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Analysis of Number and Gender Agreement Patterns and Variations in Urdu

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- Urdu
- Number & Gender Agreement
- Morpho-Syntactic
- Case Marking
- Verbal Agreement

Abstract

Urdu number and gender agreement appear on finite verbs and a class of inflecting modifying constituents, such as adjectives and quantifiers. This paper focuses on the morpho-syntactic agreement between nouns, adjectives, and verbs based on gender and number. Theory of grammatical Agreement (Chomsky, 2000, 2001) provides a framework for describing gender and number agreement patterns in Urdu. The data from native Urdu speakers show that Urdu has a complex system of marking phi features on verbs. The agreement manifests as inflections on finite verbs, aspectual and modal auxiliaries, and tense markers. For modifiers, gender and number inflection appears on adjectives in accordance with nouns and verbs. The analysis shows that the subject, the finite verb, the object, and the perfective aspect appear in accord. Likewise, it is evident that case markers –ne and –ko are involved in argument-verb agreement patterns. This study is significant for language acquisition studies and the study of language typology cross-linguistically. Another important practical implication of agreement pattern study in the modern AI world can be helpful in enhancing accuracy in creating machine-based text and translation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Agreement

According to Pyles (2009), the phenomenon when a word alters its form in accordance with its related words is known as agreement (abbreviated AGR) or concord. It involves inflection, making phi features (such as Gender, number, or person) 'agree' with various words or phrase elements. For instance, the form of the verb 'eats' in English is conditioned by characteristics of the singular subject and plural subject. In sentence (a) with a singular subject eat becomes eats, and for a plural subject in (b) eat remains unchanged.

a) Mike eats food.

b) Mike and Ben eat food.

The term agreement has also been applied to many other combinations of controlling and dependent elements, such as nominals and their adjectival modifiers, nouns and their possessors, prepositions and their complements, etc. The phenomenon of accord is prevalent across languages. However, the elements of morphological agreement may vary between languages. Basque, Arabic, Urdu, and other languages exhibit significant agreement patterns between verbs and their arguments, nouns and their modifiers, etc. On the other hand, a language like Mandarin has no canonical agreement to display (Jakson, 2011).

As a fundamental means of human communication, language is based on a complex set of rules and structures that enable the expression of thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Among the numerous factors influencing linguistic expression, number and gender agreement between verbs and arguments are crucial for accurately and coherently conveying information. This research paper seeks to highlight the significance, patterns, and possible variations of number and gender agreement on Urdu verbs.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in academic and practical domains. First, number and agreement study is important to draw comparisons cross-linguistically, thus contributing to refining linguistic theories. Second, the study of number and gender agreement on verbs is more than just a theoretical exercise; it has practical ramifications for language learners, translators, and even natural language processing technology. Maintaining grammatical correctness, intelligibility, and semantic clarity inside a phrase requires precise agreement between verbs their subjects and complements; any divergence from perfect agreement might cause misunderstanding, miscommunication, or even communication collapse. Therefore, understanding the norms and patterns controlling number and gender agreement is critical for gaining fluency and accuracy in various language settings. This research attempts to identify the syntactic elements that control gender and number agreement between nouns, adjectives, and verbs in Urdu.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theory of Agreement

This study employs Theory of Agreement presented in minimalist program (Chomsky, 2000). It explains how grammatical elements such as number, gender, person and case are valued and checked in syntactic derivations. Phi features is one of the key concepts of the theory. The phi features include gender, number and person which are carried by nouns, verbs, tense, adjectives, pronouns, determiners and postpositions. For example, in sentence *laṛka likhta ha*, noun *laṛka* carries the phi features of [3rd person singular masculine]. This theory further posits the concept of probe and goal. Probe is a functional head (such as tense) that has unvalued features. It agrees with the goal with matching valued features. The agreement is realized when unvalued features of probe match with the valued features of goal. This is called feature valuation. In DP *aḡhe laṛke*, the adjective *aḡhe* is the unvalued probe having unvalued features. It gets feature valuation by agreeing with the goal noun *laṛke*, that carries the valued phi features of plural and masculine.

Moreover, the Agreement theory argues that agreement is subject to the locality constraint a probe agrees with the closest goal. For example, in sentence *he reads the books*, the probe *reads* agrees with *he* and not with the books. However, in case of split ergative structures of certain languages such as in Urdu agreement takes place between verb and object. For example in sentence *laṛke ne kiṭabē likhī*, the probe *likhī*, agrees with the goal *kiṭabē* due to ergative case of the second noun of the sentence.

2.2. Number and Gender Agreement Cross-Linguistically

The correspondence between a subject's grammatical number and the verb form it governs is referred to as number agreement. This agreement is relatively simple in many languages, such as English, because singular subjects are matched with singular verbs and plural subjects with plural verbs. However, the process becomes more complicated when gender comes into play for agreement, which involves matching a subject's gender with the appropriate verb form. Gender agreement adds another layer of complication because it requires a language to classify nouns into specific gender categories and assign corresponding markers to verbs. In most of the world languages, verbs do not exhibit gender agreement; however, some languages show this type of agreement such as Arabic.

1) *kaṭaba*

(he wrote)

2) *kaṭabat*

(she wrote)

Many languages exhibit number agreement, also known as grammatical number agreement or concord. It refers to the correspondence between the grammatical number of various sentence components, such as nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs. In other words, number agreement is the process of assuring that nouns' singular and plural forms are consistently in concord with other grammatical elements.

Languages use a variety of ways to express number agreement, and the specific norms and patterns can vary greatly from one language to another. In many languages, the form of nouns changes to denote singular or plural numbers. For example in English, singular noun

cat becomes plural by attaching the morpheme –s thus making it cats. Likewise, in Spanish, the singular noun gato (cat) becomes the plural gatos (cats). This agreement between nouns and their respective determiners and adjectives is necessary for correct grammar. Verbs typically demonstrate numbers according to their subjects. When used with a third-person singular subject in English, verbs typically append -s to the root form, as in he walks. They do not, however, change elsewhere as given in Figure 1.

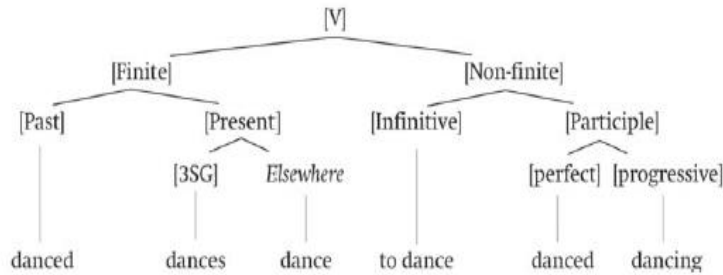


Figure 1: Forms of Verbs (Koeneman & Zeijlstra, 2017)

Other languages may have more intricate systems of verb agreement, in which verbs change their form based on the number of the subject and sometimes even the person.

It is important to note that not all languages exhibit the same level of number agreement or follow the same patterns. Some languages may have more elaborate systems, while others may have simpler rules or even lack overt marking for number agreement. For instance, Mandarin Chinese typically does not have explicit markers for number agreement on nouns, pronouns, or verbs.

Number and gender agreement is essential for maintaining grammatical acceptability and clarity of meaning. It aids in establishing coherence between various parts of speech, ensuring that the components of a sentence agree with each other and make grammatical sense.

3.3. Grammatical System of Urdu

Unlike English, Urdu is a SOV language. However, it also shows flexibility in its word order due to a rich case marking system. Urdu language draws its morphology and grammar from Persian, Arabic and Indic languages. It shows an intricate agreement system of phi features encompassing gender, person and number. Urdu adjectives agree in number and gender with nouns they modify. Likewise, verbs conjugate to reflect tense, aspect, number and gender. Case plays an important role in these agreement patterns.

3. Research Methodology

This study presents a descriptive analysis of naturally occurring and elicited Urdu data. The researchers themselves are native Urdu speakers. Additionally, the data were verified from ten native Urdu speakers. The study focuses on categorizing and analyzing the data to find patterns and variations in number and gender agreement in verbs and adjectives. A set of

30 sentences were designed to observe the gender and number agreement patterns on adjectives. A sentence completion task was given to the participants for data elicitation. Similarly, a sentence completion test comprising of 29 sentences was designed to see noun-verb agreement patterns. Chomsky's theory of agreement (2000) presented in Minimalist Program provides the guidance for data analysis. Data were annotated and analyzed to examine patterns and exceptions of agreement on adjectives and verbs.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Number Marking & Agreement in Urdu

Number agreement in Urdu applies primarily to nouns, pronouns, postpositions and adjectives. There are two number forms for nouns in Urdu: singular and plural. Singular masculine and feminine nouns in (3a, 3b) and (4a, 4b) with vowel endings [a], [i] are inflected as [e] and [ã] respectively to produce plural forms.

3a) ɔurəɫ=ne risal-a parh- a
woman3SG.F =ERG magazine N- M.SG read -M.SG-PFV.PST

3b) ɔurəɫ=ne risal-e parh- e
woman3SG.F =ERG magazine N- M.PL read -M.PL-PFV.PST

4a) a:ɖmi =ne kurs-i tor-i
man.M.3SG. = ERG chair N-F.SG break -F.SG- PFV.PST

4b) a:ɖmi =ne kursiy-ã tor-i
man.M.3SG. = ERG chair N-F.SG break -F.PL- PFV.PST

On the contrary, consonant ending singular nouns in nominative case do not inflect for plurality, as shown in (5). In oblique case, if postposition-ko is used after the consonant ending nouns, the suffixes [õ] or [ẽ] are added to pluralize such as mez/mezõ ko, darya/daryaõ ko, ɖərəɫ/ ɖərəɫõ ko etc. as exemplified in 6 and 6a.

5) ɖərəɫ gir-a
tree SG M.NOM fell-M.SG-PFV.PST

6a) həm=ne ɖərəɫ-õ ko ka:ta he
we.1 PL=ERG trees SG.M-OBL. P cut.PFV Aux.PRS

6b) həm=ne ɖərəɫ ka:te

There are many words in Urdu which have the unchanged singular and plural forms. For example, ɖərəɫ (tree), ɖɜɖəl (forest), ɖərya (river), sama:n (luggage) etc. The context and intention of the speaker decide the realization of the agreement elements on related

grammatical categories. The verbal agreement for singular *bəṛṭən* (utensil) and plural *ḡəṛəxt* (tree) is realized according to the context as illustrated in (7a&7b). The same agreement pattern is found on nouns showing unchanged singular and plural nominative forms such as *bəṛṭən*, *haṭhi*, *aḡmi* etc.

7a) *bəṛṭən* *tu:t-a*
utensil. NOM.M.SG break-M.SG.PST.PFV

7b) *ḡəṛəxt* *gir-e*
tree. NOM.M.PL fall-M.PL.PST.PFV

Urdu pronouns are subject to number agreement. The forms of the pronouns change for first person, second person and third person. The inflections on different pronouns are given in table 1. It shows third person is referred to with three pronouns *vo* (he/she/they) and oblique forms *us* (his/her/its) and *un* (their). These pronouns do not show any overt inflectional difference for gender but *vo*, *us*, *un* might be used in accord with the number of the subject.

Urdu displays a variety of pronouns for second person such as *ṭum*, *ṭu*, as nominative forms, *ṭujhe*, *ṭumhē* as oblique forms for singular or plural subjects without any difference for gender.

Table 1

Urdu Pronouns

<i>vo</i>	He/She/They	3person	NOM	Singular /plural	Masculine /feminine
<i>us</i>	He/She or His /Her	3person	OBL	Obligatorily singular	Masculine /Feminine
<i>un</i>	They/Their	3person	OBL	Plural	Masculine /feminine
<i>ṭum</i>	You	2person	NOM/OBL	ambiguous singular /plural	Masculine /feminine
<i>ṭumhar-a</i>	Your	2 person	GEN	Singular	Masculine
<i>ṭumhar-i</i>	Your	2 person	GEN	Singular	Feminine
<i>ṭumhar-e</i>	Your	2 person	GEN	Singular /plural	Masculine
<i>ṭer-a</i>	Your	2person	GEN	Obligatorily singular	Masculine

<i>ṭer-i</i>	Your	2person	GEN	Obligatorily singular	Feminine
<i>tu</i>	You	2person	NOM	obligatorily singular	Masculine /feminine
<i>tuḍḥe</i>	You	2person	OBL/NOM	obligatorily singular	Masculine /feminine
<i>tumhẽ</i>	You	2person	OBL/NOM	Singular /plural	Masculine /feminine
<i>a:p</i>	You	2person	NOM/OBL	obligatorily plural	Masculine /feminine
<i>mẽ</i>	I	1person	NOM	Singular	Masculine /feminine
<i>mudḥe</i>	I/Me	1person	OBL	obligatory singular	Masculine /feminine
<i>həm</i>	We	1person	NOM/OBL	plural	Masculine /feminine
<i>həm</i>	I	1person	HONOR	Singular	Masculine /feminine

The pronouns in genitive cases such as second person pronouns: *tumhara*, *tumhari*, *tumhare*, *ṭera*, *ṭeri* (all meaning your) carry inflections to show the gender and number of the possessed nouns. For example, *tumhara ghar* (your house) *tumhari kiṭab* (your book) *ṭera dost* (your friend). Like most of the Urdu pronouns, first person singular *mudḥe* (I/me) and *mẽ* (I) are the same for both genders. Urdu language has different pronouns to show the level of respect. Second person pronoun *a:p* (you) is used instead of *tum* (you) to express respect to the addressee. First person plural pronoun *həm* (we) is used as honorific for first person singular. Table 1 enlists different forms of Urdu pronouns and their realizations according to case, number and gender variations.

Urdu demonstrates number and gender agreement between nouns and adjectives. The endings of adjectives play a role in number and gender marking. Figure 2 illustrates the agreement pattern of adjectives according to vowel or consonant endings.

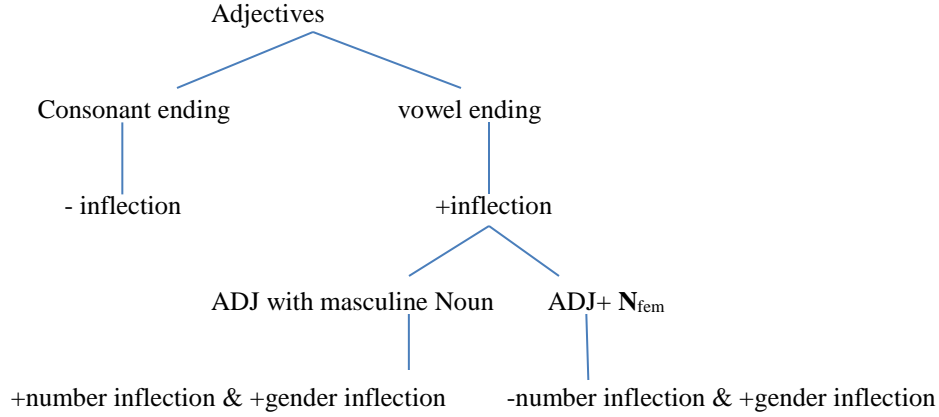


Figure 2: Agreement Pattern of Adjectives in Urdu

The adjectives containing a consonant ending usually do not inflect for any gender and number to agree with a noun as illustrated in examples 8a-9b. However, vowel ending adjectives do show inflection for gender and/or number.

- 8a) xubsurat̤ laṛk-i
 Pretty ADJ girl N SG.F
 (Pretty girl)
- 8b) xhuburat̤ laṛk-a
 intelligent ADJ boyN SG.M
 (Intelligent boy)
- 9a) rangi:n bot̤al
 colourful.ADJ bottle N.F.SG
 (colorful bottle)
- 9b) rangi:n bot̤al-ẽ
 colorful.ADJ bottles.N-F.PL
 (colorful bottles)

Examples (10a-11b) show adjectives ending in vowels exhibiting variations in gender and number agreement. The vowel ending adjectives modifying a masculine noun inflect with [a] and [e] to reflect accord with the number and gender as presented in examples (10a & 10b) given below. Similarly, for vowel ending and consonant ending singular and plural feminine nouns, the inflection [i] appears on adjectives alike as illustrated in 11a & 11b.

- 10a) ləmb-a: ra:st-a
 long ADJ-SG.M path N-SG.M
 (Long path)
- 10b) ləmb-e ra:st-e
 long ADJ-Pl. M path ADJ.PL.M
 (long paths)
- 11a) ləmb-i kəhan-i
 long ADJ-F.SG story.N-F.SG
 (long story)
- 11b) ləmb-i kəhan-i-yā
 long.ADJ.F story.N-F-PL
 (long stories)

For consonant ending feminine nouns, the adjectives show inflection [i] only for gender but not for number as illustrated in (12a) (12b).

- 12a) əch-i kiṭa:b
 nice ADJ SG.F book.SG.F
 (nice book)
- 12b) əch-i kiṭa:b-ē
 nice ADJ.F.PL book.F.PL
 (nice books)

Some grammatically feminine nouns contain masculine gender marker [a] ending such as həvə(air), ṡiza(food), səza(punishment) etc. Similarly, some masculine nouns end with common feminine gender marker [i] such as pa:ni(water), admi(man), hathi(elephant) etc. Based on their linguistic knowledge, native Urdu speakers make agreement between these nouns and adjectives in terms of gender. The sentences (13a) and (13b) are examples of this kind of marked agreement between nouns and adjectives. The nouns həvə (air) and pani (water) being assigned feminine grammatical gender by the speakers, reflect their respective gender and number agreement on their modifying adjectives.

- 13a) thənd-i həv-ə
 cold.ADJ-F air.N.F-SG
 (cold air)
- (13b) thənd-a pa:ni
 cold ADJ-M-SG water.ADJ.M.SG
 (cold water)

The above mentioned variation in the agreement pattern poses difficulty for the non-native speakers to learn gender number agreement rules and patterns.

The consonant ending nouns show inflection for number but not for gender. In case of feminine consonant ending nouns, their adjectives with vowel endings inflect only for gender agreement but not for number as shown in (14a) and (14b).

14a) sunehr-i ḡhup
 golden ADJ.F.SG sunshine N.SG.F
 (Golden sunshine)

14b) sunehr-i dhoop-ẽ
 golden ADJ.F.SG sunshines N-F.PL
 (Golden sunshines)

On the other hand, for consonant ending masculine nouns, adjectives do inflect to agree with gender and number both as shown in (15a&15b).

15a) ḡhot-a bəṛṭən
 small.ADJ-M.SG utensil.N.M.SG

15b) ḡhot-e bəṛṭən
 small.ADJ-M.PL utensil.N.M.PL

As far as consonant ending adjectives are concerned, such adjectives do not inflect to agree for either number or gender of nouns they modify.

16a) xu:bsurəṭ ṭəsvi:r
 beautiful.ADJ picture.N.F.SG

16b) muḡkil ki ṭa:bẽ
 difficult.ADJ book.N.M.PL

Examples given above exhibit that gender and number agreement of adjectives with consonant ending nouns depends on the tacit knowledge of the speaker about the grammatical gender of the nouns and the context in terms of the number.

4.2 Gender marking & Agreement in Urdu

The gender of nouns include not only animate but also inanimate objects commonly observed in many language such as French, Arabic, and Russian (Jackson, 2011). For instance, La Maison (the house) is a feminine noun in French, and Le livre (the book) is a masculine noun. Likewise beit (the house) is a masculine noun in Arabic, while səma (the sky) is a feminine noun. Some languages, like Tamil, differentiate between human and non-human to mark gender on nouns. However, many languages do not categorize nouns based on grammatical genders, like Hungarian, Finnish, Turkish, and Estonian (Jakson, 2011). In Urdu, nouns carry gender marking with different masculine and feminine markers. The genders can be biological gender and grammatical gender. Biological gender is assigned depending on the sex of animate nouns, and grammatical gender is assigned arbitrarily to inanimate nouns with no obvious reason. Many languages contain the feature of grammatical gender along with natural gender in nouns.

There is a somewhat consistent system of recognizing the grammatical gender of many Urdu nouns, as they are marked with differences in vowel ending. In order to mark masculinity, usually nouns end with [a] and feminine nouns end with [i]. For example, 'ləṭka' (boy) and 'murya' (rooster) are masculine and 'ləṭki' (girl) and 'muryi' (hen) are feminine. Non-native speakers with no experience of this kind of distinction might wonder

Likewise, example (28) exhibits masculine, plural agreement inflections on noun and adjective.

17b) tu:t-e g^hər-e
broken PST PART-M.SG pitcher-M.SG.NOM

Example (29) shows a variation in noun-adjective agreement pattern. Here g^hər-e is in its oblique form which is overtly marked by a postposition –ko. The oblique marker –ko is responsible to provide [e] inflection to both g^həra and tuta. As mentioned earlier, it is a common agreement pattern that [e] inflection usually shows plurality and masculinity of the nouns and adjectives. Nevertheless, the use of postposition –ko has assigned the case forms to g^həra and tu:ta , changing [a] into [e] as masculine singular inflection.

17c) tu:t-e g^hər-e ka
broken PST PART-M.SG pitcher-M.SG.OBL P

4.6. Gender and Number Agreement Patterns on Verbs in Urdu

Urdu is an SOV language in which the position of the verb is most defined than any other constituent. Since most nouns' grammatical functions are indicated by the postpositions that follow them, nominal constituents can be freely rearranged for thematic purposes. Only in poetic or highly affective style is the position of the verb modified. Word order was historically relatively flexible in Old Indo-Aryan, but it became more rigid between 200 and 600 AD in Middle Indo-Aryan (Comrie, 2018)

The primary forms of Urdu verbs and auxiliaries are Root, Imperfective Participle, Perfective Participle, and Infinitive. Adding auxiliaries and suffixes to these forms creates a complex verb tense and aspect system. The primary form determines the aspect, while the auxiliaries determine the tense.

The Urdu noun class system distinguishes between masculine and feminine genders and singular and plural numbers. These characteristics manifest as inflectional agreement on verbal elements such as main verbs, aspectual and modal auxiliaries, and tense-carrying copular forms. In Urdu, Agreement appears on an inflecting class of modifying elements, such as adjectives, quantifiers, numerals, and particles, indicating modification by another noun in a complex noun phrase (Rizvi et al., 2008). This section is limited to morphological inflections on verbs. It also analyses different syntactic elements responsible for these inflections of agreement.

Table 3

Cases in Urdu (Butt & King, 2001)

Nominative	Φ
Ergative	Ne
Genitive	k-i/a/e

Case is the key element in determining noun-verb agreement in Urdu (Dayal & Mahajan, 2007). While discussing agreement patterns in Hindi, which is syntactically similar to Urdu Pareekh (2022) presented the idea of language-specific case-blocking agreement conditions.

4.7. Nominative Case and Verbal Agreement

i. vo Ləɾk-a sabzi-yā nahi kha-t̪-a h-e
That.D Boy-Sg-M=NOM vegetables- F.PL not eat-V.IMP/SG-M Aux-3SG-PRS
(That boy does not eat vegetables)

ii. Ləɾk-i roz kʰanə bəna-t̪-i h-e.
girl -F.3SG=NOM daily ADV food SG.M make -V.IMP.SG.F Aux-SG.PRS
(The girl makes food daily)

3) Lərk-e ghərī pehən-t-e h-ē
Boys-M.3PL=NOM watches SG.F wear V-IMP-PL.M Aux- PL

4) Ləṭk-i-yā	khanə	bəna-t-i	h-ē
Girls-F-3PL=Nom	food SG.M	make V-IMP-SG.F	Aux. PRS-PL

(Girls make food)

In examples given below with past perfective and progressive verbal aspect, nominative noun in subject position for intransitive verbs such as a:na (come), ja:na(go), controls agreement. For singular masculine noun –a [a] inflection and for plural masculine –e [e] inflections are added.

- 5) Ləɾk-a duka:n-ẽ dekhne gəy-a
 boy.M.3SG=NOM shopsF-PL see V go V-PST.PFV.M.SG
 (Aslam went to see the shops)
- 6)) Ləɾk -i skul der se gəy-i.
 girl.-F.3SG=NOM school M.SG late ADV P go.V.PFV-F.SG
 (Girl went to school late)
- 7) kuch mərd ʃadi pe gəy-e
 Few D men.M.3PL=NOM wedding.SG.F to.P go.V.PFV-M.PL.
 (Few men went to the wedding)
- 8) Laɾk -i-yan cinema gə-ĩ
 girls-F-3PL=NOM cinema M.SG go.V.PFV-F.PL
 (Girls went to the cinema)

In sentences with transitive verb and progressive aspect, inflections appear on progressive particle –rah (be) and auxiliaries to agree with the subjects. Following example demonstrates that inflections –i [i] appear on progressive participle to show agreement for feminine gender of the singular subject, and –e [ẽ] on auxillary to agree with the feminine plural noun. Further, the inflection –a [a] appears on progressive participle of the verb and –e [e] inflection on auxillary to show agreement with singular masculine subject. To agree with plural masculine subject, progressive particle inflects with [e] while auxillary inflects with [ẽ] which is same as for plural feminine agreement. The above mentioned description is illustrated in the sentences given below.

- 9) Ləɾk -i phəl ka:t rəh-i h-e
 girl. F.3SG=NOM fruit M.SG cut PROG -SG.F Aux PRS-SG
 (Salma is going to the market)
- 10) Ləɾk -a goli-yan k^ha rəh-a h-e
 M.3SG=NOM tablets PL.F eat PROG -M.SG. Aux -PRS-SG
 (Boy is taking the pills)
- 11) xəwaɾɪn kam kər rəh-i h-ẽ
 women F.3PL=NOM work SG.M do.V PROG-F Aux-PRS-PL
 (All ladies are going to the market)
- 12) a:dmi kursi utha rəh-e t^h-e
 Men PL.M=NOM chair.SG.F pick PROG-M.PL Aux.M PST
 (Men were picking the chair)

In future perfective, plural nominative nouns trigger agreement inflection on verbs and auxiliary as [ẽ] and [e] respectively. However, the main verb inflects for number but remains unchanged for gender and auxiliary inflects for gender but not for number as (14)

shows la-ẽ reflects plurality and g-i reflects femininity without specifying singularity or plurality.

- 13) Ləɾk -e gaɾi la-ẽ g-e
boy-M.3PL=NOM car -.FSG bring.V -PL Aux.FUT-M.PL
(Boys will bring the car)
- 14) Ləɾk -iy ă saman la-ẽ g-i
girls-PL-F=NOM luggage.M.SG bring.V -PL AUX.FUT. F
(Girls will bring the luggage)

4.8. Ergative Case and Agreement

Urdu is a split ergative language. Transitive and di-transitive verbs with perfective aspect cause ergative case in Urdu, whereas finite intransitive verbs are responsible for nominative case of nouns. Thus, case-markers, notably ergative on transitive verb, subjects with perfective morphology, cause split-ergativity in Urdu (Durrani, 2006).

Noun phrases with the case marker "ne" represent an agent that fills the "subject" argument in the list of grammatical functions. The ergative case arises with perfective verbs with valency more than one (Rizvi et al, 2008) According to Chomsky's operation agree (2000, 2001 as mentioned in Pareekh, 2022) given in Minimalism Framework, the gender and number features of the goal are morphologically realized on the progressive auxiliary and the past tense marking copula, as a consequence of the feature-checking mechanism, which is presumed to be the source of agreement. It is illustrated in the following examples.

- 15) Ləɾk -e=ne pəhel-i-yă bəta-ĩ
boy-M.3SG=ERG riddle.F-PL tell-PST.PFVF-F-PL
(Boy told the riddle)
- 16) Ləɾk -i=ne əxbar-aɬ khol-e
girl-F.3SG=ERG newspaper.M-PL open-PST.PFV-M-PL
(Girl opened the newspapers)

It is evident from the above examples that ergative argument does not control number and gender agreement on verb. Direct objects paheli and əxbara:ɬ behave as the gender and number agreement controlling arguments in both sentences to reflect inflections on verbs. Ergative marker –ne blocks agreement between ergative argument and verb. So, it is direct object that controls the agreement inflections on perfective verbs.

4.9. Dative Case and Agreement

For past perfective aspect, a noun phrase marked with the dative case marker 'ko' performs the function of an indirect object. In the following sentence where roti is direct object, Betõ is indirect object, ergative case marker –ne blocks agreement between ergative subject and verb, resulting agreement of gender and number between direct object and verb.

- 17) Bap =ne bet-i= ko ɬəbi-yă d-ĩ
father.M.3SG=ERG daughter-F-SG.IO=dat keys.F-PL.DO give-V.PST.PFV F-PL
(Father gave the keys to daughter)

Likewise, following sentence also shows number and gender agreement between direct object and verb

- 18) Lark-ō =ne kuṭṭō = ko rot-i dal-i
 boy-M.PL=Erg dogs.M.PL=Dat bread.F-SG give.V.PST.PFV-F-SG
 (The boys gave bread to dogs)

It is evident from the examples given below that for progressive aspect, ergative case marker –ne disappears. Thus, dative case marker –ko becomes transparent, allowing gender and number agreement between nominative subject and progressive participle –raha/e/i and auxiliary.

- 19) Lark-e kuṭṭe = ko roti de rāh-e ṭh̄ -e.
 Boys-Pl-M=NOM dogs.M.SG=Dat bread.F.SG give.V.PROG-M-PL Aux PST-M-PL
 (The boys were giving bread to dog)

- 20) Lark-i admiy ō = ko pod-e de rāh-i ṭh̄ -i
 Girl-Sg-F=NOM men-M-PL=Dat plants-M-PL give PROG.F.SG Aux-F-SG
 (The girl is giving work to Salman)

The above examples conclude that in perfective aspect ergative case marker –ne blocks gender and number agreement between subject and verb. On the other hand, for imperfective aspects, subject agrees in number and gender with progressive particle and auxiliary.

5. Conclusion

The examples given in above section explain gender number agreement reflected on verbs. Nouns are the goals and verbs act as probes. It is evident that diverse case forms in Urdu significantly impact gender and number marking with reference to subject or object. The agreement patterns are asymmetrical. Table (3) illustrates summary of forms of transitive verb kha and its number-gender agreement patterns.

Table 4

Illustration of Number & Gender agreement Pattern of verb kha (eat)

Root	Kha (eat)	Case	Gender	Number
Imperfective Verb+ auxiliary	Kha-ta he	Nominative	Masculine	Singular
	Kha-te h- ē			Plural
	Kha-ti hē		Feminine	Singular
	Kha-ti he- ĩ			Plural
Perfective	Kha-ya	Ergative	Masculine	Singular
	Kha-yi		Feminine	Singular

Progressive(p res-ent)	(Kha) rəh-a h-e	Nominative	Masculine	Singular
Verb+ particle				
	Kha rah-e h-ẽ			Plural
Progressive(P as)	Kha rah-i h-e	Nominative	Feminine	Singular
Verb+ particle	Kha rah-i h-ẽ			Plural
Perfective	Khay-a	Ergative	Masculine	Singular
	Kha-e			Plural
	Kha-i		Feminine	Singular
	Kha-ĩ		Feminine	Plural

Urdu is different from English in its gender and number marking system. Morphological inflections for gender and number on probes (verbs) and targets (nominal subjects) are determined by the case forms. Adjectives inflect to agree with gender and number of the nouns they modify. Urdu contains frequent non nominative case forms and there is a direct structural relation between case marking and agreement. If a subject is nominative, the verbs inflect for agreement with it. While the subject marked with ergative -ne, verb agrees with the direct object. In perfective constructions containing di-transitive verb, subject and direct object get blocked by dative marker –ko, thus perfective verb agrees with indirect object

The gender-number agreement relations depend on the aspectual elements and verb particles. For progressive, verbal particles agree with the nominative subject. It is a common pattern that on progressive particles, [a] appears for masculine singular [e] for masculine plural. Likewise to show agreement with feminine, nouns progressive particle inflect as [i] for both singular and plural. The auxiliaries inflect with bound morpheme [e] and [ẽ] for singular and plural nouns respectively.

This study has practical implications for linguistic typology researchers. Taking insights from it, they can further refine linguistic theories that highlight the similarities and differences between world languages. Moreover, this study might be helpful for teaching Urdu as a second language. The instructors can design more effective learning materials by focusing on the patterns of agreement in terms of verbs and adjectives. Additionally, this study can be fruitful for AI text generators in Urdu.

This paper focuses only on the common noun-adjective and 3person noun-verb agreement relations and patterns. As Urdu is a language with complex case systems and free word

order and gender and number agreement also reflects on other grammatical categories such as adverbs and postpositions etc. But due to restrictions of time and space those agreement relations are not within the scope of this paper. In future these areas might be outlined by analyzing the data in more detail in future.

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Configuring Socio-economic Crises through Vehicular Discourse in Pakistan: A Socio-linguistic Outlook

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- Code-switching
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- Vehicular discourse
- Socio-economic crises

Abstract

This research focuses on the discourse analysis of Vehicular discourse on Pakistani public transport vehicles. The data was collected from the roads, parking lots and market places in the twin cities, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. It was purposive data collection, reason being, only those texts were selected that highlighted the theme of socio-economic crises. Vehicular discourse in the twin cities was found to be written in three languages, English, Urdu and Punjabi and there was observance of code-switching. The sample size was twenty-five, but it was delimited to five samples. The data was then analyzed keeping into consideration Janks' rubrics for linguistic analysis. The linguistic analysis revealed that the text employs the use of lexicalization, over lexicalization and lexical cohesion, and there is extensive use of metaphors, similes and personification. The data was then further analyzed to highlight the socio-economic problems a common man faces in day-to-day life. This research provided a deep insight into the life of public transport drivers in Pakistani society. The drivers, in this research, represent every layman in Pakistan.

1. Introduction

This research paper explores the phenomenon of vehicular discourse in Pakistan, where the text written on vehicles conveys a rich array of messages that reflect the culture, beliefs, and identities of the drivers and their communities. The text can be found in various forms, including quotations, slogans, poetry, and images, and it often expresses themes such as wisdom, religion, romance, humor, socio-economic issues, and political views. The discourse on vehicles also signifies the driver's love for their country, family, and religion. Over time, political messages have become a common feature, further expanding the scope of vehicular discourse.

The historical development of truck art, as described by Elias (2012), traces its roots back to Afghanistan in the 1970s. Afghan refugees brought this tradition to Pakistan after the Soviet invasion and civil war disrupted Afghanistan. Initially, truck art focused on decorative paintings, including images of landscapes, animals, and women, along with intricate woodwork and mirror designs. Over time, the art form evolved to include written texts, which now feature on a variety of vehicles, not just trucks. Today, written discourse can be found on buses, vans, carts, cabs, private cars, and motorbikes, written in languages such as Urdu, English, Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, and others, reflecting the multilingual and multicultural nature of Pakistani society.

In this research, the study of vehicular discourse involves discourse analysis, a concept defined by Gee (2014) as the sequence of sentences that create meaningful communication. Discourse analysis helps to explore how sentences and phrases are ordered to convey messages and facilitate interpretation. The sociolinguistic variation in the language used on vehicles highlights the diversity of language users and their social contexts, especially in light of globalization and societal complexity. This research aims to examine how this variation manifests in the texts seen on vehicles and what it reveals about the socio-economic struggles of drivers and their communities. Vehicular discourse in Pakistan is a unique and evolving form of public expression that conveys a wealth of cultural, religious, and social meanings, providing a fascinating lens through which to study language, identity, and society in the region.

1.1. Significance of Study

This research is significant in a way that Vehicular Discourse can be introduced as a new genre of study for the students of linguistics and cultural studies, as this text is representative of Pakistani society and culture. The current research exhibits how this text imitates life and is useful in highlighting various socio-economic problems in Pakistani society. Most importantly, this study is unique in its kind, as very little substantial work has been previously done to study vehicular inscriptions in Pakistan from a sociolinguistic perspective.

1.2. Research Objectives

This research has the following objectives:

To reveal the lexical features employed in vehicular discourse on Pakistani public transport vehicles that discuss the economic and financial conditions of the drivers.

To verify if the use of linguistic features such as euphemism, similes, metaphors, and personification in vehicular discourse on Pakistani public transport vehicles plays a significant role in conveying the socio-economic struggles of the drivers.

To explore how the transitivity system of language plays a crucial role in shaping the way meaning is constructed in vehicular discourse, particularly in relation to expressing the driver's deprivation from the basic necessities of life.

1.3. Research Questions

This research covers the following research questions:

- i. What kind of lexical features are employed in the vehicular discourse to convey the economic and financial condition of the drivers?
- ii. How does the vehicular discourse employ euphemism, similes, metaphors and personification highlight the socio-economic struggles of the drivers?
- iii. To what extent is transitivity a regular feature of vehicular discourse, and how do these processes contribute in expressing the driver's deprivation from the basic necessities of life.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Reflection of Socio-Economic Problems through Language:

Social problems are interwoven with economic problems. Economic success serves as a pillar for the overall advancement of a nation. One thing is communal in all advanced nations is that they are economically sound. On the other hand, meager economic state is the root cause of so many social problems in a country. These socio-economic problems are reflected in the speech and writing of the people. Since this research highlights the socio-economic problems faced by the citizens of Pakistan, it also takes into account some of the researches conducted in the field of Economics. It has been observed that the same problems have been mentioned in both the disciplines.

Adil (2012), in his article highlights various social and economic challenges that Pakistan has faced since its independence in 1947. Initially, the country struggled with issues like lack of funds, refugee's rehabilitation, poor infrastructure and widespread poverty. Today, the most pressing threat is terrorism, which has destabilized the nation. Poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and child labor are significant issues. Corruption in government, overpopulation and economic inequality also exacerbate the country's problems. These social challenges are impacting the economy, which faces crises in energy, inflation, outdated technology and a lack of foreign investment. Many multinational companies have packed up, and tourism has suffered a setback due to security concerns. Overall, Pakistan's economy has continued to deteriorate and has worsened by its ongoing war on terrorism.

Aslam and Baloch (2012), in their research about socio-economic challenges that Pakistan is facing have described different factors that have resulted in country's economic instability. These factors include lack of foreign and national investment, bad governance, debt reduction, and corruption, polarization of society, political instability, poverty and inflation. They believe that political stability is crucial for the economic development of any country. But in Pakistan, due to political instability, the country's economic growth

received a major setback. Economic policies implemented by one government have always been dismantled by the successor government.

There are certain factors that result in the economic downfall of any society. The current research would bring to lime light these socio-economic problems, which are reflected in the vehicular discourse in Pakistan.

2.2. Vehicular Discourse in International Context:

Writing texts on the vehicles has become a global practice in many countries including Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Ghana. However, it has been observed that this practice is fairly common in third world countries that are still in the phase of struggling through social and economic instability. The developed countries like China, Japan, United Kingdom and United States of America, have not been observed to deploy any text on their vehicles.

Kumar (2015) in his article entitled, “Wisdom on Wheels in India” says that goods-carrying trucks in India are very famous because of the wisdom they spread. The text on some trucks is witty and sometimes it’s gloomy. She has mentioned some of the messages that she found on the trucks (with apology to the international readers, because most of them were in Hindi language).

Vehicular discourse is also common in Sri Lanka, but it is limited to three- wheelers only i.e. rickshaws. In Sri Lanka, Sinhalese and Tamil are the official languages, whereas English is used as a foreign language. It has been observed that the inscriptions on the rickshaws are in their official language as well as in English.

In modern Nigeria, stickers on vehicles serve as a means of social communication, often conveying religious, social, or political messages. Adamo (2015) conducted a study that analyzed the religious texts, particularly psalms, inscribed on vehicles. Psalms, which are biblical quotations from the Hebrew Bible and Christian Old Testament, are commonly found on around 70% of commercial vehicles in Nigeria. These inscriptions are believed to invoke divine protection for travelers, with the psalms symbolizing God's presence as an escort. Drivers and passengers view these inscriptions as a safeguard against potential misfortunes, such as accidents, theft, robbery, or kidnapping, as they navigate Nigeria's dangerous roads.

Taluah and Musah (2015) in their research conducted in Ghana, comment that inscriptions are a common sight in their country and can be found on bars, stores, houses and vehicles. They believe that vehicles do not only serve as a mode of transportation, but also as a means to communicate their thoughts, ideas, attitudes, opinions, interests and knowledge. Vehicular inscriptions in Ghana are written in response to social fears, worries, uncertainties and anxieties, and, therefore, are a reminder of human nature. They propose preventive guidance and recommendations that may lead other people to live their lives peacefully and successfully. These inscriptions on vehicles in Ghana are a sign of unique national speech community and social network that shares similar values and norms. This research shows that most vehicle owners and drivers use these inscriptions as norm.

2.3. Vehicular Discourse in Pakistan:

One can find dozens of cars with inscriptions on them. This tradition of writing on the vehicles in Pakistan, came from Afghanistan, when the Afghan refugees migrated to Pakistan after Soviet invasion. At that time the tradition became popular among commercial trucks, but with passing time, it was adopted by buses and Suzuki vans. They were often called 'Dulhan Buses and 'Dulhan Suzuki', because of their lavished embellishments in the form of art work, mirror work and colourful, intricately patterned decoration laden with text. ('Dulhan' is an Urdu word for bride, and these vehicles are metaphorically called dulhan, because of their shimmery and colourful beautification and adornment).

Elias (2012) believes that this truck culture in Pakistan is completely distinct from private car-owning circle of urban community. It has its own class structure which is based on economic and ethnic terms. The highest in this hierarchy are the fleet owners, who have government contracts. Then come the truck owners, and the lowest in the order of hierarchy are the truck drivers. He also claims that the class differences between the owners of trucks are due to the differences in the prices of trucks. In recent times, this truck art and truck decoration has become a subject of discussion not only among Pakistani elites, but it also has started to receive international recognition.

3. Research Methodology

The theoretical framework for the current research is based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1995), which focuses on the function of language in social contexts and views language as a social semiotic system. It focuses on the functional aspects of language, emphasizing the relationship between language and its use in different contexts. It views language as a tool for communication and meaning-making within specific social and cultural contexts, and helps speakers achieve various purposes, such as informing, questioning, persuading, or expressing emotions.

The analytical framework chosen to analyze the data is Janks' Rubrics for Linguistic Analysis (2005), which was developed from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. It offers a comprehensive approach to analyze the linguistic data and covers a broad spectrum of linguistic features. For current research Janks' model has been adapted and the following linguistic features have been selected for the analysis of vehicular discourse:

- i. Lexicalization
- ii. Over-lexicalization
- iii. Re-lexicalization
- iv. Lexical cohesion
- v. Metaphor
- vi. Euphemism
- vii. Transitivity
- viii. Similes
- ix. Personification

The last two linguistic features mentioned above are not a part of Janks' model but have been analyzed in the texts because they could not be ignored while analyzing the data linguistically.


3.1. Data Collection & Sample Size

The data was collected from market places and parking lots of different commercial areas in the twin cities, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. In order to conduct the research, twenty-five samples of the vehicular discourse were snapshot but to delimit the study, the sample size was reduced to five. Since the data was in Punjabi and Urdu language, it was crucial to translate it. The purpose of providing the translation is that Urdu and Punjabi texts are not comprehensible for the English-speaking readers.

4. Data Analysis

Discourse analysis of the vehicular discourse reveals that the drivers and the common man have been facing different socio-economic problems for quite a long time and are now offended to such an extent that they have started to raise their voice and express their concerns by writing them on their vehicles. The analysis of the selected samples in this section reveals their socio-economic struggles.

Text 1:

Main Text	Translation
<p>دل کرتا ہے، دنیا خرید لوں، جیب کہتی ہے، بکواس نہ کر</p> 	<p>The Hearts urges me to buy the world The Pocket gives me a shut-up call.</p>

Lexicalization: This Urdu text, written at the back of a truck consists of two interdependent clauses. The first glance at the text gives the impression that it has been written for the sake of fun, but in fact the driver is directing the readers' attention to a grave issue of sky-high rate of inflation in Pakistan. He says that his heart urges him to buy the whole world but his pocket gives him a shut-up call.

Lexical Cohesion: This text is lexically cohesive and the two parts of text have been cohesively linked by the use of connecting word 'magar' (but)

Metaphor: In this text the words, ‘dunya khareed loun’ have been metaphorically used, and refer to the driver’s desire to get all the luxuries of life. The words, ‘jaib kehti hay’ have also been used metaphorically, as ‘jaib’ (pocket) itself cannot interact and implicates that his pocket does not allow him to spend lavishly and lead a luxurious life.


Transitivity: The following transitivity processes can be observed in this text:

- a. **Mental Process:** The heartfelt feelings of the driver have been mentioned in this text. ‘Dil’ is the sensor, where his desires get nourished, whereas, ‘dunya khareed loun’ is the phenomenon. In second clause of the text, driver’s ‘jaib’ is the sensor which perceives the phenomenon, ‘bakwaas na kar’
- b. **Verbal Process:** In this text the driver is sharing his feelings. In first clause, ‘dil’ is the sayer, and the verbiage is ‘dunya khareed loun’. In the second clause ‘jaib’ is the sayer and verbiage is ‘bakwaas na kar’. All the readers who read this text are the addressees.
- c. **Existential Process:** The text seems to be existential, because it is the voice of every common man in Pakistan, who is deprived of basic necessities of life and cannot even dream of having any luxury in his life.

Personification: The word ‘Jaib’(pocket) has been personified, as it is mentioned in the text, ‘jaib kehti hay’. ‘Kehna’ (saying) is a human attribute that has been associated with ‘jaib’ (pocket).

In this text, the driver has highlighted a grave truth of people’s sufferings in Pakistan. In a witty manner, he aims to reveal that the poor people desire to live a luxurious life, but their finances do not allow them. It is difficult for them to afford the three basic necessities of life, i.e. food, clothing and shelter, and in such a situation they cannot even think of affording any luxury and if they do so, they make fun of themselves and their desires.

Text 2:

Main Text	Translation
<p>سوری نہیں کر سکتا۔ sorry کیا کرایہ کم کروں؟ ہاں آپ کا ووٹ کر سکتا ہے، یاد سے یکم مئی کو ووٹ ڈالیں</p> 	<p>Should I discount the fare? Sorry I cannot. Yes, your vote can. Forget not to caste vote on the 1st May.</p>

Lexicalization: The following text is written in the form of a dialogue in Urdu language, and the passenger is requesting to offer discount on the fare and the driver is responding to his request. The content of the text reveals that the driver is concerned about the economic condition of the people of his country and wants to guide them that their vote can help in bringing a positive change in the country.

Over-lexicalization: Over-lexicalization can be observed in this text. The driver intends to convince the people to caste vote on the said date, but he has over-lexicalized the text to convey the same idea. Actually he wants to make the people aware that their vote can help to bring a positive change in their economic condition.

Lexical Cohesion: Lexical cohesion can also be found in the form of repetition where the writer has used a pair of antonyms i.e., ‘han’ (yes) and ‘nahi’ (no).


Transitivity: The following transitivity processes have been observed in this text:

- Material Process:** In the text there are two material processes. First in ‘main nahi kar sakta’ and second in ‘yaad se 11 may ko vote dalein’. In the first sentence, ‘main’ is the actor, ‘kar sakta’ is the process and ‘nahi’ is the goal. In the second sentence, ‘actor’ is the reader, ‘dalein’ is the process and ‘vote’ is the goal.

The driver seems to be a patriotic Pakistani who is hoping for the good future of his country. He has discussed the problem of inflation in a light manner. He has used a dialogue form to convey his message and is assuming that a passenger has asked him to give discount on the fare of the rickshaw and he is responding to that request. This rickshaw driver is asserting in an implicit manner that the drivers are also victims of inflation just as the passengers are, therefore they should not be blamed for the increase in

the fare of the rickshaws. He has made an effort to convince the people that if they want to see a decrease in the transportation fare, the only thing that can help them is their vote. If they take this matter seriously and caste the vote to the most eligible member, only then the country can prosper.

Text 3:

Main Text	Translation
<p>موت برحق ہے، کفن پہ شک ہے۔</p> 	<p>Death is certain; shroud is uncertain.</p>

Lexicalization: This text consists of two short sentences written in Urdu language. Both the sentences are interlinked with the theme of death.

Lexical Cohesion: Lexical cohesion has been observed in the following ways:

- Antonyms:** The words, ‘bar-haq’ and ‘shak’ are antonyms. The former one refers to something which is confirm, and the latter one refers to something which is doubtful.
- Collocation:** The word ‘bar-haq’ is a collocation. The two words, ‘bar’ and ‘haq’ tend to occur together.

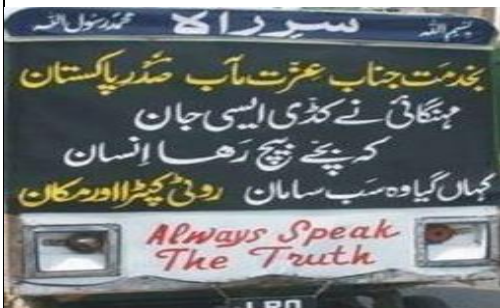
Transitivity: The following transitivity features can be observed in this text:

- Mental Process:** As mentioned in the second sentence, the driver’s perception is that after death the provision of shroud is doubtful. Therefore, the driver is the ‘sensor’.
- Verbal Process:** The driver is the sayer, every person who reads this text is the addressee, and the verbiage is, ‘maut bar-haq hay, kafan pay shak hay’.

- c. **Relational Process:** In first sentence, the carrier is ‘death’ and its attribute is that it is certain and cannot be avoided. In second sentence, ‘kafan’ (shroud) is the carrier.
- d. **Existential Process:** Death is the ultimate reality of every soul, this fact makes the text existential.

This text highlights the driver’s belief in death, and the fact that it has to approach on the destined day and time and no one can escape it. In the second clause, he is expressing his fear that getting a shroud before burial is doubtful. This statement can have multiple implications. Firstly, the driver is quite poor and is barely able to meet the basic requirements of his family. In such circumstances, if he dies, it is questionable that how his family would afford to buy him a shroud. Secondly, due to high rate of inflation, people have become materialistic and do not like to talk to anyone if they do not expect any benefit from each other. In a materialistic world like this, no one would buy his family a shroud for him.

Text 4:

Main Text	Translation
<p>بخدمت جناب عزت مآب، صدر پاکستان مہنگائی نے کڈی ایسی جان، بچے بیچ رہا ہے انسان کہاں گیا وہ سب سامان، روٹی کپڑا اور مکان</p> 	<p>To the Honorable President of Pakistan Price-hike has ravaged so completely, Men are selling their children; Where all the things have gone—bread, dress and shelter?</p>

Lexicalization: The first part written on the top depicts religious mindedness of the driver. The second part of the text is written in Urdu language and rhyming words have been used at the end of each verse. There is one Punjabi word in the second part: ‘kaddi’, which reveals that the writer belongs to the Punjab region. The third part is written in English language. The choice of text in English language reflects that writer is trying to adjust in the modern world by expressing himself in English language.

The text is divided into three parts. In the first part the writer has written ‘Bismillah, Sar-e-rah and Muhammad RasulAllah’. The second part is a message in the form of an application to the President of Pakistan. It is highlighting the fact that price hike has ravaged completely and thus made the life of people so miserable that they have started to sell off their own children, because they cannot provide them a proper meals. He is questioning the President about his vows of providing the basic necessities like food,

shelter and clothing, before getting elected as a president. The last part consists of one sentence in which the writer is advising the readers to always speak the truth.

Over-Lexicalization: Over-lexicalization has been observed in this text. The driver has expressed his concerns about the high rate of inflation in the country and its impact on a common man.


Lexical Cohesion: Lexical cohesion can be seen in the text. All the sentences in the second and third part are lexically connected. Rhyming words have been used at the end of every verse in the second part of the text, which make the text cohesive. These words are, 'Pakistan, jaan, insaan, samaan, makan'.

Transitivity: The following transitivity processes have been observed in this text:

- a. **Material Process:** In the text, a physical action can be noticed in the phrase 'bachay baich raha insaan'. Here 'insaan' is the actor, 'baich raha' is the process and 'bachay' is the goal. In the third part which is 'Always speak the truth', 'speak' is the process and 'truth' is the goal.
- b. **Verbal Process:** Verbal process can be seen in the two parts. The whole second part is the verbal process as the driver (on the behalf of Pakistan) is talking to the President of Pakistan. 'Pakistan' is the 'sayer', President of Pakistan is the addressee and all the content of the second part is the verbiage. The third part of the text also shows verbal process. The writer is the 'sayer', the readers are the addressees while 'Always speak the truth' is the verbiage.
- c. **Behavioural Process:** The text exhibits the behavioural process as well. The driver is playing the role of a responsible citizen who is worried and concerned about the plight of his country, and wants to create awareness among the people to raise their voice for the betterment of the country.

The present text is written in the form of an application to the President of the Pakistan. In this text he has described the effect of price hike on a common man. One of the inhumane truths that has been highlighted in this text is that many people have started to sell off their own children because they are not able to feed them.

Text 5:

Main Text	Translation
<p>سوچ رہا ہے پاکستان نہ کوئی دھندا نہ کوئی کام، رشوت عام، ٹریفک جام امریکہ کے ہم غلام، ساری دنیا میں بدنام ہوگا کیا میرا انجام، یہ سوچ رہا ہے پاکستان</p> 	<p>Pakistan is thinking No business, no job; bribery rife, traffic jammed All slave to America; Disgraced all over the world What will be my end? Pakistan is thinking.</p>

Lexicalization: The text is written in Urdu language, in the form of a verse and consists of six verses. There are rhyming words at the end of each verse, which are ‘kaam, jam, ghulam, bad- naam, anjaam’. The text shows that the driver is deeply concerned about the existing problems that Pakistan is facing nowadays.

Over-lexicalization: Over-lexicalization can be seen in the text as the driver has used numerous examples to describe different socio-economic problems that Pakistan is currently facing. The use of words like, ‘Traffic jam, ghulam, badnam’, exposes the dreadful socio-economic condition of Pakistan.

Lexical Cohesion: Lexical cohesion can be seen in the text. All the sentences in the first part are lexically connected. The two forms of lexical cohesion have been observed in the form of:

- Repetition:** The phrase ‘soch raha hay Pakistan’ has been repeated twice.
- Collocation:** The word ‘Badnam’ is a collocative expression used in the text.

Transitivity: The following transitivity processes have been observed in this text:

- Mental Process:** In the phrase, ‘soch raha hai Pakistan’ ‘Pakistan’ is the sensor and ‘soch raha hai’ is the phenomenon.
- Verbal Process:** In the entire text, the driver is the ‘sayer’, the readers are the addressees, while ‘always speak the truth’ is the verbiage.
- Relational Process:** In the verse, ‘amreeka k hum banay ghulam’, ‘hum’ is the carrier, ‘ghulam’ is the attribute and ‘amreeka’ is the possessor.

- d. **Existential Process:** The writer is talking about the present situation of Pakistan therefore it exhibits existential process.

Personification: Pakistan has been personified in this text, as it is mentioned that ‘Pakistan is thinking’, and thinking is a human attribute.

With the help of this text the writer has mentioned some of the currently prevailing socio-economic problems and warned the people about the future of this country. The driver has personified Pakistan, as if it is a human figure, who is extremely upset about his own condition. He has stated three major problems in this country, which are joblessness due to job recession, bribery and traffic congestion on the roads. It is further contemplating that we have enslaved ourselves to America by taking huge loans. Due to foreign interference, Pakistan has suffered enormous damage to its economy. We have been disgraced throughout the world because of currently prevailing social problems and moral degradation. At the end, the driver has advised the readers of his text to speak the truth always, and raise their voice for the betterment of their country.

5. Conclusion

The current study undertook the discourse analysis of the vehicular discourse in Pakistan. The study was undertaken from socio-linguistic perspective. It was a qualitative research. In this research the drivers have been chosen as the representatives of a layman in Pakistan. The data was randomly collected from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, and was analyzed according to Janks (2005) rubrics for linguistic analysis. The lexical features that were focused upon during the analysis of data included lexicalization, over lexicalization, re-lexicalization, lexical cohesion, transitivity analysis and the use of personification, metaphors and similes. The findings of the research have been discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

The first linguistic item that was analyzed in the data was lexicalization. It refers to the selection or choice of words. The study revealed that the choice of language for the writing of texts is usually Urdu. It was observed that most of the texts were written in Urdu language. Only one text employed the use of Punjabi language, while another text employed the use of Urdu and Punjabi both.

It was observed that most of the texts were short, consisting of two to three short phrase or sentences. There was only one text which was considerably large. It was also noted that some of the texts were in the form of poetic verses, usually comprising of two verses. In longer texts, the use of rhyming words at the end of each clause, phrase or verse was noticed. The short texts also showed the use of rhyming words.

The second lexical feature that was studied in the texts was over-lexicalization. It was observed in very few cases, since the texts are quite short. It was witnessed that rickshaws have longer texts written on them and are evident of the use of over-lexicalization. In order to explain the theme of their text, they over-lexicalized the texts using different words or by supplementing it with examples. For instance, in a text written on a rickshaw, the driver says, ‘baray patton walay darakht laga lo sahib, aanay wala budget awami choray ga na pant pajami’. In this the writer has used different analogies to discuss the idea of inflation and soaring prices of the goods in a witty manner.

Re-lexicalization was the third lexical feature that could be found in only one text. It was a long text and in order to create a rhyme scheme in alliance with the preceding phrase, the word 'pajamas' was re-lexicalized as 'pajami', which is not used otherwise in spoken or written language. Therefore, it can be said that re-lexicalization was not very much apparent in Vehicular Discourse.

The next lexical feature that has been analyzed is 'lexical cohesion' which has been noticed in all the texts on public transport vehicles. All the texts were lexically cohesive. The lexical cohesion was observed in terms of repetitions, collocations and the use of metaphors and similes. Repetition could be seen in terms of synonymous and antonymous words. The use of metaphors has also been noticed and is fairly common in the texts on Pakistani vehicles. Personification is a linguistic feature, that is not a part of Janks (2005) rubric, but it is highlighted and explained since its use is very much evident. In a text written on a rickshaw, highlighting socio-economic problems, it was written, "soch raha hay Pakistan", Pakistan has been personified as an individual who is struggling with socio-economic crises.

From the current research, it was concluded that transitivity is the most common feature of linguistic analysis. All the texts that were selected for analysis showed different transitivity processes, including material, mental, verbal, relational, behavioral and existential processes. For instance: Material processes expressed some kind of physical activity, as mentioned in the text, "aanay wala budget na awami choray ga, na pant pajama". According to this text, government is the 'actor' who is going to announce the budget, whereas the Pakistani citizens are the 'goal' who are going to be negatively affected by this action. They will wear leaves instead of clothes, due to high rate of inflation.

Mental processes voiced the driver's observations, perceptions and feelings. For instance, the text, "Main Pakistan ka mehenti shehri hun or main halfan kehta hun kay maray mulk ka wazeer-e-azam chor hay", represents the driver's observation and perception about the charges of corruption on the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Verbal processes conveyed different actions such as requesting, telling, arguing or warning. For instance, in the text, the driver has warned the fellowmen about the alarming financial crises that would begin after the announcement of the new budget.

Behavioural processes expressed different behaviours like mourning, enjoying, regretting etc. The texts do not employ much use of behavioural processes. However, one of the texts shows the behaviour of the driver that he feels distressed and deprived because he cannot afford to take the financial responsibility of his beloved because of his meagre salary.

Vehicular discourse exhibits the use of Existential processes by describing the existing economic condition of a common man due to inflation and poverty in Pakistan.

From this research, it was concluded that all these processes constitute the transitivity system of language, which belongs to the experiential metafunction. Hence, it can be said that transitivity analysis describes how language interprets our experience of the world around us. These findings relate to my third research question in the current study.

Focusing on the social aspect of this research, it was brought to notice that public transport drivers have played a crucial role in highlighting the most pressing issue of inflation through vehicular discourse. It has been found that such problems have been highlighted mostly by rickshaw drivers, and they have expressed their deprivation from the basic

necessities of life by writing longer texts on their vehicles. For instance, a driver wrote a text in the form of an application to the President of Pakistan, expecting that somehow his concerns would get delivered to him and he may take some action to rectify the problems of a common man. He has mentioned that due to high rate of inflation, people are unable to feed their children, therefore, they sell them off to rich people who engage them in child labour. He urges upon the President that before getting elected he had vowed to provide basic necessities (i.e., food, clothing and shelter) to every citizen, and now he has forgotten his vows. Actually, through this text the driver has highlighted miserable life of a layman who does not have the access to the basic necessities of life. Not only this, the rickshaw drivers have specifically played a significant role in highlighting the problems that a common man is facing. They have highlighted these issues with an aim to bring them to the notice of the government, so that they can be rectified and the plight of this country and its people can be changed.

The conclusive findings of my research manifest the fact that the vehicular discourse in Pakistan is evident of the use of almost all linguistic features. There is careful selection of words, choice of language and each text carries a specific message for the readers. There is use of similies and metaphors to make direct or indirect comparisons. Many drivers have used euphemized expressions to highlight harsh realities of Pakistani society in a lighter tone. The findings of my study show that vehicular discourse is a complete and new genre of study in the field of linguistics in a way that it has not been previously studied or analyzed linguistically in Pakistan. Janks' model (2005) has been comprehensive and reasonably supportive in analyzing the texts in my research in linguistic terms as it employs all the important linguistic features that can be taken into account to understand and analyze any linguistic text. However, some additional features such as similies, personification were not a part of Janks' model, but could not be ignored and were included in the analysis. The findings of the social aspect of this research reveal that vehicular discourse in Pakistan reflects a realistic image of socio-economic crises in Pakistan and the way people are struggling to make both ends meet.

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Navigating Modernity and Coloniality: Text World Theory Analysis of “Our Lady of Paris”

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Keywords

- Text World Theory
- Decolonial Studies
- Modernity
- Coloniality
- Cultural Identity
- Postcolonial Literature
- Narrative Analysis
- Socio-political Dynamics

Abstract

Literature from postcolonial societies often engages with the themes of modernity, coloniality, and cultural identity. Cognitive poetics, which emerged as a new critical lens, offers new insights into these themes. This research paper employs a cognitive framework, Text World Theory (TWT), to comprehensively analyze Daniyal Moeenuddin's short story “Our Lady of Paris”, focusing on its intricate narrative construction and thematic implications. While previous research works examine the text from postcolonial dimensions, current research focuses on the intersection of modernity and coloniality; the study delves deeper into the text's portrayal of the ambivalent attitudes of the colonial subjects. Through TWT, the study analyses the text's textual worlds and narrative advancements, unravelling the layers of meaning embedded within the story. Paul Werth (1990) and Joana Gavins (2007) developed this cognitive framework, which provides a framework for analysing the construction of fictional worlds, enabling a deeper understanding of how characters' mental representations and cognitive conceptualisation shape their actions and decisions. TWT allows the study to explore how characters navigate different text worlds. The narrative centres on the characters of Helen and Sohail, representing contrasting perspectives on modernity – one rooted in Western ideals and the other shaped by postcolonial struggles, and highlighting the complexity of identity in the postcolonial world. The findings showcase the internal conflict of postcolonial subjects who admire Western modernity yet remain unable to attain it. Through this cognitive lens, this study critically engages with themes of power, agency, and identity. The paper contributes to the discourse on decolonizing literary studies and offers insights into how narratives negotiate the legacies of colonialism in contemporary contexts.

1. Introduction

Interdisciplinary research has become an increasingly prominent area of scholarly inquiry. The researchers studying Pakistani Anglophone literature are examining how narrative addresses the legacies of colonialism and the complexities of the cultural and social reality of the contemporary world. Though cognitive poetics is a new emerging lens in literary studies, and researchers have applied it, but its use in postcolonial studies remains a relatively underexplored area. Existing research has focused on the issue of linguistic relativity, colonialism and identity in Pakistani Anglophone literature, such as research by Altaf et al. (2024) and Ali et al. (2024). Still, these often overlooked the cognitive mechanism in shaping characters' decisions identified and practical actions. The study addressed the gap and applied a cognitive lens to the study of "Our Lady of Paris" (2009) by Daniyal Moenuddin to explore how TWT can uncover the multiple text worlds within the story. This study deepens our understanding of the interplay between post-colonial consciousness and Western modernity by focusing on characters' mental constructions to navigate the themes of modernity and coloniality in the post-colonial context. This investigates the cognitive dimension and contributes to the ongoing debate on the enduring impact of colonialism on contemporary postcolonial societies.

Recently, the intersection of cognitive linguistics, decolonial studies and literature has increasingly attracted scholarly attention, and researchers have been exploring how narratives negotiate the complexities of colonial legacies and contemporary socio-cultural worlds. The study gets insights from the Cognitive poetics domain, and the prominent aspect of this study is to examine how texts engage with themes of modernity and coloniality. The researchers employ the cognitive poetic framework, Text World Theory (TWT), to explore the different worlds created within the text to present contrastive themes of modernity and coloniality. The notion of coloniality was first conceptualized by a Peruvian thinker, Anibal Quijano which is further developed by Walter Mignolo in his famous book, *Local Histories/Global Designs*. Mignolo (2011) argues that "The hidden agenda (and darker side) of modernity was coloniality" (p.47).

The researchers take *Our Lady of Paris* for the current study. This short story is the seventh story of the book; Daniyal Moenuddin's *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders*. It was first published in 2009, and it explores the complexities of life in contemporary Pakistani postcolonial society. It focuses mainly on the themes of class, identity and postcolonial psychological conflicts. "Our Lady of Paris" provides a rich tapestry for investigating the complexity of modernity and coloniality within a postcolonial context. The narrative is set against the backdrop of contemporary Pakistan. The worlds are woven around the characters grappling with colonialism's legacy while navigating the complexity of modernity.

The application of Text World Theory as a data analysis method yields the textual construction of multiple worlds within the narrative and discovers the discourse between Western modernity and indigenous cultural perspectives. The study interrogates how the characters negotiate their identities and relationships within these textual worlds. "TWT proposes that the meaning of a text is generated by the reader constructing a mental representation or text world. The reader processes textual cues by generating representative worlds constructed from the reader's background knowledge and personal embodied experience" (Werth, 1999, p. 28). The current research aims to deepen our

knowledge about the literature and its role in shaping and reflecting socio-cultural realities. The study situates the text within the broader context of postcolonial literature. It contributes to ongoing discussions surrounding cultural identity, modernity, and coloniality, an enduring impact of colonialism on contemporary societies.

Despite the research works on Pakistani Anglophone writings, there remains a notable research gap in the application of cognitive poetics within postcolonial studies, particularly the TWT. On the other hand, Text World Theory has been employed by many researchers, but no one yet employed it to uncover the cognitive mechanism shaping characters' decisions and actions. The current study is unique in the sense it entangles, different threads such as cognitive poetic, literature, and postcolonial studies.

1.1. Research Objectives

2. To explore how the characters' experiences and interactions reflect their ambivalent attitudes toward Western modernity.
3. To identify and examine the textual strategies employed in depicting the story's conflicting narratives of modernity and coloniality.

1.2. Research Questions

2. In what ways does the narrative of “Our Lady of Paris” engage with the interplay between Western modernity and postcolonial consciousness?
3. How does Text-World Theory facilitate the analysis of “Our Lady of Paris” in navigating the tensions between modernity and coloniality?
4. What textual elements contribute to constructing multiple text worlds in the narrative, and how do they reflect the complexities of cultural identity?

1.3. Significance of the Study

The study is interdisciplinary as it integrates cognitive poetics, decolonial approach, and the postcolonial literature to analyze “Our Lady of Paris”. This research sheds light on the intricate interplay between coloniality and modernity. It deepens our knowledge and understanding of how short fiction navigates complex socio-cultural themes, particularly in postcolonial contexts. By exploring the discourse between Western modernity and postcolonial consciousness, the study offers insights into broader problems of power, cultural identity, and the legacy of colonialism. The study enriches us with the specific text and provides valuable perspectives on the broader implications of literature in portraying challenges and prevailing sociocultural paradigms.

2. Literature Review

The present study is grounded in the intersection of literature, decoloniality studies, and cognitive poetics. It offers insights into the complex web of cultural identity, power relations, and historical legacies. Within cognitive poetics, Text-World Theory (TWT) has emerged as a valuable analytical tool for exploring the narrative construction of textual worlds and conveying meaning to readers.

2.1. Postcolonial Literature and Identity

This field encompasses a variety of literary works that examine colonial legacies and their enduring impact on cultural identity and representation. Scholars such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi K. Bhabha have pioneered postcolonial critical studies to understand how colonial discourse shapes the perceptions of the self and others (Said, 1978; Bhabha, 1994). Bhabha (1994) elaborates on and highlights the complex ideas of hybridity and cultural hybridity. Gayatri calls herself a deconstructive Marxist Feminist thinker, and Edward Said centres on the misrepresentation of the East. But recently, postcolonial studies has taken decolonial turn.

2.2. Decolonial Studies

Decolonial Studies is a new discipline, rapidly emerging, and it is based on theorists like Aime Cesaire, Walter Dignolo, Frantz Fanon, and Anibal Quijano who promote methodologies that challenge dominant narratives and amplify marginalised voices, fostering alternative perspectives on history, identity, and resistance. Dignolo argues that decoloniality seeks to dismantle Western-centric perspectives and hierarchies of knowledge, advocating for the recognition and empowerment of diverse epistemologies (Dignolo, 2011). Frantz Fanon's works emphasize the transformative potential of literature in decolonizing minds and societies, asserting that colonialism distorts colonizers' and colonized people's psyches and social structures (Fanon, 1963). Together, their theories contribute to a critical framework that interrogates colonial legacies and promotes narratives of liberation and empowerment.

2.3. Modernity and Coloniality

The dialectic of modernity and coloniality forms the central theme in decolonial studies. Scholars such as Walter D. Dignolo and Anibal Quijano examined how coloniality persists in the contemporary socio-cultural context. According to Dignolo (2011), "the hidden agenda (and darker side) of modernity was coloniality" (p. 47). Their concept of colonial modernity emphasises how Western notions of progress, development, and identity are intertwined with colonial power structures that perpetuate hierarchies of knowledge and marginalize Indigenous epistemologies. The current study employs these notions of postcolonial and decolonial studies along with cognitive poetics, in which the text world theory is a good model for analyzing the cognitive side of the text and the reader.

2.4. Text World Theory

Paul Werth developed this theory, which provides a framework for analyzing the construction of fictional worlds within literary texts. According to Werth (1999), 'TWT proposes that the meaning of a text is generated by the reader constructing a mental representation or text world. "The reader processes textual cues by generating representative worlds constructed from the reader's background knowledge and personal embodied experience" (p. 28). TWT allows the study to explore how characters navigate different worlds of the text. The meanings are interpreted through the intersections of various imaginary worlds. Textual worlds are connected to the large, diverse world where socio-cultural ideas are used.

2.5. Critical Scholarship

Exploring Daniyal Mueenuddin's short stories through various critical lenses has provided valuable insights into Pakistan's socio-political and cultural landscape. There have been extensive scholarly studies into the issues of linguistics, identity and postcolonial identity in Pakistani Anglophone literature. However, these research works often overlook the cognitive processes underlying the construction of worlds of stories. For example, Altaf et al. (2024) explored colonial legacies and identity. However, their study does not fully incorporate the cognitive angle to examine how these theories are represented through the mental constructions of the text world. Similarly, Ali et al. (2024) focused primarily on linguistic relativity, and Gohar et al. (2023) investigated the interplay between poetry and art. Malik et al. (2022) evaluated the language pragmatically in Parveen Shakir's translated poetry. On the other hand, Batool et al. (2022) explained how language appropriation strategies empower postcolonial voices. The researchers Batool et al. study the conceptualization of sadness in the Urdu language through metaphors and their mapping. They used Khadija Mastoor's *Aangan* to show how sadness is metaphorically represented through sensory experiences and it supports both cultural and physiological embodiment of human emotions. Haq et al. examine Khalid Hosseini's fiction, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007), to explore its narrative structure. They employed Vladimir Propp's narrative theory to reveal the archetypal fairy tale structure of the novel. In another study, Altaf and Batool (2024) examined cognitive strategies of decoloniality in *The Golden Legend* (2017); they focused on how the text incorporated Pluriversity, epistemic disobedience and border thinking as strategies to challenge the colonial matrix of power. The study employed a lens of decoloniality to highlight the potential of fostering alternative narratives to amplify the marginalized voices on the global stage. These papers employed frameworks from cognitive poetics but with different approaches; the current study employed TWT to explore postcolonial identity and modernity.

Another researcher, Waheed (2017), employed Marxist criticism to analyse the socioeconomic factors depicted in *Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (2009). This analysis revealed the profound impact of economic pressures on shaping characters and societal norms. It underscored the urgent need for societal changes to address these forces' ramifications on individuals' lives. Similarly, Tariq (2018) focused on portraying the feudal system in Punjab, Pakistan, within Mueenuddin's narratives, drawing parallels with Marx and Engels' discussions on class struggles. Tariq advocated for increased awareness and literature addressing this issue by highlighting the persistent presence of feudalism in rural Pakistan. Building on these socioeconomic analyses. On the other hand, Nazir et al. (2022) examined the cultural representation of rural Pakistan in Mueenuddin's work through a postcolonial lens. Their study explored the global commodification of cultural differences and authenticity challenges in the postcolonial world, shedding light on the complexities of identity formation in contemporary society.

Shazia Sadaf (2014) delved into the portrayal of Pakistani masculinity in *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (2009), elucidating the shift from colonial power dynamics to post-colonial corruption and its impact on male identity. Through themes of death and rebirth, Sadaf metaphorically unpacked the evolving notions of masculinity within Pakistani society. Further enriching the discourse but Hai (2014) examined the representation of domestic servants as central figures in Mueenuddin's narratives, emphasizing their vulnerability, agency, and interiority within the context of Pakistan's postcolonial feudal system. By evoking empathy and encouraging ethical action, Mueenuddin's stories aimed to amplify the voices of marginalized individuals striving for agency amidst structures of power.

Finally, Javaid et al. (2021) explored the concept of hybridity and identity crisis in Mueenuddin's stories "Our Lady of Paris" and 'Lily.' Their study illuminated the complexities of colonial identity and the experience of multiple cultural identities in the postcolonial context, further expanding the critical discourse surrounding Mueenuddin's literary oeuvre.

2.6. Research Gap

Despite the extensive research on *In Other Room, Other Wonders* (2009, which ranges from linguistics analyses to Marxist studies, No scholar explored the cognitive mechanism that shapes the characters' decisions, actions, and cultural identity in the postcolonial context. The current research primarily focuses on the text's cognitive dimensions to fill this gap.

3. Research Methodology

The present study emphasizes a qualitative approach informed by Text World Theory to examine 'Our Lad of Paris' through the lens of modernity and coloniality. The Qualitative methodology provides an in-depth study of textual elements and narrative structure. It helps us understand the complex themes and dynamics within the text. We have taken "Our Lady of Paris" for the study due to its narrative with rich thematic complexity and its engagement with postcolonial issues, particularly its tension between modernity and coloniality. The story within the broad Pakistani Anglophone literature provides an ideal case study to explore cognitive worlds and their struggle with identity, which aligns perfectly with research objectives. Moeenduddin's *In Other Room, Other Wonders* collection may deal with history and colonialism. Still, "Our Lady of Paris" stands out due to its profound psychological portrayal of complex mental landscapes and identity shifts. This makes this story an ideal text to explore the cognitive and psychological dynamics of characters struggling to cope with modernity and coloniality.

3.1. Data Collection

The study's primary text is "Our Lady of Paris", a short story from the collection *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* (2009). The narrative will be examined closely to identify narrative strategies, structure, textual cues, and thematic motifs relevant to the study objectives.

3.2. Textual Analysis

The text will be studied using the Text-Word Theory (TWT), which provides a framework for classifying and identifying textual worlds and helps us explore constructed fictional worlds. The researcher will apply TWT to identify narrative-advancing propositions, textual clues, and inferences to map the textual worlds created with the story. The data is analyzed by mapping the various mental representations that emerge in response to the narrative. The data analysis is structured in the following parts: discourse word, text word, word switches, and modal worlds.

3.3. The Text World (Matrix World)

The text constructs this initial primary world by the world-building elements within the text (characters, locations, time, and objects) and function-advancing propositions as building blocks to form the story's setting and atmosphere. It is also called the matrix world that moves the narrative forward.

3.4. World Switches

This occurs when the narrative shifts focus from one character, time or place to another. The text creates sub worlds, with their own set of rules, events and characters. This allows the story to explore the conflicts between different characters, beliefs, values and cultural contexts. According to Werth (1999), world switches create new worlds that portray a struggle between different world views.

3.5. Modal Worlds

Modal worlds represent the hypothetical epistemic, or desire driven realms where characters express their beliefs, desires, and internal struggles. It expresses cognition of the characters, their motivation, and their emotional reactions. There are epistemic modality, the characters, knowledge and beliefs and boulaemic modality, their wishes, and desire.

3.6. Discourse World

It connects the narrative to the wider outside social, cultural and historical context. In the case of *Our Lady of Paris*, this world addresses the themes of coloniality, modernity and the tension between Western and postcolonial conceptions of modernity.

In the Data Analysis part, the study focuses on identifying world-building elements within each text world. Such as location, enactors, time and objects. These elements help the researchers as cues and markers that build each world; and also propel the narrative forward through function-advancing propositions. Through the identification of different worlds, such as the matrix world, world switches, modal worlds and discourse world, the study traces the way these elements interact to produce meanings. The text is a space where conflicts of modernity and coloniality are not merely displayed but lived and it is evident when characters navigate the enduring legacy of colonization in their pursuit of freedom, belonging and identity.

3.7. Decolonial Lens

TWT provides the framework, but the interpretation will be done from a decolonial lens, particularly the works of Walter Dignolo and Nasir Abbas Nayyar. By applying the decolonial lens, the study aims to connect the text to the larger discourse world and to discover the hidden colonial debates of modernity and colonial modernity, which is coloniality.

The study acknowledges that to capture the full complexity of the socio-political and cultural dimensions of the text, the TWT may be limited in capacity because it primarily focuses on mental representations and textual structures. To mitigate this issue, the paper included decolonial approach and Text world theory to provide a more comprehensive balanced analysis. It is a qualitative study largely based on interpretation; the researchers

also accept their own biases regarding modernity and coloniality as they are members of postcolonial society and will try their best not to overshadow the pattern of characters, identities, and internal conflict.

3.8. Theoretical Framework

The study integrates Text-World Theory (TWT) with concepts from decolonial studies, particularly Walter Mignolo and Nasir Abbas Nayar's perspectives, to examine the short story "Our Lady of Paris" within the context of modernity and coloniality.

3.9. Decolonial Studies

Walter Mignolo and Anibal Quijano (2024) invented the ideas of coloniality, decoloniality, and the darker side of Western modernity and laid the foundation of decolonial studies. This field incorporates the critical lens to study how narrative reflects perpetual colonial power dynamics and epistemic hierarchies. They introduced their groundbreaking decolonial ideas in significant works such as *On Decoloniality* (2018), *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* (2011), *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* (1995), *Local Histories/Global Designs* (2000), *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations* (2021), and *Aníbal Quijano: Foundational Essays on the Coloniality of Power* (2024). Decolonial writers criticize and challenge Western-centric perspectives and highlight colonialism's ongoing legacies in shaping contemporary socio-cultural discourse. The researcher also takes insights from a renowned Pakistani decolonial critic, Nasir Abbas Nayar, to study the debate of modernity and coloniality.

3.10. Modernity and Coloniality

The study is centred around the two central concepts of decolonial debate, modernity and coloniality, as proposed by Anibal Quijano, Maria Lugones, Walter Mignolo, and Nasir Abbas Nayar. Traditionally understood as progress and development, modernity is examined through a decolonial lens to reveal its entanglement with the colonial power structure and epistemology hierarchies. "The hidden agenda (and darker side) of modernity was coloniality" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 47). Coloniality refers to the enduring effects of colonialism on the socio-cultural, political, and economic system, shaping country identities and the knowledge system.

3.11. Text World Theory (TWT)

It was proposed by Paul Werth (1999) and further developed by Joanna Gavings (2007). It is a comprehensive framework for analyzing narrative texts by conceptualizing them as constructed mental representations or Text Worlds. According to Gavin (2007), the narrative creates immersive worlds with distinct characters, settings, events, and propositions, inflicting readers' cognitive processes and interpretations. The framework for analysis is based on the cognitive poetic lens. Text world theory (TWT), proposed by Paul Werth (1999), explains how readers' minds create mental representations of events while processing literature. The researchers employ TWT in this paper to explore the modernity and coloniality in the text of "Our Lady of Paris". TWT says that text worlds exist, mental constructs formed by readers to perceive and conceptualize literary narratives. "TWT proposes that the meaning of a text is generated by the reader constructing a mental representation or text world. The reader processes textual cues by generating representative

worlds constructed from the reader's background knowledge and personal embodied experience" (Werth, 1999, p. 28). TWT has three interconnecting levels: The engagement level, the mental representation level, and the sub-world level.

The first level deals with the engagement of two or more participants in the language event. It can be face-to-face or distanced communication or in the form of text, where distance is temporal. The participants communicate with personal backgrounds such as world knowledge, intentions, memories, motivation, and culture. These influence text engagement and affect the negotiation process with the text and its meaning.

The second level of text world theory analysis is the mental representation level. At this level, the reader constructs a mental representation or text world to process the literature. The cues in the text serve to stimulate the reader's emotions and memories. Through his schemas, the reader infers the meanings of the narrative. The reader experiences the text in their mind by creating representative worlds. Personal embodied experience and background knowledge of the world and culture are vital in generating the mental world. Different meanings by the other readers may be perceived from the exact text. The precise textual cues may create and develop multiple meanings for various readers. A single reader may conceive different worlds from the precise text while reading at other times.

The sub-world level is the third and final level of text-world theory (TWT) analysis. It is also known as New Worlds. The main world is also called the matrix world; many other worlds that depart from this are created once constructed. These newly built worlds can be classified into two subtypes: world-switches and modal worlds. Moralisation in the discourse resulted in the modal worlds. We can divide modal worlds into three types: Deontic modality, Boulomaic modality, and epistemic modality.

The narrative showcases epistemic modality by displaying the characters' knowing, beliefs, and thinking. It also deals with the dimensions of possibility and probability. "The third level of TWT analysis is the sub-world level, which includes world-switches and modal worlds. World switches occur when the central focus of the narrative is switched, and a new world is created. Modal worlds are created due to moralization in discourse and are further divided into deontic, boulomaic, and epistemic modalities" (Gavins, 2007, p. 64). Paul Werth's book, "Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse", shows the applicability of the TWT to both fictional and factual works. This framework provides a cognitive model to understand the mental process of the readers while reading the literature. It talks about how the readers process the literature cognitively. It studies and analyses the selected work in totality. It considers text as well as the content of the text. TWT is a cognitive poetic framework applicable to a wide range of texts. By using this, we can understand and process literary works better. It studies readers' representation of the text in their minds. Paul Werth enlightens us on this subject and says, "TWT is a cognitive model for processing literature that focuses on how readers create dynamic representations of events in their minds. It is useful and applicable to factual and fictional works and enables the examination of their entirety by taking text and context" (Werth, 1999, p. 1).

• Key Points of the Framework

The study employs Text World Theory (TWT) as a framework to investigate Our Lady of Paris's fictional discourse through three interconnected levels

- i. **Discourse World:** it is the larger outer level which connects the text to the broad discourse of history, society and culture. It is the context of the communication event.
- ii. **Text World:** in the text, each character constructs the mental representations to understand the discourse, which is shaped by language choices, and background knowledge of the character.
- iii. **Sub-Worlds:** these are additional worlds, which are created through shifts in place, time, and perspectives, for example, Word-switches (e.g. flashbacks) and modal worlds (e.g. potential or hypothetical scenarios) Modernity/Coloniality, Text World Theory & “Our Lady of Paris”

In the short fiction, “Our Lady of Paris” (2009), Text World Theory (TWT) is an analytical tool to dig into the narrative’s exploration of coloniality and modernity within the context of postcolonial Pakistan. TWT provides a framework to examine how readers construct mental representations/text worlds from textual cues. It integrates their background knowledge and personal experiences (Werth, 1999). The researchers find this framework apt to scrutinize the interplay between Western ideals of modernity and the enduring effects of colonialism on cultural identity and socio-political dynamics. The narrative of “Our Lady of Paris” unfolds through the contrasting perspectives of Helen and Sohail. They symbolize the clash between the Eurocentric concept and the Indigenous response to colonial legacies. Through text world theory, the study examines Moeenuddin’s narrative construction of multiple textual worlds. It highlights how characters navigate these spaces and negotiate their identities amidst the complexities of postcolonial conditions. The study aligns with the decolonial perspectives established by Walter Mignolo and Aníbal Quijano (2014), who critique coloniality, the darker idea of Western modernity. This analysis enriches our understanding of how literature evolves and reflects the ongoing discourse surrounding modernity and colonialism in the contemporary era by employing TWT within the decolonial framework.

4. Data Analysis

The researchers divide this part of the paper into the text and discourse worlds. The text worlds are the mental mapping of the text. The researchers in this analysis also chart the reader's mental journey from different worlds and the structure of the text worlds. The researchers table the narrative into text worlds, such as matrix, world switches, and modal worlds. In the discourse world, the themes of modernity and coloniality, traced in the text world, are discussed and connected to the more considerable debate of decolonial discourse. Each text world is built by world-building elements given in the analysis. Some function-advancing propositions are addressed during the mapping of the narrative.

4.1. The Text World

The layer of TWT, known as the text world or matrix world, consists of the mental representations of the text. In Table 1 when we encounter the line, “Sohail and Helen had begun dating two years earlier at Yale” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p. 130). The text world is built with world-building elements by mentioning places, objects, and characters. The function-advancing propositions are used to propel the narrative. The narrative exposes the relationship between Sohail and Helen. The suspense is created when the issue of their

future is hinted when “They had agreed to put the question of their future in abeyance...” (Mueenuddin, 2009, p.143). They belong to two different cultures and have different versions of modernity. The narrative also switches to the matrix world and the modal worlds of desires and wishes of the characters. These modal worlds express the association of their version of modernity. Paul Werth's book, *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse*, describes interactions between the text and the mental process that constructs the text world. “The construction of a text world is not a solitary process but is guided by the language of the text and the interactions between the text and the reader's mental processes” (Werth, 1995, p. 16).

The narrative shifts the location from New York to Karachi, Pakistan, the family mansion of Sohail. The big house signifies Sohail's status as a landowning class in postcolonial Pakistan. Sohail's mother's anxiety over the love affair between Sohail and Helen portrays the limitations of their colonial modernity.

Table 1

World Building Elements

Time: two years earlier

Location: New York, Yale University.

Enactors: Helen, Sohail

Function Advancing Propositions

- “Sohail and Helen had begun” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.110).
 - He (had returned) to his home” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.146)
 - They (had agreed)she finished school” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.146).
-

This setting and the story's events in Karachi introduce the colonial modernity in postcolonial Pakistan. Sohail's parents are concerned about their son's desire to marry Helen, who belongs to American Culture. The subsequent story explains that Harounis, who are postcolonial subjects, admire Western modernity, but at the same time, they are anxious. It reflects the colonized mind that has been only fed the unique text of modernity by the British rulers in the past. As Macaulay states: “We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and intellect” (Ashcroft, 2003, p. 430). Harouni's family accumulated countless wealth after

independence but never experienced the true sense of modernity. Because of their colonial past and colonial matrix of power, they are unable to find their true independent self and are struggling with coloniality's weight.

The narrative then introduces Sohail's Mother, Rafia, and a once beautiful and influential woman from a prominent, cultured family in Lucknow, who is a patriarchal woman. She is also suffering from the anxiety of colonial modernity. However, the colonial subconscious constraints have curbed her personality, but she suffers from the tyranny of the patriarchal society and the colonial matrix of power. In the discourse world, the text criticizes colonial modernity, saying that no one in this world of suffocation is free and satisfied, and everyone desires freedom but cannot find it due to the invisible enduring effects of colonization of the mind.

Rafia and Amjad Harouni idealize Western modernity, including freedom and choice. Helen's character visibly portrays this. The narrative portrays that the Pakistani elite desires the Western way of life but is inwardly afraid of embracing modernity. When he informed his mother about his decision to visit Paris to meet Helen "she pursed her lips but said nothing" (Mueenuddin, 2009, 143). The narrative exposes the internal paradox of the landowning class of postcolonial Pakistan. "Sohail had vaguely committed himself to joining his father's sprawling business a sugar mill, farmlands, and much else" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p. 143). Sohail represents the new generation that, unlike their ancestors, is moving to embrace modernity in its proper form. There is conflict in the minds of postcolonial subjects; they admire modernity but are always hesitant to be absorbed by it.

The text highlights colonial modernity's negative side. Function-advancing propositions propel the narrative, and one can visualize both cultural worlds and feel the conflict between them. The preceding world is built on word-building elements: every text world is built on similar elements.

Table 2

World Building Elements

Time: Fall

Location: Karachi, Pakistan

Enactors: Sohail, Rafia, Amjad

Objects: mansion, the old house, Banyan tree

Function Advancing Proposition

- "He lived that fall" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p.110)
- "When he announced...., she pursed her lips but said nothing" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p.110).
- "He had been avoiding her" ... "I thought we might come to Paris. She said this brightly" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p.110).

Then again, the narrative shifts from Karachi to Paris. Paris is painted as a world of freedom, love, fantasy, and romance. In Saint Louis, Sohail arranges an apartment and cleans it before Helen arrives. He carries her bag on his head up to the sixth-floor garret, which shows his love and desire for Helen. The text showcases modernity, signified by liberty, fraternity, and equality. The author describes the rain and a scene of a river from the window, depicting Helen's dream world, free from colonial modernity, and she can visualise and feel ecstasy. Sohail watches Helen getting dressed for the first dinner with his parents and inhales the scent of her beautiful hair. They walk past in front of Notre Dame and along the left bank of the Seine; the name Notre-Dame translates to "Our Lady," referring to the Virgin Mary. This connects the cathedral to Mary, a central figure in Christianity, symbolizing purity, maternal love, and intercession; it symbolizes their love which has a power that can dissolve their cultural differences. The text builds a world that shows how love is an emotion that links people, no matter their religion, colour, or culture. Helen is depicted as a free individual ready to choose her future course of life, while Sohail's parents worry about losing their son and are not prepared to give him the freedom to choose. Sohail leans down and kisses Helen when she says, "You know, the Seine does not divide Paris; it keeps the city together. It is just the right width, not a little stream but a public place in the heart of the city" (Mueenuddin p. 133). The river symbolizes love that unites them and can break the binaries and boundaries of cultures.

Table 3

World Building Elements

Time: just before Christmas

Location: Paris, Saint Louis

Enactors: Sohail, Helen, Rafia, Amjad Hourini

Objects: Notre Dame, River Seine

Function Advancing Propositions

- "Sohail had borrowed an apartment" (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.111).
- "Arriving in Paris"" Sohail cleaned the apartment" (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.111).
- "After collecting Helen"....."Sohail carried her bag on his head" (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.111).

When Sohail and Helen meet Harounis, Sohail's parents, Helen demonstrates self-confidence and integrity by extending her hand and introducing herself directly to Sohail's

mother with a flat palm and unwavering eye contact. This exemplifies modernity's emphasis on individuality and self-respect. Meanwhile, Rafia, Sohail's mother, welcomes them with a stiff smile, and the reader can sense that she feels some hidden anxiety in this encounter. As they admire the apartment's high ceilings and delicate furnishings, a woman sings in French on the stereo, and Rafia lights candles. Sohail's father, who had previously left the room, returns and informs them, "It belongs to Brigadier Hazari said his father, sitting down again in front of the fire" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p.147).

The narrative progresses as Amjad and Helen discuss the contrasting cultures of America and Pakistan. The reader discerns that Sohail faces a decision between two worlds, modernity and coloniality. Helen asserts that the American way of life has a structure that would be suitable for Sohail to live in. On the other hand, Amjad Harouni holds Americans in high regard, admiring their freedom and the liberty to live as they please. He expresses, "I admire the Americans tremendously" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p. 136) and wishes he had been born in America as it is the happiest place in the world for him. When Helen asks him why he is American, he responds,

I sometimes feel that the one thing I have missed is the sensation of being free, doing precisely what I like, going where I want, and acting as I like. I suspect that only an American ever feels that. Your families do not weigh you down, and you are not weighed down by history. (Mueenuddin, 2009, p.136)

The central theme of the story is painted with these words: the conflict and anxiety in the minds under the influence of the colonial past. The author portrays this through Amjad Harouni's voice, who expresses his admiration for American culture and modernity and his mental dissatisfaction and anxiety about colonial modernity because it is a caricature of modernity. Despite being one of the feudal who accumulated wealth through corrupt means, Amjad still yearns for freedom and sees salvation in modernity. Internally, they are divided. They admire modernity but fear that Helen may take Sohail away from her modern world. This conversation and this reply from Amjad, father of Sohail, is the crux of this debate: modernity and colonial modernity.

Rafia surprises them with tickets for 'the Sleeping Beauty ballet' at the Garnier Opera on Christmas Eve. Sleeping Beauty is symbolic and significant. The colonised are sleeping due to the curse of colonial modernity, which The West wrote to conquer the colonised minds to loot their lands and plunder the resources. The colonised need a kiss of modernity to awaken again and discover their proper position, culture, and potential.

On New Year's Eve, Sohail and Helen rent a car to spend time in the countryside. When they return to Paris, they find that the Harounis are still in town. After exchanging Christmas gifts, Rafia invites Helen for tea at Hotel George V to spend some time alone. Both women meet to discuss Sohail and his future. Rafia feels jealous of Helen's influence on Sohail. They argue about Sohail's future. Symbolically, it is a debate between modernity and colonial modernity. Rafia argues that Sohail would lose his identity in American society and might adopt a subservient attitude. Helen senses that Rafia and their colonial modernity mindset would not leave Sohail to live his choice of life. The readers experience the modal worlds of desires and hypotheses. Helen's conflict is expressive in her randomly selecting the place to spend the night at an old inn named Beaugency, symbolizing their crumbling relationship. The reader senses the impending tragic end when Helen softly utters, "I cannot believe Paris is over" (Mueenuddin, 2009, p. 154), aware of

Sohail's proximity. Helen embodies Western cultural traits, taking independent decisions and responsibility, while Sohail belongs to the world of coloniality.

Table 4

World Building Elements

Time: Christmas Eve, Christmas

Location: Paris, Opera, Quai des Grands, HÂtel George V, Beaugency, inn in Montresor

Enactors: Sohail, Helen, Amjab, Rafia

Objects: The Necklace, Sleeping Beauty at the Garnier

Function Advancing Propositions

- “Sohail sat watching Helen dressed” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.146)
- “Helen extended her palm”(Moeenuddin, 2009, p.113).
- “Helen and Sohail walked along the cold Seine” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.112).
- “While he recited, she looked at him” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.119).
- “Rafia had gotten tickets” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.119)
- “Sohail and Helen decided to rent a car and spend New Year’s Eve” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.122)
- “I do not know, cried Rafia, startling Helen” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.125).
- “Helen wandered away” (Moeenuddin, 2009, p.129).

4.2. The Sub-Worlds

The researchers analysed the sub-worlds in “Our Lady of Paris” (2009) through the Text-World Theory (TWT) framework. These sub-worlds are categorised into world switches and modal worlds. The first sub-world in the story as a world-switch occurs when the narrative's central focus is switched from one character to another. “World switches occur when the central focus of the narrative is switched, and a new world is created” (Werth, 1999, p. 47). The story starts with describing the protagonists, Sohail, who struggles to carry the weight of her family's expectations, and Helen, a symbol of modernity's Western version. “The first subworld begins when readers are introduced to her character, situation, and struggles” (Gavins, 2007, p. 78).

The narrative propels, and the world switches to a sub-world distinct from the earlier one. The characters from two different cultures struggle to accommodate in this context.

Professor Werth describes this phenomenon in these worlds: “The worldswitch creates a new sub-world distinct from the previous one, and it highlights the parallel struggles of two characters from different cultural backgrounds” (Werth, 1995, p. 62).

Another subworld in the narrative is the modal world. It is weaved through epistemic modality and revolves around the characters' beliefs, knowledge, and thinking. These text worlds narrate Rafia's cultural beliefs and class consciousness grounded in colonial modernity. Colonial modernity's values are expressed through opinions, beliefs, and wishes.

Boulmaic modality creates another sub-world, a world of wishes and desires. The narrative weaves the conflict between the desires of different characters. Helen represents the Western values of freedom and individuality. At the same time, Sohail struggles against his family constraints and dreams of becoming a painter despite the disapproval of his mother, who represents the colonial values of modernity.

These sub-worlds in the narrative structure give insights into the complex nature of modernity vs colonial modernity and debate how an individual is the product of history and culture. Although this story doesn't provide a clear end to the story, another story in the collection, Lily and 'A Spoiled Man' gives us information that the relationship between Helen and Sohail did not survive. Finally, Sohail had to marry Sonya, a woman from his social class and culture.

“Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet” (Rudyard Kipling).

However, East is not East, and West is not West. Still, both are epistemological constructs of colonial modernity, and the purpose was to separate them so that the so-called West could maintain its supremacy and hegemony.

Table 5

Narrative map of Text Worlds

Switched worlds	The matrix worlds	Modal worlds
Helen and Sohail's meeting at Yale University	Sohail is in Karachi with his parents.	Helen and Sohail's assumptions about their future (Epistemic world)
	Helen and Sohail meeting in Paris	Helen's Desires and fantasies about Paris and her future life with Sohail (Boulamaic World)
	Sohail's parents, Amjad Hourini and Helen's Meeting in Paris	Sohail's parents discuss Helen's freedom and American life (Epistemic world)

Helen and Rafia's meeting in a hotel in Paris	Helen and Raifa discussion about the future of Sohail (Epistemic world)
Helen and Sohail meeting in Paris	Amjad Hauronis's discussion with Helen about his desire to be born (Boulamaic world)

4.3. Discourse World

It is a world where text enters into the world of discourse. The central theme of the short fiction revolves around modernity and the values of autonomy and individuality of the person in society. Mueenuddin portrays a rural servant class of landowners with a colonial mentality, and K.K Harouni is the link in all eight stories. In his interview, Mueenuddin expressed his objective in writing these short stories: to communicate to Western readers about Pakistan and its society. His short stories are widely read and translated into 16 languages (Mueenuddin, 2009). “Our Lady of Paris” (2009) represents modernity and coloniality in symbolic form. Modernity is known in the West as liberty, equality, and freedom from constraints; on the other hand, colonial modernity is a different text written by the West to enslave non-Europeans to plunder their lands and loot their resources. They introduced the caricature of modernity in the colonised world with false promises of development and salvation. The text of “Our Lady of Paris” (2009) expresses the two different modernity versions, cued by linguistic expressions: the free world of modernity and colonial modernity, which is, in reality, coloniality, the world of constraints. The narrative's primary setting is Paris, considered one of the centres of fashion, literature, freedom, and love. Mustansar Hussain Tarar, a renowned Pakistani Urdu writer, states that Paris is the Mecca of literature. On the other hand, Pakistani rural society in the 70s to 90s was predominantly feudal and had a colonial legacy, which is corrupt. There was a wide gap between the rich and poor in Pakistan (Butt, 2009). Joanna Gavins' *Text World Theory: An Introduction* (2007) supports the idea that readers construct dynamic mental representations or text worlds as they read, continually updated and modified based on new textual cues. This is relevant to the data analysis of the article, as it suggests that the readers' construction of text worlds in response to the story may have been influenced by their background knowledge and experiences. “The readers' schemata are activated as they read, and they continually update and modify their text worlds as they receive new textual cues” (Gavins, 2007, p. 35).

The story “Our Lady of Paris” (2009) revolves around the negative influences of coloniality. Rafia, Sohail's mother, obstructs the growing romantic relationship between him and Helen, who has a different experience of modernity represented by freedom and self-reliance. The story highlights the ambivalent attitudes towards freedom and choice and how enduring legacies of colonialism persist in postcolonial Pakistan. The characters' attraction towards modernity and reluctance to adopt make them colonial subjects. “The

next night was Christmas Eve, and Rafia had gotten tickets for the ballet. Sleeping Beauty at the Gamier” (Mueenuddin, 209, p. 155). The postcolonial world is a sleeping beauty cursed by colonial modernity's magic. Colonisers are cut off from their past, history, and environment. They need a kiss of modernity to be reawakened to reclaim their authentic self.

4.4 Key Findings

Aspect	Details
Colonial Modernity	Characters’ cognition is portrayed through tensions between western modernity and colonial legacy in postcolonial Pakistan.
Cultural Paradox	Characters though admire Western modernity but they are unable to embrace it due to their colonial cognitive formation.
Symbolism of Paris	Paris has symbolic value which represents values of modernity. Paris is portrayed as Utopian dream of modernity and Karachi as a space of coloniality.
Narrative Structure	The internal conflict is showcases through construction of different mental worlds, when characters grapple with the complexity of coloniality and modernity.
Discourse	Characters from postcolonial background, struggle to break free from coloniality. The narrative discusses on discourse level, the themes of modernity and colonial modernity, which shows coloniality is not a thing of the past but a present reality. Colonials legacies continue to shape identities, which creates cognitive conflict and ambivalence
Decolonization of the Mind	The narrative suggests the need to decolonize the minds because the postcolonial subjects are suffering due to the conditioning of coloniality.

The text is mapped through the TWT framework, to analyze the conflict of modernity and coloniality. The characters are at a crossroads where they admire Western modernity and yet they are burdened by the baggage of colonialism. Every character from a colonial background is caught in the colonial matrix, there their view of the world is shaped by coloniality. The text implies that true modernity can be achieved through mental decolonization, and it is possible when individuals would break free from the oppressive structures of the past. In short we can say that TWT provides us a rich framework to explore the cognitive dimension of the characters to trace the themes. The study showcases the inherent psychosocial, and cultural struggle in postcolonial societies.

The study offers a contribution to both cognitive poetics and decolonial studies by showing the implication of the TWT to map the postcolonial literature. This shows the relevance of

the cognitive framework to unpack Pakistani Anglophone literature. This study calls for a dynamic reading of Pakistani fiction to understand the cultural conflicts, both internal and external, that shape the cognition of the postcolonial subjects who struggle and negotiate the legacy of colonization.

4. Conclusion

The characters of Sohail and Helen embody different attitudes towards modernity. Helen represents a Western concept of modernity expressed by individuality, freedom of choice, and rationality. On the other hand, Sohail, as a mentally colonised subject, grapples with the pressures and expectations due to his family and postcolonial background. The story pained the internal conflict by postcolonial subjects who admire Western modernity and are still unable to achieve it. The Western ideals attract Rafia, Amjad, and Sohail, all and yet simultaneously afraid of it. This conflict centres on Sohail's character, who is torn between his desire for Western modernity and his familial and societal obligations. His ambivalent condition expressed his internally colonised consciousness. Dialogues between different characters with symbolic imagery, such as in the opera's *Sleeping Beauty* and *Seine River*, serve as narrative devices to explore the themes of identity, belongings, and social expectation and their relation to modernity and coloniality. The interplay between modernity and coloniality is complexly woven through the narrative. TWT provides valuable insight into the complex nature of colonised subjects in postcolonial societies. It reveals the complex ways in which individuals negotiate their identities and relations with a changing socio-cultural landscape. The study also gives us insights into how the narrative constructs text worlds to portray the tensions inside the minds of the postcolonial subjects and their ambivalent attitude towards Western modernity. The text shows the negative enduring influences of colonisation. The story focuses on the issue of the ambivalent attitude of the colonial subjects and their love-and-hate relationship. It is a paradoxical situation. Characters are attracted and, at the same time, reluctant to adopt modernity. Moeenuddin shows how enduring legacies of colonialism persist in postcolonial Pakistan. Postcolonial subjects are still under the curse of colonialism.

Future researchers can apply TWT to a wide range of postcolonial texts. The internal conflicts and ambivalence toward modernity and coloniality can be studied within different cultural contexts and it would be an extension of this study. The study integrated different approaches to form a conceptual framework which can be used by future researchers to investigate more deeply the cognition of the postcolonial subjects in the literature of Global South

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Totalitarian Regime and the Three R's: Rebellion, Resistance, and Revolution in YA Dystopian Novels

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Keywords

- YA Fiction
- Dystopia
- Resistance
- Revolution
- Totalitarianism

Abstract

In the age of science and technological development, Young Adult (YA) literature has undergone a fascinating transformation. This article delves into the study of the post-apocalyptic YA dystopian fiction, A Whisper of Horses (2016) by Zillah Bethall and Outwakers (2018) by Fiona Shaw. The study employed Foucault's three fundamental concepts of disciplinary techniques, power/knowledge, and subjectification to understand the concepts of resistance, rebellion, and revolution. The textual analysis by closely analyzing the words, visuals, literary techniques, and relevant sections of the text highlights how young adults and their small acts of rebellion against the totalitarian regime snowball into a revolutionary movement. The young subjects represent a collective community that shares the same experiences and fosters the narratives to challenge the dominant oppressive powers. The study contributes to highlight the potential of YA dystopian fiction that can inspire critical thinking, social change, and collective effort against injustice.

1. Introduction

Young Adult literature is “fiction that deeply resonates with the unique experiences and challenges faced by adolescents” (What’s YAL). The prominent themes and issues that the young adult fiction addresses include urgent social and global issues such as liberty and self-determination, environmental destruction and looming catastrophe, questions of identity, and the increasingly fragile boundaries between technology and the self. The text is “directed at young readers, who are trying to understand the world and their place in it” (Arter, 2015). Talking about how YA literature is different from children’s literature, R. S. Trites, an expert in the study of YAL, opines that this genre of literature “tend[s] to interrogate social constructions, foregrounding the relationship between the society and the individual rather than focusing on self and self-discovery as children’s literature does” (18). Stefanie Van Melckebeke, differentiates between the characters in Dystopian fiction and young adult dystopian fiction stating, “...classic dystopian characters commonly are unable to rebel against the totalitarian regime, young adult dystopian protagonists are able to defy the system” (2018, p.18). YA literature has had a rich tradition since the 1940s and has attracted the interest of scholars and researchers. Over the years, a number of subgenres in YAL have emerged, and one such subgenre is YA dystopian fiction. The success of *Hunger Games*, *The Twilight Saga*, and *Divergent* as novels directed at young adult readers and their screen adaptations have led to the immense popularity of the genre. Osterland, in his research, states that a noticeable shift can be seen after the 1990s in YA dystopian novels, where the novels tend to address more serious and darker themes, including social and political problems including violence (120).

This article analyzes the two post-apocalyptic young adult dystopian novels, *A Whisper of Horses* by Zilah Bethall and *Outwalkers* by Fiona Shaw, exploring Michael Foucault’s concept of how, in a totalitarian regime, rebellion gives way to revolution. The term totalitarianism was first used by Benito Mussolini, who defined it as “Everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State” (Mussolini, 1932). Suggesting a state that holds the ultimate power over its subjects, in other words, is a sovereign model of power. Hannah Arendt sums up the idea in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* by stating, “The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the dedicated communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction, true and false, no longer exists” (Arendt, 1951).

This study brings critical attention to Young Adult Dystopian Fiction, which is often overlooked in academic research. While existing scholarship frequently analyses popular young adult dystopian works, especially those adapted into films, non-mainstream novels in this genre have yet to receive comparable critical and scholarly attention. Given the general lack of academic inquiry into non-popular young adult dystopian literature, this study makes a meaningful contribution by elucidating theoretical constructions of power and the young people’s struggles against it. Analyzing overlooked literary works expands scholarly discourse and enables more inclusive interpretations of how contemporary authors bring forth the struggles and resistance of the young generation in dystopian societies. The way they learn to negotiate with power, the existing power structure, and authority figures in their lives is the ultimate knowledge and skill that makes them complete and aware members of society.

1.1. Research Objectives

- To study the presence and nature of acts of defiance in the selected texts and the underlying dynamics of subject's rebellious actions against the totalitarian regime.
- To investigate and ascertain the subjects' awareness of their circumstances and individual acts of resistance that pave the way towards a collective revolutionary movement.

2. Literature Review

This section gives a critical review of the existing scholarly research on the selected texts, including Dystopian Fiction and Young Adult Fiction. It aims to lay a solid basis for the subsequent analysis by outlining the state of the research in this field and showcasing how the selected novels fit into and contribute to the broader discourse when evaluated through the framework of Foucault's concept of resistance and revolution.

Hashmi et al. (2021) in the deconstructive analysis of Adiga's *White Tiger* argue that the protagonist challenges and even restructures the power relations in his struggle of resistance against power exposing the despotic social and political order. Hussain and Azam (2021) through Marxist critique of *Manchild in the Promised Land* explain that the hegemony of the powerful is maintained through manipulative and discursive strategies. However they claim that this hegemony is faced with a strong resistance and is countered by more or less same manipulative tactics to counter the hegemony of the powerful groups.

Sean P. Connors (2017) explores the issue of monitoring in young adult dystopian fiction using the ideas of Michel Foucault and Michel de Certeau to analyze *Little Brother* by Corey Doctorow, the *Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins, and *Feed* by M. T. Anderson. His study focuses on how characters deal with authority and frequently switch between being compliant and being resistant. Darren Dillman's (2020) study investigates the essential roles that memory and technology play in promoting resistance and challenges to coercive means of control. The importance of public memory is emphasized to subvert the official state narratives. His research illuminates the importance of resistance in dystopian writing and the intricate relationships between memory, technological advances, and narrative structures in the genre (Dillman, 2020).

A similar concept was looked upon by Eva Solina Gultom and Syifa Salsabila (2023), who launched an investigation into the fundamental concepts of control and resistance in dystopian literature. Analyzing Cecelia Ahern's *Flawed* they explore how the government's control machinery including surveillance, limits subjects freedom. Their study reveals that dystopian stories serve as "strategies of warning," highlighting the effects of unresolved societal crises and drawing comparisons to totalitarian governments in the actual world (Gultom & Salsabila, 2023). Jill Westfal examined the thematic underpinnings of dystopian fiction norms and orders, control and manipulation, sacrifices, rebellion and resilience. In light of the review of related literature, it can be observed that the way young adults negotiate with the use of authority and control needs scholarly engagement. This paper delves into the study of young adult subjects in the totalitarian regimen.

3. Research Methodology

The theoretical framework of the present study has been adapted from Michel Foucault's theory of Biopolitics and Biopower. Further narrowing down the idea, in analyses of the concept of resistance and revolution, the study explores how power dynamics give rise to different forms of resistance. From the individual level to the collective revolutionary movements, Foucault's idea of disciplinary power and resistance against them is the main focus of the study. In *The Subject and Power*, Foucault provides insight into the modes of resistance and the possible underlying dynamics. He claims that this resistance is not just "anti-authority struggles" (Foucault, 1982, p. 780) against specific institutions but against the forms of power that shape individuals and their lived experiences. He says,

The main objective of these struggles is to attack not so much 'such or such' an institution of power, or group, or elite, or class but rather a technique, a form of power. This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. (1982, p. 781)

The analysis explores the working of power structures in the selected texts and the struggle of characters who navigate, resist, rebel, and give rise to a revolution against totalitarian powers. Focusing on overt and subtle forms and levels of resistance, the study also examines how the characters exercise resisting agency and what are the underlying dynamics behind their actions. The study emphasizes Foucault's three fundamental concepts of disciplinary techniques, power/knowledge, and subjectification to understand the concepts of resistance, rebellion, and revolution. The regime establishes boundaries of permissible behavior using bottom-up micro-tactics, a persistent and intensive effort, and the application of normalization techniques that reproduce subjects. The initiatives that sparked his early interest in biopolitics and those he later expanded, particularly the genealogical studies of governmentality and the topic of desire, are what we must seek if we are to create a notion of resistance. He makes the convincing argument in his work *Subject and Power* that these battle's primary goal is "to attack not so much such-or-such institution of power, or group, or elite, or class but, rather, a technique, a form of power" (Foucault, 1997, p.331). Stated differently, they contest the policies and discriminatory tactics that personalize the issue. The resisting struggles he discusses in *Society Must Be Defended* are primarily focused" (Foucault, 1976, p.331) against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way," much as state tactics attempt to control people's behavior. Some traits that the disputes have in common include their universal or global nature, their advocacy of the freedom to be oneself and to create alternative identities separate from ones that have been dictated to them, their concern for the issue of who we are, and their rejection of any approach that downplays individuality or make them "objects of power" (Foucault, 1975, p. 28) or "scientific or administrative inquisition." (Foucault, 1976, p.329) that ensures compliance with dictated rules and regulations.

With Celena Kusch's *Literary Analysis: The Basics* (2016) as a model, this study uses a qualitative close reading analysis approach to methodically find and examine themes and textual components pertaining to acts of defiance and the underlying dynamics governing them in the selected young adult dystopian texts. By responding to several queries, the model puts out a methodical literary text analysis. According to I.A. Richard's definition in

Practical Criticism, close reading is delving deeper into a text's meaning to see beyond its literal meaning. Richards refers to close reading as understanding a text's "overt meaning" as a collection of understandable phrases (1930, p. 13). However, to discern additional meanings and insight, one must go deeper into the text's implications, imagery, linguistic patterns, and structure. For literary analysis, close reading is a methodical, evidence-based approach. It offers a targeted, thorough textual analysis by closely analyzing the words, visuals, literary techniques, and sections of the text.

4. Data Analysis & Discussion

The analysis focuses on the rebellion, resistance, and revolution in the selected young adult dystopian novels *Outwalkers* by Fiona Shaw and *A Whisper of Horses* by Zillah Bethel. Foucault's theoretical concepts of resistance and power dynamics serve as an analytical tool that uncovers the subtle as well as overt forms of defiance against totalitarian rule. With characters paying more attention to their changing surroundings, a journey of self-awareness and potential for individual and collective rebellion can be seen in the selected texts, starting from small yet meaningful defiance by the young adults that works as a catalyst and a chain reaction that challenges the totalitarian status quo to more pronounced ways of rebellion. Foucault's concept of localized resistance helps explain this shift from individual acts of resistance to a revolutionary rebellion.

4.1 Rebellion and Resistance Leading to Revolution

The act of "rebellion" is usually associated with disruption and disturbance, distress, or what embodies a spirit of resistance. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault takes rebellion as a potent form of resistance against the oppressing system, an unjust established order, and a collective challenge to the power structures. "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. Hence, there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions" (Foucault, 1976, p. 95). Foucault defined resistance as the "irreducible opposite" that is present in bits and pieces "spread over time and spaces at varying densities" (Foucault, 1976, p. 96). Rebellion is the most confrontational form of resistance, focusing on one point and a collective refusal of oppressive norms in the face of injustice and domination. This spread of resistance over time can become a collective rebellion to bring a revolution within the society. He wrote, "And it is doubtless the strategic codification of these points of resistance that makes a revolution possible" (Foucault, 1976, p. 96). Hence, given a strategic direction and organization, the isolated acts of defiance and resistance, when collaborating in an organized manner, reinforce and emerge as a collective rebellion. Resistance occurs at different levels and is dispersed throughout society. This dispersion of resistance can be clearly observed in the selected novels, *Outwalkers* and *A Whisper of Horses*.

The protagonists Jake and Serendipity show resistance at the individual level. Both subjects find themselves at a crossroads, facing a conflict between staying obedient like others or going against social expectations. These individual acts of transgressing and engaging themselves in practices that counter the imposed rules dictated by the powers are not an easy choice to make. One reality of our existence in power is resistance. However, our resistance's strength and scope, as well as its political impact, are dependent, meaning they

rely on the social structures and discourses that surround us. Our social lives provide us with a broad or limited range of options, and it is within this range that autonomy has to be recognized and expressed.

Ideological criticism and physical agitation is used in the uprising against these institutions. The first act of defiance in both the novels was running away from the strict surveillance in the society. In *Outwalkers*, Jake's running away from the "Home Academy" and Serendipity choosing to embark on a journey to find the truth and to escape the continuous watch represent a pivotal moment in individual resistance. Foucault claims that institutions act as state apparatuses for the creating hegemony of the regime. First, the main reason the school functions as a state apparatus is that it spreads a conservative mindset under the guise of expertise and knowledge. Despite the hegemonic rule of keeping subjects docile and obedient, the dormant critical thinking emerged with triggers of hope that led them to question every established truth along the way. When Professor Nimbus tries to warn Serendipity about the consequences of going against the social order, she says, "I still want to try... If I don't try then I'll never know, and if I never know then I'll be all crumpled up until the day I die" (Bethell, 2016, p. 64). Seeing her mother on her deathbed and finally decoding the last words of her mother, she decided she would not let herself regret not finding the truth about the map. Similarly, Jake, with the hope of leading a life of freedom in his old neighborhood, escaped the "Home Academy". He remembers how they were made to believe the confinement in the academy was normal and the life outside a transgression, "Don't attempt a departure. That's what the teachers told them. They called it 'departure' because escape made the Academy sound like a prison. But nobody was fooled. The Academy was a prison. So escape was what it was" (Shaw, 2018, p. 22). Choosing to escape depicts the first step taken at the personal and individual levels of resistance, challenging societal norms. This symbolizes the rejection of subjectivities and identities that were imposed on them, refusing to be governed by the dominant discourses by embarking on a journey of recognizing their autonomy and self-determination.

While resistance begins at a personal or individual level, it always has the capacity to spread, whether the reason behind it is survival or resistance. It soon becomes a struggle that has the potential to inspire and mobilize others to join in the rejection of the subjugating powers. From an individual act, it grows into a group struggle, establishing resistance on a collective level. As the journey progressed, they found more people who shared the same critical consciousness and the passion to be liberated from strict surveillance and controlling power structures. Serendipity and Professor Nimbus came across Tab, who was a smuggler. Tab guided and informed them about the world beyond the walls, as well as disclosed certain information about how the governing powers were working with the help of tools and strategic tactics to control and regulate the people of the city. His information disrupted the established picture of the safe and ideal city of Lahn Dan, the truth about the deaths, the public display of frozen bodies, Two Swords being a prison for people who the government claimed were executed, all this information of how the powers are working to keep their subjects docile and compliant led Professor and Serendipity to question everything and ignited a fire of rebellion against the authorities. When Serendipity was firmer about her decision, the Professor decided to take the resistance a step further by informing people with the help of storytelling. About the decision to stay in Lahn Dan, she said, "We storytellers are a tight bunch, you know. I have many friends who will protect me and together we might just be able to show people the truth...the lies, the deceptions. I owe it to all the Grys and Brackens that grace this city.

Every single one of them deserves to know the truth” (Bethell, 2016, p. 116). Jake, on the other hand, was rescued by a group of outwalkers who took him in and allowed him to join the gang. They told him how they rescued him, and the eldest of the boys, Poacher, said, “We rescued yer. Yer’d be back in your Home Academy by now if we hadn’t.” Moreover, the eldest girl, “You were lucky. Our lookout spotted you more than a mile off” (Shaw, 2018, p. 48). They further inform him about the rules he has to follow if he intends to stay with the gang. The first act of defiance of the group was the decision to take out the hub chip; when Jake was rescued and regained consciousness, Poacher told him they had to take the chip out: “there wasn’t time. They’d have had you by now if we hadn’t done it quick, and maybe they’d have got us too. Couldn’t let that happen. So we took out yer hub chip. Stuck you with superglue. Works good. Better than stitches out here” (Shaw, 2018, p. 48). Running away from the hubb police and hiding in tunnels and abandoned buildings, the resistance against the very source of surveillance over subjects is evident. The isolated acts of resistance conjoined and transcended the individual level and evolved into collective forms of defiance on the basis of the sense of solidarity and shared struggles. This makes it clearly apparent that, in line with Foucault’s views, “local struggles” around particular issues in which various forms of resistance can be used strategically against the manifestations of hegemonic and oppressive powers.

Foucault acknowledges that “local or localized struggles” and the various forms of resistance they represent have the potential to culminate in a significant and dramatic shift in the social, cultural, political, and economic spheres through “multiple forms of solidarity” and “affiliations” at the local, national, regional, or global level this in History of Sexuality he wrote “And it is doubtlessthe strategic codification of these points of resistance that makes a revolution possible” (1976, p.96). Coming together as a gang and collective community that shares the same experiences and fosters the narratives to challenge dominant powers, the resistance gains momentum. Further collective resistance points can be the smugglers who live outside the walls in A Whisper of Horses or just near the border walls like biker gangs and smugglers or lowlifer gangs living in underground tunnels in Outwalkers. Living in the darkness, “hundreds of lowlifer gangs with no laws to stop them, and they were on the run from the Coalition” (Shaw, 2018, p. 225). Just like Jake and the Outwalker gang, disrupting the established social order and going against the dictated norms and social expectations, the experiences and the goal were the same: to live a free life and escape the controlling gaze. In A Whisper of Horses, Tab’s people, the smugglers, are seen to be living life to the fullest without any confining laws. When Serendipity reached the area, she noticed a pile of food and music. He asked Tab if there was a party tonight, and his reply was, “They’re smugglers” Tab shrugged. “Every night is party night for smugglers” (Bethell, 2016, p. 122). Late in the night, when Serendipity and other citizens of Lahn Dan are under curfew, and nobody is allowed to be outside, the smugglers just start their day. They were living and thriving in shadows and in the darkness of night where the norms and rules hold no power. When all these resistances connect and find common ground, the resistance turns into rebellion and revolution. The professor’s struggle inside the city established a collective struggle with storytellers, turning the individual resistance into a revolution called “Storyteller’s Revolution.” Knottman reported that from inside the city, “there is talk of unrest: “A revolution. They are saying that a revolution is imminent” (Bethell, 2016, pp. 217-218). Similarly, Jake and the outwalker gang reached Scotland with the help of bikers and smugglers. After reaching there, Jake reads the headline, “English crowds rally to New Wall in peaceful protest. Angry scenes

outside Coalition Parliament” (Shaw, 2018, p. 414). This leads the people to change the social order; when Serendipity meets Professor after a long time, he tells her, “London had changed, he told us. Everything in London had changed. There was no such thing as an Au or a Cu or a Pb now” (Bethell, 2016, p. 332). The protest taking place demonstrated how the dispersed points of resistance, either individual or group level when asserting their agency together, a collective rebellion emerges that rejects the subjectivities and renegotiates and reshapes their conditions of existence. A minor act of defiance, such as running away, can pave for a broader transformation that eventually overthrows the customs of living life in obedience and subjugation.

4.2 Resistance and Underlying Power Dynamics

With acts of resistance, Foucault suggested that the strategic exercise of power could be fully revealed. Rather than focusing on and analyzing power structures using a top-down technique, Foucault took a different approach and introduced a lens of resistance that exposes the inner workings of power relations. While using a metaphoric analogy and “using this resistance as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, and find out their point of application and the methods used. Rather than analyzing power from the point of view of its internal rationality, it consists of analyzing power relations through the antagonism of strategies” (1982, p. 780). By understanding the nature of resistance types, targets, and strategic employment, the underlying power relations that gave rise to these resistances can be brought to light. So, by analyzing acts of resistance can serve as an inverse map that illuminates strategies, positions, methods, and deployment techniques the power structures employ to maintain dominance. For instance, the choice of resistance methods and their deployment among the masses can provide insight into the injustice the powers are exercising in society. Professor Nimbus’ choice of staying in Lahn Dan and choosing storytelling as a method of resistance, giving voice to the experiences of the marginalized and oppressed, highlights the authoritative hold powers enjoyed by silencing the subjects. The same tool--storytelling --Serendipity said, government established only to keep the subjects busy “Storytellers were employed by the Ministry to keep us busy when we weren’t working on the lotments” (Bethell, 2016, p. 11), preventing them from conspiring against the powers became the very source of resistance afterward that resulted in a rebellion and ultimately a revolution that led Lahn Dan to change. In the end, the “Storyteller’s Revolution” Professor says, “merely helped to start the process. It was the people of Lahn Dan who took it all to their hearts so valiantly” (Bethell, 2016, p. 332). The resistance acted as a diagnostic tool that highlighted the diffused ways powers manifest control in everyday life and the strategical techniques used by them to subjugate individuals.

Additionally, the acts of disobedience give a deeper insight into what the powers expect from their subjects and how powers operate to control them. Obedience and disobedience here are taken in context to the definition given by Eric Foamm in his work *On Disobedience and Other Essays*. He writes “Obedience to a person, institution or power (heteronomous obedience) is submission; it implies the abdication of my autonomy and the acceptance of a foreign will or judgment in place of my own” (Foamm, 1981, p.6) and disobedience as an act “of the affirmation of reason and will. It is not primarily an attitude directed against something, but for something: for man’s capacity to see, to say what he sees, and to refuse to say what he does not see” (Foamm, 1981, p. 17). The definitions align with Foucault’s concept of obedient and disobedient subjects, embedded within the power

dynamics. He does not treat obedience as passive compliance but as something that is produced by installing the notions of acceptable and unacceptable, punishable and reward worthy. Where obedience is instilled with the help of several tools and strategies to ensure the subject's complete submission to the state narrative, disobedience, on the other hand, disrupts the established notions and challenges authority and its norms by questioning the set narratives. In both selected contemporary young adult novels, acts of rebellion and disobedience by the protagonists and other characters highlight how the authoritative system exercises social control over subjects. It reveals its tactical workings and underlying dynamics. Getting ready to go into the town to restock on basic necessities government deprived the outlaws and illegals, Martha cuts Jake's hair, which he claims is too short, but she corrects him by saying, "The shorter, and the better. Makes you look obedient. Not like a boy who'd steal things" (Shaw, 2018, p. 108). For a government that dictated the outlook and actions of a loyal subject, going against its rules in actions or outlook is considered to be a rebellion. Stealing the necessities as an act of resistance depicts how outlaws or anybody who goes against the government is stripped of their basic human rights of getting proper food or medication. Similarly, in *A Whisper of Horses*, after the resistance became a revolutionary movement in Lahn Dan, Knottman reported that people were "Doing things they shouldn't. Not doing the things they should. General disobedience" (Bethell, 2016, p. 218). This indicates how the powers mandated do's and don'ts. Authorities exercise power by producing subjects who will disregard any truth over the word of the powers; they would say what powers want them to say and see what powers want them to see. In other words, authorities rule over a group of people who follow the rulings blindly without questioning anything and willingly curtailing their critical thinking.

A question that arises here is about the factors that ignite these acts of disobedience and resistance and what does this resistance reveal about the injustices taking place. Subjects who are 'manufactured' under rules and regulations, do's and don't of societal norms, and with an installed fear of authorities start recognizing how their individualities are stripped off; this provides them with reasons to liberate themselves. Subjects may recognize how their thoughts, behaviors, and identities are moulded in order to limit their autonomy. The realization then acts as a catalyst and provides the impetus for acts of resistance. Questioning the truth regimes and engaging in practices previously deemed to be unacceptable. Through Tab, when Professor Nimbus and Serendipity come to realize how the Minter is operating by spreading lies to control people, Professor decides to stay behind and "show people the truth. Open their eyes to the things that they see every day but are too afraid to notice" (Bethell, 2016, p. 116). Further, Knottman told others that before he left Lahn Dan "Cus and Pbs are protesting on the streets. Doing things they shouldn't" (Bethell, 2016, p. 218). Going against societal expectations and rulings, they sort their individuality and self-determination to challenge the entrenched power structures, their narratives, and the injustices of imposed identities in order to embrace their true individuality.

The analysis of the selected young adult dystopian novels shows how an individual act of resistance and defiance can become a foundation for a collective and larger revolutionary movement. The theoretical framework also helps to reveal what control mechanisms are employed by the governing authorities and how the critical consciousness of the characters changes from acceptance to challenging their situations.

5. Conclusion

Foucault's critical lens allows the dissection of the dominant mechanisms of manipulation of truth paradigms and their distortion. Modern strategic techniques shape individuals with a more subtle and pervasive form of disciplining subjects by manipulation of thinking patterns. Strategical disciplinary power is the dominant form of power that Foucault enlightened us about for it limits freedom by influencing the choices one makes and even what one takes to be truth and knowledge. The analysis of the selected YA dystopian novels reveals not only the ways used by authorities for disciplining subjects but also the strategies employed by the subjects to defy the oppressive system. Jake and Outwalker gang in *Outwalkers*; Serendipity, Professor, and Tab in *A Whisper of Horses* employed resistance strategies to expose the strong authoritative hold of the oppressive regime. The subjects challenge the expectations of powers and the mechanism of enforced compliance. The individual acts of defiance challenging surveillance and monitory discourses evolve into a broader resistance movement at a collective level that brings revolutionary changes in society. Gaining consciousness about their situation and rejecting oppressive regimes ignite a potential for reclaiming autonomy over the oppressive power structures. These results advance our knowledge of how oppressive regimes, and the possibility of revolutionary social transformation are portrayed in contemporary young adult dystopian fiction. The study led to understanding the nature of resistance by digging deep into the averse relationship of obedience and disobedience, the power regime and its strategical exercise in the selected texts. The vivid depiction of power dynamics in society in young adult dystopian fiction not only puts forward a picture of contemporary reality but also envisions the complicated roles of power and control in the fast changing world.

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An Acoustic Analysis of Pashto Vowels

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Key Words

- Pashto
- Yousafzai Dialect
- Pure Vowels
- Formants
- Vowel Duration

Abstract

The present paper explores Pashto monophthongs focusing on a point of disagreement regarding Pashto vocalic inventory found in a number of studies (e.g., Penzl, 1954, 1961; Miran 1969; Tegey & Robson, 1996; Rehman, 2009 and among others). By analyzing data from (the standard) Yousafzai dialect, the study provides a detailed insight into the nine pure vowels of the language in the light of both traditional (by using minimal sets qualitatively) and latest experimental techniques using Praat 6.4.01. The qualitative part of the study included minimal sets and the recording and phonemic transcription of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) story, i.e., The North Wind and the Sun. The experimental part of the study also included the recording of a selected list of minimal set consisting nine words from 10 informants with the rural monolingual background. The informants were required to speak out the given words (three times each) in isolation in a soundproof room. Finally, the averages of their responses ($10 \times 3 = 30$) for the first two formants (F1 and F2) and length duration (in MS) for each sound were calculated and were subsequently plotted on a chart to show their spectral features. The findings of the study show that the actual number of Pashto vowels are nine (i.e., /u:, ʊ, v, i:, ɪ, a: ə, a, e/) in the standard (Yousafzai) dialect of the language.

1. Introduction

Pashto links to the Indo-Iranian family of languages. It traces back to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European family of languages. The nearer languages with it are Persian, Kurdish, Tajik, and Ossetian (Tegey & Robson, 1996). Pashto belongs to Indo-Iranian (Kahn, 2012). It is spoken natively by approximately half of Afghanistan's population, 7.5 million, and 90% of the population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 14 million speakers in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, and two million in Karachi (Tegey & Robson, 1996). Pashto is also spoken natively by thousands of people in India, the United Arab Emirates, and other parts of the Gulf. It is now spoken by approximately 50 million people (Khan, 2012). Moreover, people in Tajikistan, Iran, India, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom also speak it (Aslamzai & Saad, 2015).

Pashto is spoken in the districts of Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Peshawar, Hazara, Swabi, Mardan, Charsada, Bajaur, Buner, and Swat in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is also spoken in Northeastern Baluchistan and in Punjab near Mianwali and Attock. Pashto speakers can be found in Afghanistan's south, southwest, and east (Hallberg, 1992). The majority of Pashto speakers live in a single geographical area: southern Afghanistan and northeastern Pakistan (Tegey & Robson, 1996). According to Shahedkhel (2019), some phonetic symbols of Pashto are similar to those of other Indo-European languages because it belongs to the Indo-European family after being linked to Indo-Iranian.

This study is highly significant in terms of a vital contribution to Pashto phonology as it analyzes the Pashto vocalic phonemes. This might be very fruitful for the upcoming researchers, teachers and for the student as well. Furthermore, this study is limited only to the exploration of Pashto vocalic phonemes. It was based on minimal sets, pairs, and IPA recommended story. For doing this, the data was collected from male speakers of Yousafzai dialect.

2. Literature Review

Pashto is an Eastern Iranian language. It has great dominance in the area of Southern Afghanistan and most parts of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pashto phonology has been a focus of many studies. Most of the books, articles and thesis have been carried out on various interesting features of Pashto phonology. Penzl's (1954) investigation focuses on the orthography and spelling of the Pashto language, specifically the Kandahari dialect. In addition to delineating the phonemics of modern Pashto, he dedicates a portion of his study to the analysis of vowels. Based on his findings, Pashto comprises nine vowels: /a, e, i, u, ii (i), uu (u), aa, ee, oo/. Furthermore, Penzl (1961) delves into loan words from other languages integrated into Pashto, providing a concise overview of vowels in this context. The author identifies the following vowels in loan words: /i, a, ə, ā, ē, i, ī, ō, u, ū/. He distinguishes long vowels with a bar over them, including /ē, ā, ō, ī, and ū/. Notably, /ē/ is a mid-front vowel, /ā/ is a low central unrounded or low back rounded vowel, /ō/ is mid-back rounded with raised allophones, /ī/ is high front, and /ū/ is a high back long vowel. Miran's study (1969) primarily focuses on contrasting the Dari and Pashto languages while highlighting the challenges faced by speakers of these languages. He systematically presents Pashto vowels as /i, e, æ, ə, a, o, u/. The first three front vowels /i, e, æ/ are categorized as unrounded vowels, with /e/ occurring in the middle and final

positions but not at the beginning. Similarly, the central vowel /ə/ is found in the middle and final positions but is absent at the beginning. The last three vowels /a, o, u/ are classified as back vowels, with /a/ being unrounded and /o, u/ being rounded. Similarly, Bashir's (1991) contrastive analysis of Pashto and Urdu includes a focus on the Yousafzai dialect and identifies seven vowels: /i, e, a, ɜ, ā, o, u/. In her research, she clarifies that /a/ is a short vowel, while /ā/ is long. Additionally, /e/ is a front central vowel, /i/ is short, /o/ is a back central vowel, and /u/ is a lower-high back vowel. Bashir also notes the presence of the mid-central vowel /ɜ/ in the vowel inventory of the Yousafzai dialect.

Tegey and Robson's (1996) study provides a comprehensive overview of a specific Pashto dialect, focusing on the Kabul/central dialect. Their work, centered on Pashto grammar, aims to fulfill the essential requirements for language learning, especially for instructing Pashto to foreign learners. Within the context of the central dialect, the study delves into historical aspects, encompassing grammatical forms, phonology and pronunciation, word stock, and loan words. A notable segment of this analysis is dedicated to the examination of vowels. They identified nine vowels in the central dialect of Pashto: /i, ɪ, e, ə, a, ā, o, ʊ, u/. The authors provide insights into Pashto vowels based on tongue and lip postures, highlighting the restriction that vowels /ɪ, e, o, and u/ do not appear at the beginning of words. Henderson's (1998) work is rooted in the Kandahari dialect, where he elucidates syntactic structures, prestige, and literary traditions inherent to this specific Pashto dialect. He posits six Pashto vowels for the Kandahari dialect: /i, e, a, ə, o, u/. In his examination of Pashto vowels, he categorizes /i/ as high, /a/ as low, /o/ as back round, and /u/ as high back round. Additionally, he notes that /e/ and /o/ are extra-long, particularly in unstressed syllables, while /i/ and /u/ are short, with elongated forms in Arabic and Persian loanwords. Furthermore, Roberts (2000) contributes to the understanding of Pashto by elucidating its phrase structure and explaining various sentence features. Within this linguistic exploration, Roberts investigates Pashto vowels, identifying /i, ee, a, e, aa, o, u/. The researcher also briefly touches upon the mid vowels /ee and o/, as well as the raised high vowels /i and u/, particularly when the subsequent syllable contains a high vowel.

Mirdehghan and Jahangiri (2005) research is confined to the description of phonological ergative of three languages; Hindi/Urdu, Balochi and Pashto. It gives an explanation of variation in the said languages. The inventory further elucidates the Pashto vowels /i, e, æ, a, aa, o, u/. Ijaz (as cited by Shierani, 2009) is basically related to new names entities into media in the form of personal names and organization. He spells out the above issue that it is a problem in translation. He investigates the present techniques to develop bilingual English-Pashto proper nouns lexicon for the web. He asserts further that English and Pashto have got different rules. In his study, he explores the phonemic inventory of Pashto and suggests that Pashto has ten vowels, /i, ɪ, e, a:, a, ə, ɐ, o, u, u:/. Among them, there are seven short vowels /a, e, i, ə, ɐ, o, u/ and three long vowels /a:, u:, i:/.

Din and Rahman (2011) is based on the acoustic analysis of Pashto vowels. Their inventory shows a vowel chart, nine in number /i, ɪ, e, ə, u, ʊ, æ, α, o/. Ali (2013) deals with the difference between Pakistani English and Singaporean English vowels. The author points out eleven vowels in Pashto /i, ɪ, e, æ, ʌ, a:, ɐ, ɔ:, ʊ, ɜ:, u:/. He further claims that there is no difference between the above two varieties. However, the slight difference is highlighted only in the F1 for the sounds /ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/. Another difference in F2 for the sounds /ɐ/ and /ɔ:/ is also mentioned. In the last, he suggests that the above-mentioned languages are the different varieties of English language.

Miller (2014) is cramped to the Waziri dialect of Pashto language. He demonstrates the vowel shift of the mentioned dialect to other dialects. He raises a point on vowels that Waziri has the same vowels as other standard varieties. He declares that there are seven vowels in Pashto /i, e, a, ə, ā, o, u/. Here, he explains the vowel shift from its position to another. Waziri long vowel /ā/, its quality reaches to /a/, short vowel /a/, and reaches to /ʌ/. In this shift /ā/ rises to /o/. Back vowels move to the front. Waziri vowel /u/, changes to front vowel /i/. Back vowel /o/ changes to front /e/.

2.1. Similarities and Differences in the above Cited Studies

The existing reviews on Pashto show similarities and differences in the following inventories. The authors included the phonemes /i/ and /e/ in their inventories which are given below: Penzl (1954) and (1961), Miran (1969), Bashir (1991), Tegey and Robson (1996), Henderson (1998), Robert (2000), Mirdehgan and Jahangiri (2005), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (2011), Ali (2013) and Miller (2014). The phoneme /ə/ is also found in the above works, except Penzl (1954), Bashir (1991) Robert (2000), and Ali (2013). The phoneme /ɪ/ pinpointed in these studies: Penzl (1961), Tegey and Robson (1996), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (1996) and Ali (2013).

The phonemes /a/, /o/ and /u/ found in the inventories given below: Penzl (1954) and (1961), Miran (1969), Tegey and Robson (1996), Henderson (1998), Robert (2000), Midehgan and Jahangiri (2005), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (2011), Ali (2013) and Miller (2014). The vowel /æ/ existed in the following works: Miran (1969), Din and Rahman (2011) and Ali (2013) and the phoneme /ʊ/ also included in the above studies except for Miran (1969) but the /ʊ/ sound found in the work of Tegey and Robson (1996). The schwa /ə/ phoneme searched out in these studies: Penzl (1961), Tegey and Robson (1996), Henderson (1998), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (2011), and Miller (2014). The phonemes /ɒ/, /ʌ/, and /ɜ:/ found only in the work of Ali (2013).

2.2. Total Number and Symbols of Pure Vowels in Secondary Data

The following phonetic symbols for pure vowels were collected from the existing reviews on Pashto. The list is given bellow for the existing pure vowels in Pashto: /i, ɪ, e, a, aa, ee, oo, ə, ā, ē, ī, ō, u, ū, æ, o, ɜ, ʊ, a:, u:, α, ʌ, ɒ, ɔ:, ɜ:/. These twenty-five different pure vowels (symbols) were found in the above-cited studies based on Pashto.

As discussed above, there is no agreement among the scholars who conducted various research on Pashto language about the number of vowels. However, this study is going to discuss this issue in greater detail, providing data from everyday language of the selected dialect (Yousafzai) of Pashto spoken in Pakistan. The collection of the above-cited works clarifies that there is big ambiguity in the number of Pashto vocalic phonemes. Many studies have been done but different opinions have been raised, regarding the number of vowels. The purpose of this study is to fill up this gap by exploring Pashto vocalic phonemes traditionally and acoustically. The main concern of this study is to highlight the acoustic analysis of the vocalic phonemes of Pashto.

2.3. Vowels in Human Languages

Roach (1991) claims that a vowel is a sound in which there is no obstruction of airflow from the lungs to the lips. The articulators are separated, allowing the airflow to exit freely.

The frontness and backness of the tongue, as well as the rounding of the lips, are used to define vowel sounds. Davenport (2005) states that a fixed vowel sound is known as a pure vowel and will be represented by a single vowel symbol. Similarly, Ladefoged (2006) opines that producing vowel sounds, the articulators do not come together, and the passage of air is relatively unobstructed. Ogden (2009) has the view that monophthongs are pure, and they do not change in their voices.

Natural languages have flexible number of vowels. There are languages that have up to 17 vowels such as Urdu (Hussain, 2005). Spanish has a set of five vowels /i, e, a, o, u/ and Japanese also has only five /i, e, a, o, u/ (Ladefoged, 2005). English has twenty vowels /i, ɪ, e, æ, ʌ, ɜ:, ə, ɑ, ɔ:, ʊ, u:, ɪə, eə, ʊə, eɪ, aɪ, ɔɪ, əʊ, aʊ/ (Roach 1991; Ladefoged, 2005). Kono has seven vowel system /i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u/ (Komba, 1983) and Latin has five vowels (Tench, 2011). This detail clarifies that each human language has its own vowels due to its different vocabulary and pronunciation. As languages have got contrasting grammatical features and rules, same is the case with vowels. In the above-mentioned languages that only Spanish and Japan have the same number in vowels, other don't have similarities in vowels. That's why; Pashto also needs an effort for finding its vocalic phonemes, to explain them qualitatively and acoustically, because it has also got different rules, pronunciation and grammar.

2.4. Acoustic Analysis of Vowels in Other Studies

Low (2019) conducted research on 'kinematic and acoustic vowel changes in adult bite block speech'. The focus remained on the acoustic analysis of phonemes by analyzing the formants and their changing frequencies, sided by side kinematic analysis of articulators was done. For doing this research, data were collected from twenty speakers, divided equally, 10 males and 10 females involved. The stimuli used in the study 'the blue spot is on the black key again'. In this stimulus, the word blue was taken for high back vowel, the word spot for low back vowel; black for low front vowel; and key for high front vowel.

Phakkahn (2018) introduced the vowels of Yoy. It has 18 vowels in which nine are short and nine are long /i, e, æ, a, ʊ, ɪ, u, o, ɔ/ and /i:, e:, æ:, a:, ʊ:, ɪ:, u:, o:, ɔ:/. A word list was provided to participants in Thai script. It was recorded from the informants. The input of the informants was broken into words. All these words tagged, transcribed and glossed and the data was analyzed through Praat. Formants 1 and 2 were taken and showed the actual places of all vowels on tongue. He has the view that long and short vowels don't have any distinctive feature in open final syllable, but they are clearly distinct in closed final syllables.

Nolan (2014) says that Lekwungen has five vowels and thirty-five consonants. These vowels were introduced acoustically. The data was collected in CV and CVC structures. All words were recorded twice and analyzed through Praat. Vowels were determined after observing stress effects, duration, pitch and amplitude. F1, F2 and F3 were checked of all target vowels. Words were divided into segments and textgrid tier were used for writing separate vowels and their duration. Measurements were exported to Microsoft Excel and then to R (R Core Team), then analysis and plotting were done.

Roesler conducted a study in 2013, on 'acoustic characteristics of tense and lax vowels across sentence position in clear speech'. He analyzed vowel duration, vowel space dispersion, space area, and vowel peripheralization in clear and conversational speech. For

doing this, he collected the data from 12 monolingual speakers in spoken form and analyzed through PRAAT software. Vowel space was represented through F1 and F2. Another feature of acoustic analysis showed that vowel durations were greater in clear speech than the conversation style. Tense vowel had greater space and longer duration than lax vowels. Vowels occurred in the sentence-final position had longer vowel durations and great vowel space areas than those vowels that occurred in sentence-medial position.

Bailey (2012) provided an acoustic analysis of Brazilian Portuguese nasal and oral monophthongs, produced by native and non-native speakers both. The data for this study was collected from ten speakers, six native speakers of Brazilian Portuguese and four native speakers of Spanish. All these participants were university students at the time of research and data recording. Praat software was used for data analysis measuring vowel durations, first two formants and anti-resonances. The study compares Brazilian Portuguese and Spanish speakers using ANOVA. The analysis revealed that all participants had a significantly higher F1 for /a/ than /ẽ/. For females, F1 of nasal and oral vowels remained higher than their male counterparts. The analysis also revealed higher F1 for nasal vowels than oral vowels for /e/ and /u/ for males. The analysis showed interesting findings for Spanish L1 informants producing higher F1 values than Portuguese L1 informants. Based on these lines, the current study describes the acoustic features of Pashto vowels using Praat software.

3. Research Methodology

The nature of this study is a blend of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies exploring various features of the vocalic sounds in Pashto. A written standard list of selected vocabulary was chosen which was designed as minimal sets having nine words from the Yousafzai dialect, followed by IPA recommended story, i.e., *The North Wind and the Sun*. For the acoustic analysis, the utterances of the subjects of the selected vocabulary items were recorded. The first attempt was made; each sound in collected data for the study was recorded in isolation for better analysis of vocalic sounds. For further precaution, other speakers of the same language were asked to listen to the recorded sounds and then the recorded data was analyzed on Praat.

Fant (1960) introduced the Source-Filter Theory which was taken as a theoretical framework for this study. This theory forms the basis for speech analysis with respect to the articulation of vowel sounds. According to this concept, the vocal cords are considered the source of sound, which is subsequently shaped by the vocal tract or filter. For vowels, this filtering effect is let's say the most important, which helps determining the formant frequencies of the vowels which in turn helps in analyzing and categorizing vowels in a cross linguistic perspective. Fant's model can aid researchers in studying vocal tract modifications and their impact on the acoustic properties of vowels, particularly the manner and interpretation of formant frequencies (F1, F2, etc.), which, in turn, help in vowel categorization.

3.1. Sampling Techniques and Procedures

Ten NORMS (non-mobile, old, rural, males) were randomly selected from different areas-as adopted Trudgill (1987) method for the participants. They all belonged to Malakand division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These subjects were aging 40+.

As part of the descriptive study, Praat software (6.4.01) was used for the acoustic analysis of the vowel sounds. For each single segment, the duration and first three formants along with other related properties were checked. Each word having vowel had the same process for the purpose to be analyzed and finalized for plotting on quadrilateral shape at the end.

This systematic process recording was conducted in a comfortable soundproof room. First, the selected word list containing nine words was given to the participants and they were directed to read them in a natural way. They were directed to read each word three times, and they were recorded by using Zoom H6. This process was repeated with each participant. In the last, all recordings were saved in the laptop in audio form (WAV file). Subsequently, this data was used for measuring the duration, formants, and frequencies for the purpose.

4. Data Analysis & Discussion

Before deciding the number of monophthongs, Pashto phonemes were explored using many sets. For these segments, certain minimal sets in CVC context were explored for their inclusion in the study. After this detailed procedure, the following set given in Table 1 was finally selected for this study that has nine words.

Table 1

Selected set of stimuli for Pashto monophthongs and their measurement

Vowels	Transcription	Pashto	Glossary	Duration	F1	F2	F3
u:	tu:k	توک (توکمار)	Thickly woven	148	369	955	2455
ʊ	tɔk	ټک	Piece	93	400	1032	2468
ɒ	tɒk	ټوک	Cutting tool	218	502	979	2554
i:	tʃi:k	ټیک	Right	130	380	2070	2671
ɪ	tɪk	ټک	As in rest	87	376	2013	2556
ɑ:	tɑ:k	ټاک	Marked	230	694	1238	2473
ə	tək	ټک(ټکي)	As in word	92	639	1456	2296
a	tak	ټک	Drip-drip	99	637	1491	2385
e	tɛk	ټیک	Support	201	440	1958	2572

The recorded data were analyzed using Praat. The data covered the required specific notions of sound analysis such as duration, F1, F2, and F3. The duration of each phoneme and three formants are the results of thirty responses as there were ten informants and each of them uttered the sound thrice (10 speakers x 3 responses = 30 tokens). First, the average of three responses of every speaker was taken, then the average was taken of all ten informants. The duration, F1, F2, and F3 values are the grand average of all thirty responses. When the final average was taken, then the data was exported to Microsoft Excel. The values for vowel duration and the first three formants are given in Figure-1.

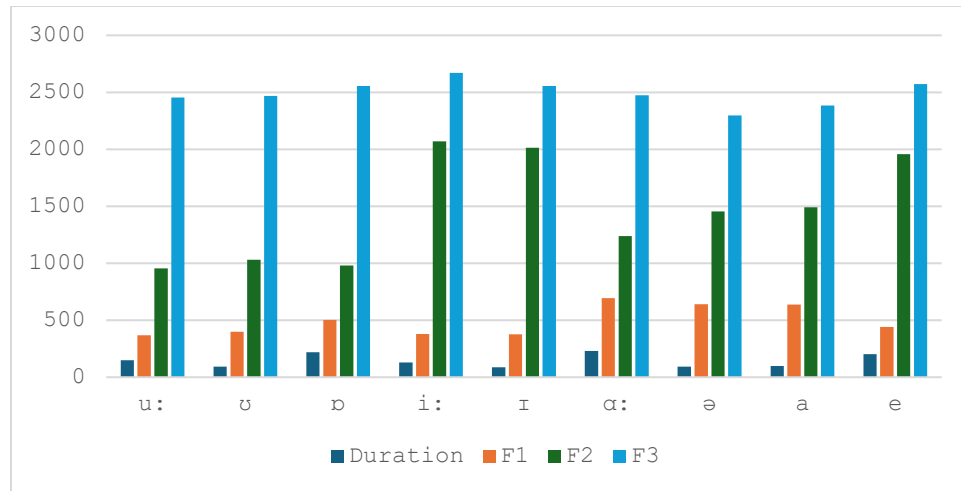


Figure 1: Pashto monophthongs and their measurement

The values for the first three formants and durations were taken systematically using Praat and were put respectively. The chart design used was created through Microsoft ExcelSheet. For spectrographic illustrations, individual segments for all nine vowels were processed and measured through Praat. For example, Figure-2 shows the spectrogram for /u:/ vowel sound.

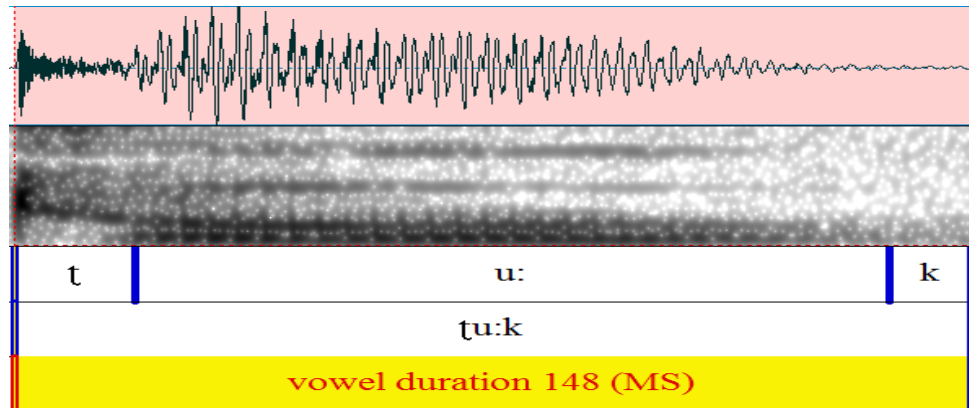


Figure 2: Spectrogram for /u:/

Figure-2 presents the spectrogram of the vowel /u:/. It provides a detailed visualization of the vowel's characteristics. At the top, it features the waveform, followed by the spectrogram itself. Below these, three tiers display different linguistic details: the first tier represents the phonemic transcription, the second shows the word in which the vowel appears, and the third indicates the vowel's duration, measured in milliseconds. This structured representation offers a comprehensive insight into the acoustic properties of the vowel.

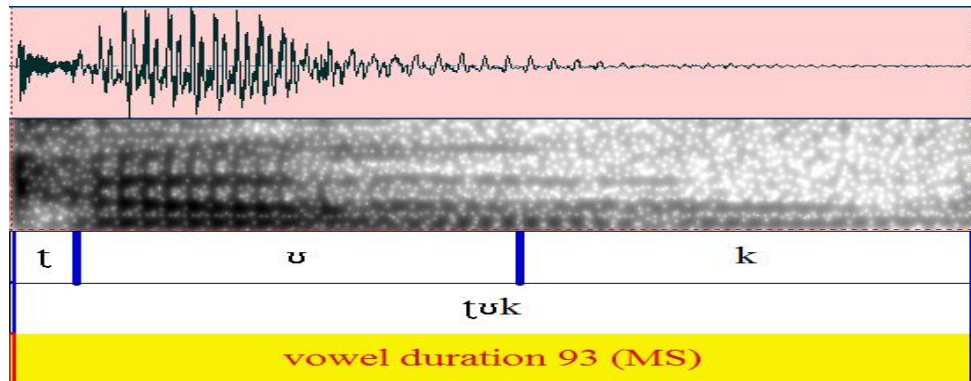


Figure 3: Spectrogram for /ʊ/

Figure-3 illustrates the spectrogram of the vowel /ʊ/, which serves as the short counterpart of /u:/. The spectrogram provides a multi-layered representation of the vowel and shows all the features of the phonemes such as waveform, spectrographic representation, phonemic transcription, and duration (93) in milliseconds.

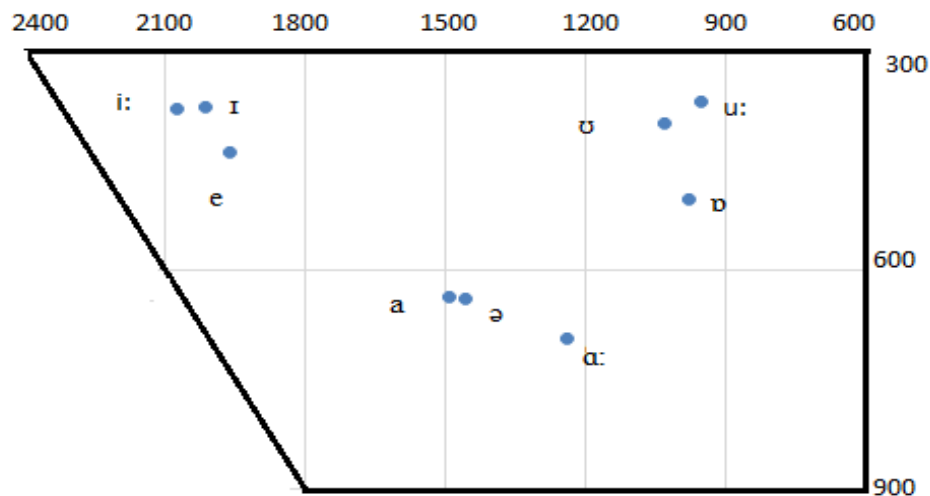


Figure 4: Pashto Vowel Grid

Figure-4 was created following an acoustic analysis of the stimuli presented in Table 1. This table contains nine Pashto root words, each featuring a single vocalic phoneme. Native speakers carefully pronounced these words, which were then recorded, analyzed, and segmented. The extracted values were used to generate this figure, which visually represents all nine vowels along with their corresponding symbols. The figure was produced using the first two formants, F1 and F2.

4.1. Vowel Height

Pashto vowels were put under the binary features as Chomsky and Hall (1968) used for vowel height. Pashto vowels were described with (+high) and (-high), also with other terms as (+back) and (-back) as given in Table 2.

Table 2

Pashto Vowel Height Features

Vowel Height	-back	+back
+high, -mid	i:, ɪ	u: ʊ
+high, +mid	e	ɒ
-high, +mid	a, ə	ɑ:

In this broad description, six vowels were included in (+high) portion and three were (-high); and for further clarification (-back) marked out five vowels and (+back) covered four vowels.

Feature Chart

The above results and discussion on Pashto vowels were summarized by the feature chart as given below in Table 3.

Table 3

Feature Chart for Pashto Vowels

Features	u:	ʊ	ɒ	i:	ɪ	ɑ:	ə	a	e
Consonant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
High	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
Mid	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	+
Front	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+
Back	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
Round	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-

The above chart made clear distinguishing features of each vocalic phoneme. It also mentioned that each phoneme has considerable existence and phonological properties in the language. These features were highlighted in the light of vowel grid (Figure 4) that was generated based on grand average. After all these processes, the final touch was given through descriptive statistics.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

The grand average of all nine vowels put in Table 1 was exported to SPSS for statistical purpose. All vowels were taken as variable and the following results obtained given in Table 4.

Table 4

Summary Statistics, using the obtained results of 9 Vowels for the variables: Duration, F1, F2, and F3

Variable	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Duration	144.222	130.000	87.0000	230.000
F1	493.000	440.000	369.000	694.000
F2	1465.78	1456.00	955.000	2070.00
F3	2492.22	2473.00	2296.00	2671.00
Variable	Std. Dev.			
Duration	57.9995			
F1	130.301			
F2	453.520			
F3	110.991			

The results related to duration, F1, F2, and F3 were given to SPSS where the mean, median, minimum and maximum were derived. In statistics analysis, the mean of all duration was obtained 144.2 where the median 130, minimum value was 87 and maximum was 230. The Standard deviation of duration is 57.9.

The results related to F1 shows that mean is 493 and median is 440, and the minimum value is 87 and maximum is 694. The standard deviation of F1 is 130.3. The values of grand average of F2 were given and results obtained in which mean is 1465, median 1456, minimum value 955 and maximum 2070. The standard deviation of F2 is 453. The last obtained results were regarding the roundness of all vowels. The grand average of all them shows in Table 1. The same value was put in statistical tool which gave these results. The mean of F3 is 2492.2, median is 2473, minimum is 2296 and maximum value is 2671. The standard deviation of the F3 is 110.

4.1. Discussion

Most studies on Pashto vowels have focused on their analysis, identifying varying numbers of vowels. Notable differences exist among these studies. The present study shares similarities with other studies, such as Penzl (1954), Tegey and Robson (1996), and Din and Rahman (2011) in terms of the number of vowels. However, some vowels identified in these studies differ from those found in the present study. As Din and Rahman (2011) conducted an acoustic analysis of Pashto vowels, presenting an inventory of nine vowels: /i, ɪ, e, ə, u, ʊ, æ, ɑ, o/. Their inventory closely aligns with the present study, as both identify nine vowels. The key difference between the two lies in the presence of the vocalic sounds /æ/ and /o/, which are not found in the present study.

The existing review on Pashto vowels also shows similarities and differences in the following inventories. The studies carried the phonemes /i/ and /e/ are given below: Penzl (1954) and (1961), Miran (1969), Bashir (1991), Tegey and Robson (1996), Henderson (1998), Robert (200), Mirdehgan and Jahangiri (2005), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman

(2011), Ali (2013) and Miller (2014). The above mentioned two vowels are also the part of the present study and found in day-to-day routinely words. The phoneme /ə/ also found in the above studies, except Penzl (1954), Bashir (1991) Robert (2000), and Ali (2013). The phoneme /ɪ/ pinpointed in the studies of Penzl (1961), Tegey and Robson (1996), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (1996) and Ali (2013). The above listed two phonemes /ɪ, ə/ are also the part of present study and have got their existence in roots.

Moreover, the phonemes /a/, /o/ and /u/ found in the inventories such as Penzl (1954) and (1961), Miran (1969), Tegey and Robson (1996), Henderson (1998), Robert (2000), Midehgan and Jahangiri (2005), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (2011), Ali (2013) and Miller (2014). In these three morphemes /a, o, u/ only /a and u/ are found in the present study but /o/ is not the part of it. Furthermore, the vowel /æ/ existed in the following studies: Miran (1969), Din and Rahman (2011) and Ali (2013) and the phoneme /ʊ/ also included in the above studies except for Miran (1969) but the /ʊ/ sound found only in the work of Tegey and Robson (1996). The phoneme /ʊ/ is also found in the present study that is frequently used in roots. However, the vowel /æ/ was found in many studies as mentioned above, but it is lacking in the present study.

The schwa /ə/ phoneme searched out in these studies: Penzl (1961), Tegey and Robson (1996), Henderson (1998), Shierani (2009), Din and Rahman (2011), and Miller (2014). The phonemes /ɒ/, /ʌ/, and /ɜ:/ found only in the work of Ali (2013). Similarly, the phonemes /ə and ɒ/ are found in the present but the last two are not the part of it, because these are not present in Yousafzai dialect. Moreover, the present study also carries the phonemes /ɑ:/ which was not found in the above literature.

5. Conclusion

The main objectives of the current study were to find out the vocalic phonemes in Pashto and to explore their acoustic properties. For addressing these objectives, the data were collected from the native speakers and then made different minimal sets and pairs having CVC context. The data discussed many times with experts and native speakers of the language. Then, the native speakers were invited to a comfortable room and guided them to utter the words in the list in a natural tone. All the participants were agreed and had no stress on them during data collection. All of the ten speakers uttered the word list thrice and recorded respectively using Zoom H6. The data were then transferred to a laptop and saved in WAV file. After finalizing the process of recording, the data was analyzed acoustically using Praat. In the acoustics process, the boundaries of vowels were carefully identified and marked, and spectrograms were taken. The durations and values of F1, F2 and F3 were taken for generating quadrilateral shape of the tongue. The results showed that there are some similarities and dissimilarities with other existing studies regarding the vowels. Some vowels are found in the secondary sources as well as in the current study and some are missing. The results also showed that there is a total of nine monophthongs in Pashto. All of them have existence in root words and the minimal set of these nine words was given in Table 1. It was finally concluded that Pashto has nine monophthongs which are given here /u:, ʊ, ɒ, i:, ɪ, ɑ: ə, a, e/.

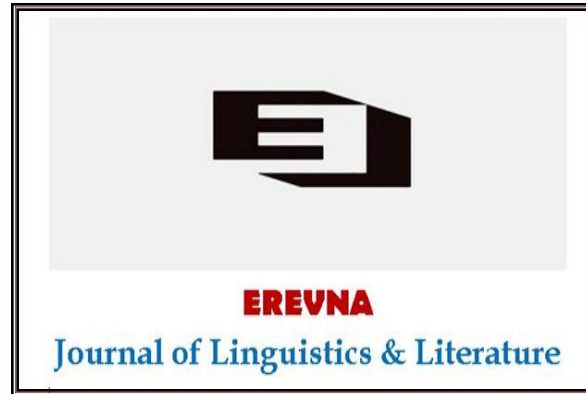
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