reasons’ and ‘purity of genres’ apply to the classical approach to literature; postmodernist descriptivist genre theory does not prescribe a fixed number of rules and kinds for authors. Rather, Warren (1949) favors the mixing of traditional kinds to produce a new one (p. 245). Clifford Geertz in his essay “Blurred Genres”(1980) enumerates a list of failure of expectations in postmodernist writings: incorporation of law court testimonies, tables and equations in history, ethnographies in the form of parables, theoretical treatises in the travelogue form, the impossible blending of poetry, fiction, footnotes and images in, for instance, Nabokov’s *Pale Fire*, and so forth (pp. 165-66).

3. Data Analysis

Alexie’s Native American ‘warring’ aesthetics challenge the Euroamerican tradition’s Greek-o-Roman slavery. His political consciousness and commitment to his ‘tribe’/tribalism have received mixed critical comments. P. Jane Hafen (1997) comments that Alexie’s Coeur d’Alene people were not present at Wounded Knee or Sand Creek; nor can they be associated with Crazy Horse but they affected all Native American tribes (p.

73). Handley's (2007) answer to this too literal critical issue is valid for Alexie as well: it is only a poet's indigenous imagination that conceives facts of nature and history that otherwise eludes untraceable diachrony. The poet finds recourse to metaphors, figural language and indigenous imagination synchronically loyal to the land but with imaginative openness applies to other cultures and regions as well (Handley, 2007, p. 46). Gloria Bird (1998) dismisses Alexie's imaginative synthesis as distorted conglomeration and invalid comparisons. But Bird's observations lack a basic understanding of the freedom postmodern creative writers (can) enjoy, and of the Native history and collective cultural ethos. Lisa Tatonetti (2010) observes that Alexie's works and most Native American writings are marked with poverty and oppression of many reservations across the country. They manifest shared features of Plains cultures resulting from boarding schools, removal and relocation practices, the sustained growth of ritualistic dances, and the emergence of urban Indian centers (Tatonetti, 2010, p. 6). Tatonetti (2010) considers Alexie's ignoring the particularity of the Native American situation counter-productive because he, for instance, anachronistically associates Big Foot's death to 1876. This overgeneralization makes all the wars and all the peoples of color mutually replaceable. A Latina author, Cherrie Moraga (1983), observes that "the danger lies in failing to acknowledge the specificity of the oppression" (p. 52). Both Tatonetti (2010) and Moraga (1983) may be otherwise right but Alexie's own view of the specificity of purpose and the role of his art is unambiguously particularized as he does not "try to speak for everybody. I'm one individual heavily influenced by my tribe. And good art doesn't come out of assimilation – it comes out of tribalism" (Berglund, 2010, p. 241). His concept of tribe is vast enough to include the dislocations, forced westward migrations, racial discrimination, Native Americans' bloody anti-colonial struggle, continued yielding to white domination, ideological violence and distortion of the traditional culture/s, the shared features of almost all of the tribes. Alexie takes with love and pride the burden of his 'tribe': "I'm a narcissist, as all artists and writers are," he admits, but he is keen on how he can be "of service" (Campbell, 2003. n. page).

Jeff Berglund (2010) traces the roots of Alexie's poetic process in nostalgia, not unrealistically indifferent to the contemporary Native American reality. In his interview, Alexie says that to him "Indian and nostalgic are synonymous. As colonized people ... we are always looking to the past for some real and imaginary sense of purity and authenticity" (Berglund, 2010, p. 243). As an autobiographically confessional writer, Alexie identifies with the Native American peoples. For this purpose, Nancy J. Peterson (2010) observes, Alexie's "later stories and poems ... have experimented with diverse materials and forms, often borrowing from Anglo-American, African American, and Western cultures to depict Indians on the move, bringing tribal identities and Native worldviews into urban and mixed-blood environments" (p. 10). For Alexie, imaginative writing is a tool of 'reshaping the world' (Berglund, 2010, p. 256) to replace the existing dissatisfying one. A piece of art not performing this function is just a 'tasty' report on the affairs. Therefore, his poetry and fiction violate rules of creative writing, the arbitrary rules which have got the status of tradition. "Nothing is more ridiculous than to make an author a dictator ... Let Aristotle and others have their dues" but we must not thereby be prevented from conceiving discoveries of today's truth and fitness, says Atkins (1947) and demonstrates Alexie whose violation is theoretically informed: postmodernism celebrates the breakdown and failure of the "set of expectations" traditionally encoded in literary writing and reading (p. 123).

Alexie with unmitigated anger and soul wound is fighting a desperate war against the history of genocide of Native Americans and his poetry and fiction with bold experimentation are his tools to fight his desperate war. Harlan Atwater's interview in "Search Engine" is partially representative of Alexie's own theory of literary creative aesthetics. Corliss's uncle rhetorically questions her what those white people could teach her, expecting the answer: nothing (Alexie, 2003, p. 14). But Alexie himself can hardly say so as he was very well-read in Euroamerican literature. Atwater reflects Alexie's reverence-revulsion ambivalence towards white authors: Jenny Shandy, his fictional teacher, taught him 'mostly white classical poets' and he had to find for himself "the Indian poets, the black poets, [and] the Chicanos" and this enabled him to blend "the white classicism with the dark-skinned rebellion" (Alexie, 2003, p. 22). Native American worldview is characterized by an inseparable mutuality between individual and tribal life. Euroamerican individualism, contrarily, is incompatible with the Native American view of communal life: "the very idea of individual self-representation", argues Paula Gunn Allen (1986), "is fundamentally at odds with many Native American world-views" (p. 55). With his conviction in the significance of tribal roots of literature, Alexie is conscious not to get lost in the haze of universalism.

Berglund (2010) is right that anger "if left to fester [may prove] a self-destructive force" (p. xxix). Alexie (2000), conscious of this counter-productive possibility of anger, never lets it go into poetic or fictional expression without creative buoyancy; he, however, does not compromise his war either. As he is intensely conscious of his tribal commitment, he employs imagination as an instrument of his battle: "Imagination is the only weapon on the reservation" (Alexie, 2000, p. 20). This understanding of the function and utility of imagination and anger produces three interdependent compact formulas of his creative expression: "Survival = Anger x Imagination; Poetry = Anger x imagination; and therefore, Survival = Poetry" (Berglund 20). In "Why We Play Basketball" (1996), he announces his purpose: "... to know / who [is] best, who [can] / change the game into / something new" (Alexie, 1996, p. 23). This game of literary creative tradition has for two millennia been followed and endorsed by Euroamerican history of canonization. For the margins of the world, the best is not the one who continues and strengthens the tradition; the best is he who can change the rules of "the game." In this sense, Alexie himself is the best who has changed the rules of the game, and transformed literary expression into 'war' which is a game for those who can neither play it unless is a game nor they needed to in the past five centuries. For Alexie (1996), "it is war, / often desperate / and without reason" (24).

The tradition of literary criticism and theorizing, more than two millennia of well-disciplined and "reasoned" exercise, has focused on keeping it pure and without any political commitment, the focus being on pleasure rather than purpose: "It is just a game". Alexie(2009) changes it into something new, a 'war' to be fought "desperate[ly] and without reason" imposed by the genre structure and literary rules, a war with a purpose much larger and higher than slavish submission to arbitrarily established tradition. In *The Absolutely True Diary of Part Time Indian* (2009), the protagonist, Arnold Junior, draws cartoons because, in case of anyone language, a certain percentage of the audience would be able to understand him whereas if he draws a cartoon of a flower, everyone can recognize it as a flower. With this cartoon-like clarity of intelligibility, his purpose is to save his 'tribe': for Junior, his cartoons are small lifeboats to survive in the series of floods from broken dams (Alexie, 2009, p. 5). His sister, carrying a very symbolic name, Mary-Runs-Away, true to her interest in romance novels, elopes with his Montana Indian lover.

Romance with its suggestion of an alternative world, and running away as a metaphor for getting rid of their entanglements are their ways of battling. He and his sister are thought as “gone absolutely crazy” but they are “warriors” never “afraid of confrontation” (Alexie, 2009, p. 91). Alexie too might be considered “absolutely crazy”. He being at war with the Euroamerican colonial agenda of the annihilation of the American Indian culture and history, is fighting with the following conflicts: Red and White polarity of racism, Biblical ‘truth’ and Native American ‘superstition’, Euroamerican and Native American versions of history, reservation Indians and urban Indians, pre-Columbus and post-Columbus (or pre-contact and post-contact) Indians. In “Sasquatch Poems” (1996), he initiates it with two descriptions of Sasquatch, one from Meriam Webster’s ‘scientific’ definition, and the other from Robert Michael Pyle’s *Where Big Foot Walks: Across the Dark Divide* (Alexie, 1996, p. 103). As the conflict is the result of the two conflicting civilizations, Alexie questions Christianity as it was the root of Euroamerican colonial adventures. Christians take the bread and wine believing them to be the body and blood of Jesus Christ and never get the blessing of doubt that they might be just superstitions. Alexie (1996) with compassionate irony tries to bring home to the colonizers that this “colonial superstition is as beautiful / as any of our indigenous superstitions (p. 108).

Euroamerican scientific, religious, historical and philosophical discourses have been manipulating and constructing white truth and the Bible served as a rationale for their exploitative projects and Bible becomes an apt rationale and justification for that (Alexie, 1996, p. 30). Bering Strait theory is a geographical theory that ‘explains’ how Native Americans came to America from Russia. Alexie (1996) poetically challenges this pseudo-scientific claim: “Sasquatch did not cross Bering Strait” (p. 109). The elitist history’s claim that Columbus was the first sign of civilization and of “human” presence in America, Alexie’s (1996) whether Columbus reached America even prior to the Eagle (p. 76) to refute the Euroamerican version of history and civilization. To counter the claimed positivist basis of western civilization, when Grandmother is asked in “Sasquatch Poems” whether she believes in Sasquatch, she says that she does not know but “he sure do *stink*” (Alexie, 1996, p. 110, emphasis added). And then he rightly adds that “more people have seen Sasquatch than have *seen* God” (Alexie, 1996, p. 103, emphasis added). Stinking and seeing refer to empiricity of the truth of Sasquatch to assert that even from the Euroamerican scientific perspective of truth it is Sasquatch, not God, that can come up to the scientificity of truth claims. But despite that scientists cannot afford the existence of the Sasquatch because it will topple down their God (Alexie, 1996, p. 107). The whole poem sustains this conflicting contrast.

One stratagem of fighting this war is through what Peterson (2010) calls “the relationship and tension between Native and Western poetics” (p. 136). Peterson (2010) has analyzed Alexie’s poem “Defending Walt Whitman” in detail and observes that the poem’s power derives from the frictive tension which actually runs throughout his work and is the basic constitutive element of his imagination. “Song of Ourselves”, a two line poem, [“While Walt Whitman sang about his body, the still body /of one Indian grew into two, then ten, then multitudes” (Alexie, 1996, p. 20)] reflects a tension at multiple levels: this song of “Ourselves” suggesting ‘communitism’ and tribal collectivism is in sharp contrast with Euroamerican individualism announced in Whitman’s (1990) “Song of Myself” sings of “my body electric” (p. 81); between Euroamerican canon – Whitman being its strongest representative – and the Native Americans who have been fighting white genocide for red survival.

The same tension in “Search Engine” (2003) runs at many levels: between Euroamerican education and repressive and intellectually misshaping white ideological state apparatus on one hand and on the other Native American traditional worldview of history and culture; between being “raised in a matriarch[y]” and “liv[ing] in a patriarch[y]” (Alexie, 2003, p. 14); the contradiction between sending the daughter to University for white education and the conviction that their “daughter is going to save the tribe” (Alexie, 2003, p. 16); between Auden defaced with scholarly graffiti, worn and misshapen by Washington State University, “scribbled all over the margins” with notes jotted down by three generations on one hand and on the other Harlan Atwater that was never issued for any purpose (Alexie, 2003, p. 9); between working “as a loan officer for Farmers’ Bank” and the assertion that “we’re still Indians” (Alexie, 2003, p. 17); and between what University has taught Corliss about Hopkins and what her uncles believe about him. She proudly introduces him as a 19th c Jesuit poet but the uncle retorts that whites were killing Red Indians in the 19th c (Alexie, 2003, p. 13). And one more contradiction is between Alexie’s writing in English and questioning the bases of Euroamerican English canon. However, learning English for Indians was a compulsion for survival, not a choice. Alexie gives the reason of writing in English through her mother’s words in *You Don’t Have to Say You Love Me: A Memoire* (2017): she knew the indigenous ancient words which would be buried with never to be spoken again but she advisedly did not teach him that language because, she said insightfully, “English will be your best weapon” (Alexie, 2017, p. 120).

Native American poetry “remove[s] or downplay[s] any cross-cultural forces that threaten to dilute or negate its Indianness,” says Anderson (2005, p. 54). Alexie (2003) also demonstrates this tendency: in a sustained conflicting relationship, Euroamerican literary, historical and religious discourses run parallel to Native American discursivity throughout Alexie but he never lets Euroamericanism dominate Native Americans Indianness. The second strategy is Alexie’s challenge to Greek-o-Roman foundations of Euroamerican literature and civilization. When Corliss, the protagonist of “Search Engine” ventures out in search of Harlan Atwater, her beloved Native American poet in the story, she feels depressed that neither she is Odysseus nor her eight-hour journey qualifies for an Odyssey. But, she consoles herself that perhaps Odysseus too was not that heroic. Rather,

he was a drug addict and thief who abused the disabled
... he had only one eye [and] it’s easy to elude a
monster with poor depth perception. [He] *cheated* on
his wife, and *disguised* himself as a potential lover so
he could *spy* on her, and eventually slaughtered all of
her suitors before he identifies himself. He was also a
romantic *fool* who believed his wife stayed faithful
during the twenty years he was missing and presumed
dead. *Self-serving and vain*, he sacrificed six of his
men so he could survive a monster attack. (Alexie,
2003, p. 28, emphasis added)

Alexie (2003) reverses Homer’s hero into a “self-serving and vain cheater, and romantic spying fool” to collapse his heroism. But this deconstructionist rendering of Odysseus is meant to expose the sham civilizational mission of European colonialism for which this epic which was primarily “a powerful piece of military propaganda” laid cultural and ideological foundations. Alexie (2003) critiques Homer for transforming “a *lying colonial*

asshole into one of the most admired literary figures in human history” (p. 28, emphasis added).

The great amplitude of Alexie’s formal range is the third strategy of Alexie’s ‘war’. All possibilities of deviation become ‘norms’ with typical Alexie ease and his limitless mercurial experimentation lets one norm stay hardly in one poem and the next poem has its own ‘norms’ flouting all Western protocols of creative writing. And so is the case with his short stories and novels. Leibman (2005) comments on Alexie’s warring spirit in *The Summer of Black Widows* which is applicable to his other works as well: his purpose of combating Euroamericanism and the genocide of his peoples face/d within it, can be better served through “the strategies of the white world it fights – including its poetic forms” (p. 545). Each poem in his poetry collections has a different style, never reflecting the desire to be fixed and framed in a pre-defined pattern. Even in sonnets, a traditional poetic form with fixed stanza form and rhyme scheme pattern, he follows none of the dictates of the form except the number fourteen, and that number too is meant for flouting, not following, the tradition. He alternates the 14 lines between the patterns of 8+6 and 4+4+4+2 from sonnet to sonnet. The third “Totem Sonnet” runs as follows:

Crazy Horse

Sitting Bull

Captain Jack

Black Kettle

Ishi

Joseph

Qualchan

Wovoka

Anna Mae Aquash

Wilma Mankiller

Tantoo Cardinal

Winona LaDuke

Buffy Sainte-Marie

Maria Tallchief

Steamed Rice

(Alexie, 1996, p. 34).

The items collected in this sonnet of apparently perfectly fourteen lines of a ‘sonnet’ are made to carry lightly the weight of the Native American history, rewritten (or semi-poetically suggested only, to be more appropriate) from the indigenous subalternist perspective. Using to the minimum the readers’ pre-understanding of what poetry is – that has spoiled their approach to the form and function of literature – Alexie weans them away to a new understanding of both form and function of literature through satisfying shock from poem to poem and from story to story and from novel to novel. He gets this effect,

says Peterson (2010), through “dynamic creative bricolage in blending Indian realities and traditional Western poetic forms” (p. 135). For Alexie semantic significance determines the form and formal deviation of a piece, poetic and fictional, which is not required for itself. Whatever synchronization between form and meaning a stylistician may ingenuously discover in Keats’ odes, one reason – howsoever naïve and simplistic it may look – is that he decided to write them in ode form and then he had to and he did stick to it. Of course, being a native speaker of English and a consummate artist, he got with ease ‘fixed’ into the pattern he had opted for. So is the case for Urdu poets’ ghazal forms and Wordsworth and Milton’s iambic pentameter, whatever delicate differences between them. But for Alexie (1996) there is no ‘have to’. He has not opted for any form that will then enslave him and bind him to say what can be said within that form. It is the pressure of meaning that pushes various stylistic deviations to a form specific to a poem:

From behind a symbolic chain link fence
the buffalo stared
intelligently
at white visitors
who soon became very nervous. (Alexie, 1996, p. 18)

The adverb ‘intelligently’ could have been placed in the previous line’s continuum but the placement of ‘intelligently’ separate from the flow is informed and determined by the force of the meaning of this word that he wants it to carry. The poem from which the above lines are taken, has been divided into four parts of three, four and five lines with the last part of two lines, but semantically they cohere well. Another example of employing a form for historically informed purpose is flame-like orthographic writing of how the lives of Native Americans been eaten up by flames of Euroamericangovernmentality:

Fire
Follows my family
each spark
each flame
a soldier
in the U.S. Cavalry.
(Alexie, 1993, p. 21)

Fourthly, Alexie uses ‘I’ in his poetry but it is not personal: it refers to ‘ourselves’ rather than ‘myself’; it covers centuries of fishing salmon in the Spokane River. Even when he makes it explicitly biographical, a story or a poem of his family, with references to his mother and father by name, he connotes the whole Native American history. This ‘I’ can be interpreted by the inclusion of all the elements around a deictic reference: “a social relationship, a social situation and a physical world” (Scollon&Scollon, 2003, p. 3). Biographicality of Alexie’s work does not undermine its artistic value; it gives his work warmth, richness and passionate and involved understanding. He does not write with the vanity of representing the whole of mankind, or any claim to universalism because only a Spokane can rescue the poems of Spokane Indian (Alexie, 2003, p. 9). His biographicality is informed by his desire

to counter and critique “so much junk written about Indians” (Alexie, 2003, p. 22). He is “pretty autobiographical” because he is interested only in the stuff about Indians as he is “trying to help the people understand Indians” (Alexie, 2003, p. 22). Biographicality only gives tribally authentic material; seemingly personal in him becomes politically pungent and tribally representative of lived Native American experience. He feels at his best when an Indian approaches him to exclaim: “Hey, man, that poem was me; that was my life” (Alexie, 2003, p. 23). For Alexie (2003), an idea is “worth turning into a poem” if he is sure that his tribal elders would approve of it (p.22). This is Atwater’s statement which is partially applicable to Alexie himself – ‘partially’ because he maintains a duality of suggestiveness in his poetry and fiction. Although he will never forgive what colonialism did to the Native history and culture, [I am told by many / of you that I must forgive and so I shall when I am dancing / with my tribe during the powwow at the end of the world (Alexie, 1996, p. 98)], when his soul wound has got ‘almost’ recovered, his tilt is towards acceptance of whites in fiction, as in case of Arnold Junior in *Diary* (2009), learning and support come from his white friends Penelope and Gordy. But, despite that, Alexie does not lose sight of his resistant aesthetic purpose: “I, Sherman Alexie, / Am the child / Of Lillian Alexie, / who was the child / Of rape. / I, Sherman Alexie, / Am the grandchild / Of rape. / My children are / The great-grandchildren / Of rape. / All of these descendants / Exist / Because of rape” (Alexie, 2017, pp. 407-8). His corrosive but historically true irony declares the colonial rape the Book of Genesis and Adam and Eve of his wretched peoples. Personal is political for Alexie (2017). These lines are from his memoir, poetic-prose work on his family history but with corrosive connotation, he extends the amplitude of his expression from his family to his tribe, from his tribe to the colonial undoing of his culture/s, from colonial encounter with indigenous tribalism to human history till Adam and Eve. This ‘war’ has so deep history that forgiveness is betrayal. Refusing to forgive the “trespasser against the Indigenous First Nations, he announces his personal-cum-historical-cum-aesthetic program:

I’m not some charitable trust.

There are people I will hate

Even after I’m ashes and dust. (Alexie, 2017, p. 343).

4. Conclusion

Postmodern aesthetics have their focus on subverting the rules of the ‘center’ and celebrating the new ones by and for the margin. Alexie is at war with the ‘type of public’ that owns and promotes the elitist ISAs, the white Euroamerican ‘class’, and the ‘social conditions’ of colonization of the Americas, and flouting of genres by mixing prose and poetry, violating the sub-genres of poetry, producing every piece with a new ‘logic’ of its own form and structure, replacing ‘overflowing spontaneity’ with self-conscious anger, inserting picturesque and cartoonist representation into the narrative of *Diary* (2009), replacing anonymity as proud universality with clear and committed autobiographicality of fiction. Alexie with aesthetic bravery tears away what Anderson (2005) calls “the trap of measuring American Indian poetry using non-Indian yardsticks” (p. 53). At war with Euroamerican hegemonic forms, his work violates rules of creative writing, the rules which were arbitrarily developed by classical tradition. His consciously sustained postmodernist writing – every piece with its own different and separate rules – deflates the superiority of

Euroamerican elitist colonial literature and its creative expectations, genre fixation and stylistic slavery.

4.1. Suggestions for Future Research

This article has briefly suggested some aspects of Sherman Alexie's aesthetics. Future researchers may produce separate articles on each of these aspects and others: i- Orthographic deviation ii- Minimalism, iii- Purposefulness of art can be treated in conjunction with other postcolonial creative writers such as Achebe, Thiong'O, and the *others* who are conscious of (or averse to this view of literature) for contrastive purpose in the paradigm of Comparatist Studies, iv- Role of and attitude to past.

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