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Editorial

UCP Journal of Languages and Literature
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It is with great pleasure that we present Volume 2, Issue 2 of the UCP Journal of Languages and Literature, an academic platform dedicated to advancing research in linguistics, literature, and interdisciplinary studies. This issue continues our commitment to fostering critical inquiry and scholarly discussions that shape contemporary discourse in the fields of language and literature.

The contributions in this issue explore a range of themes that reflect the dynamic intersections of linguistic structures, language pedagogy, and literary interpretations. Among the thought-provoking studies featured, we find insightful analyses of phonological processes, corpus-based investigations, sociolinguistic inquiries, and the complex relationships between language and digital communication. The breadth and depth of these studies emphasize the evolving nature of linguistic and literary scholarship, demonstrating a strong commitment to both theoretical innovation and empirical rigor.

A significant highlight of this volume is the research on Grammar Instruction through Task-Based Language Teaching, which sheds light on Pakistani EFL teachers' cognitions and practices. By examining how educators perceive and implement task-based approaches, this study offers crucial implications for English language teaching methodologies in higher education. Similarly, the study on Gemination in Pashto contributes valuable insights into the phonetic and phonological characteristics of the Yousafzai dialect, enhancing our understanding of South Asian linguistic diversity.

Another noteworthy contribution is the corpus-based study titled A Comparative Study of Right Collocates of Tiny, Small, and Minute in the British National Corpus. This research critically examines lexical semantics and frequency-based variations in usage, offering profound implications for lexicography and language pedagogy. Additionally, the semiotic analysis of Visual Communication in Advertisement: A Social Semiotic Analysis of Selected Billboards in Awka Metropolis provides a compelling exploration of how visual signs and symbols shape advertising narratives and consumer engagement.

Further, this issue presents A Comparative Study on Gender Identity Construction in Item Songs of Lollywood and Bollywood, which critically evaluates the portrayal of gender through linguistic choices in popular media. By analyzing item songs, this study reveals how gender identities are reinforced through musical discourse, shedding light on the implications of these representations in shaping societal perceptions. Another valuable contribution is Analyzing Post-Traumatic Transformation in Tara Westover's Educated through Transitivity Analysis, which employs Halliday's transitivity framework to explore the protagonist's journey from trauma to empowerment. This linguistic investigation provides an innovative perspective on the intersection of language, psychology, and narrative construction.

The diverse research presented in this issue advances academic knowledge and serves as a bridge between theoretical perspectives and real-world applications. Studies addressing language teaching, phonological structures, corpus linguistics, multimodal communication, gender discourse, and trauma narratives are included, reflecting our journal's commitment to an interdisciplinary approach that enriches linguistic and literary studies.

As we continue to foster an environment of academic excellence, we extend our gratitude to the esteemed contributors, reviewers, and editorial team whose diligence and expertise have ensured the quality and scholarly merit of this issue. We also invite researchers and scholars to contribute to future editions of the journal, thereby sustaining a vibrant intellectual exchange in the field of languages and literature.

We hope that the scholarly works featured in this volume inspire further research, dialogue, and critical engagement within the academic community. We look forward to continuing our mission of publishing high-quality research that resonates with the evolving landscape of linguistic and literary studies.

Dr Fehmida Sultana
Editor-in-Chief
UCP Journal of Languages and Literature

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The UCP Journal of Languages and Literature is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical publishing practices. Any concerns, questions, or requests for clarification related to the content published in this journal should be directed to the respective authors, who bear full responsibility for their work.

We appreciate your understanding of this disclaimer and hope that you find the content within this journal informative and thought-provoking.

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Grammar Instruction through Task-Based Language Teaching: Pakistani EFL Teachers' Cognitions and Practices

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Abstract

The research and implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Pakistan remain relatively unexplored, with the approach neither explicitly favoured nor rejected by language teachers and institutions. To gain insights into teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and pedagogical practices regarding TBLT, this study investigates the cognitions and practices of English language teachers in grammar instruction through TBLT at the undergraduate level in Pakistani universities. A qualitative research approach was adopted, involving 20 English language teachers from five public and private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and stimulus recall discussions. The results indicate that while most teachers claimed familiarity with TBLT—primarily based on conceptual understanding rather than formal training—a smaller subset of teachers (n=6) with English literature background exhibited limited comprehension of the approach. Despite this, the majority expressed support for integrating TBLT into Pakistani English language classrooms, albeit with an awareness of contextual challenges. Many participants perceived TBLT as a meaning-focused approach, potentially unsuitable for explicit grammar instruction. Moreover, a significant discrepancy was noted between teachers' stated beliefs and their observed classroom practices, with only two teachers demonstrating partial implementation of TBLT. The findings highlight a prevailing ambiguity among teachers regarding TBLT. Based on these insights, the study recommends comprehensive teacher training to facilitate the effective integration of TBLT in Pakistan.

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Introduction

Over the past few decades, researchers have delved into the underlying beliefs and cognitive processes, referred to as cognition, which impact teachers' instructional decisions. Various studies (e.g., Baker, 2014; Chinda & Hinkelman, 2023; Nassaji et al., 2023) have explored teacher cognition across different language domains, including pronunciation teaching, vocabulary instruction, language assessment, and corrective feedback. However, there is limited research on teacher cognition related to teaching grammar through task-based language teaching (TBLT). Furthermore, the pursuit of effective English language teaching (ELT) methodologies in Pakistan, where little emphasis is given to modern language teaching methods, makes this phenomenon more intriguing.

One of the primary objectives of ELT in Pakistan is to equip learners with the ability to communicate effectively in the country's non-native English environment. Historically, the GTM has dominated classroom practices; however, there has been a recent shift towards more communicative methods, especially at the university level where teachers have significant autonomy in teaching and assessment (Akram, 2017). This results in diverse ELT practices, with pedagogies often blending traditional methods with communicative approaches. It is worth noting the absence of consensus on any single method, as teacher preferences and practices vary depending on factors such as university requirements, assessment formats, class size, available resources, and more importantly their own language learning experiences (Ahmed & Mahmood, 2024). While some teachers diligently adhere to predefined course outlines, which often lack specific teaching process guidance, others work with minimal structure, relying only on broad course objectives (Bashiruddin & Qayyum, 2014).

On the other hand, the last two decades have witnessed a global shift in second language research and pedagogy towards TBLT. However, effectively implementing TBLT presents challenges, for instance, a lack of task-based textbooks, limited teacher training opportunities, large class sizes, and curriculum constraints (Liu & Ren, 2021). These limitations are also evident in Pakistani university English language classrooms. Additionally, existing research on TBLT in Pakistan primarily focuses on comparing its effectiveness to traditional methods in improving student outcomes (e.g., Ahmad et al., 2021; Rashid et al., 2017). While some studies explore teacher perceptions of TBLT utilisation (e.g., Ullah et al., 2020), they lack an in-depth analysis of the broader context. Therefore, a research gap remains in areas such as teachers' understanding of TBLT

and the perceived opportunities and challenges associated with its implementation.

To address this gap, this study investigates the cognitions and practices of Pakistani university EFL teachers regarding grammar instruction through TBLT, employing classroom observations and in-depth semi-structured interviews. It explores teachers' perceptions of TBLT's potential for undergraduate English language instruction, analyses the factors influencing their decisions to adopt or reject TBLT practices, and examines the alignment between their cognitions and actual classroom practices.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundations of Task-based Language Teaching

Task-based language teaching (TBLT), also known as task-based instruction (TBI), has emerged as a prominent methodology in recent years (Chen & Wang, 2019). Grounded in communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, TBLT emphasises engaging students in meaningful tasks that utilise the target language (Ellis, 2003; Long, 2015; Nunan, 2004; Skehan, 2003). The primary focus of TBLT is on fostering fluency in the target language, and assessments often prioritise *task* completion over isolated grammatical accuracy (Skehan, 1998; Hashemi, 2012). The definition of "task" in TBLT has been a subject of ongoing scholarly discussion (e.g., Ellis, 2018b, p. 23; Ellis & Shintani, 2013; Long, 2015; Nunan, 2006; Willis & Willis, 2007). For instance, Nunan (2004) distinguishes between pedagogical tasks, which are classroom activities designed to foster student comprehension and production, and target tasks, which refer to real-world activities that may not necessarily involve language use (pp. 1-16). Ellis (2003, p. 2; Ellis et al., 2020, pp. 9-17) offers a more comprehensive definition of a task, highlighting four key characteristics. The task a) prioritises conveying meaning effectively in the target language, b) inherently includes a gap, such as information, reasoning, or opinion, that students must bridge through communication, c) itself provides the linguistic resources students need for completion, d) concludes in a non-linguistic outcome, such as a product or a solution.

TBLT positions the teacher as a facilitator, primarily observing and guiding students as they complete the task, intervening only when necessary (Niemeier, 2017). This student-centred approach stands in contrast to traditional methods where the teacher plays a more directive role. Furthermore, the syllabus in TBLT serves as a flexible framework rather than a rigid structure. For instance, Ellis et al. (2020) emphasise that

the syllabus is an "operational construct," providing teachers with options to tailor tasks to their specific instructional contexts (p. 175).

Emphasising the importance of TBLT, Long (2015) identifies several criteria for a successful language learning approach, including theoretical grounding, accountability, relevance, learner-centeredness, and functionality. Furthermore, he argues that TBLT is widely considered to possess all these characteristics (p. 14). While TBLT has received some criticism (e.g., Seedhouse, 2005; Sheen, 2003; Swan, 2005; Widdowson, 2003), many researchers (e.g., East, 2021; East, 2017b; Ellis, 2018a; Long, 2015; Willis & Willis, 2007) laud its effectiveness in engaging learners in real-life language use. However, East (2017a) cautions about a potential gap between the theoretical underpinnings of TBLT and its practical implementation in classrooms. Additionally, as noted by Liu and Ren (2021), the philosophical foundation of TBLT lies in social constructivism, which views knowledge as constructed by individuals within a social context (p. 3). Furthermore, TBLT aligns with experiential learning principles by offering learners autonomy, a contrast to some traditional pedagogical methodologies (Kolb, 2015). This student-centred approach, where the teacher acts as a facilitator and monitor, fosters a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Despite having a positive attitude, teachers generally lack an in-depth understanding of TBLT, which is a less explored phenomenon, particularly in the Pakistani context (Ahmed & Mahmood, 2024). Therefore, this research attempts to address a gap in the existing literature by examining the cognition of English language teachers regarding TBLT in the Pakistani context.

Language Teacher Cognition

Language teacher cognition (LTC) encompasses personal aspects of language teachers, such as knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, feelings, emotions, attitudes, and thoughts, which significantly influence their instructional practices (Borg, 2019, p. 192). In recent decades, the exploration of LTC has gained significant momentum, focusing primarily on understanding teachers' beliefs about teaching various language elements such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (e.g., Baker, 2014; Chinda & Hinkelman, 2023; Nassaji et al., 2023). However, Borg (2019) posits that LTC is a complex phenomenon influenced by a variety of factors, including personal, social, cultural, and historical aspects. He argues that most LTC research concentrates on teachers' cognitive processes while neglecting the broader contextual considerations that significantly shape teacher cognition (pp. 192-194).

Key areas of LTC research, as categorised by Gabillon (2013), include beliefs and classroom practices, beliefs about the teaching profession, beliefs about innovation, the nature of beliefs, and differences in beliefs. Despite its advancements, LTC research faces several challenges, such as the absence of standardised terminology, small sample sizes, and a narrow focus. Van den Branden (2016) argues that teacher plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of TBLT. He claims that the teacher gives life to TBLT, which signifies the importance of LTC in TBLT. Several studies (e.g., Barnard & Viet 2010; Costa, 2016; Tajeddin & Mansouri, 2024; Ullah et al., 2020) explored this area, highlighting the significance of teacher cognition in task designing and implementation. Xhaferi and Xhaferi (2013) emphasise the need for teachers to possess a strong understanding of task characteristics and their impact on learning outcomes. Similarly, Erlam (2016) underscores the importance of teacher knowledge about designing tasks. However, research also reveals challenges related to teacher cognition in TBLT. Barnard and Viet's study (2010) points out that teachers lack confidence or experience in implementing task-based approaches, potentially hindering effective classroom practice. Furthermore, Tajeddin and Mansouri (2024) highlight the need for ongoing professional development to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of TBLT effectively.

Grammar Instruction

Grammar instruction can be categorised into two broad types: explicit and implicit instruction. Explicit instruction involves providing learners with clear information about specific grammar rules and how they operate, while implicit instruction does not attempt to make learners consciously aware of what they are supposed to learn (Ellis, 2015; Nassaji, 2017; Norris & Ortega, 2000). Studies (e.g., Baleghizadeh & Derakhshesh, 2017; Cunningham, 1990) that have compared explicit and implicit instruction, including different forms of explicit and implicit feedback, have generally found that explicit instruction is more effective than implicit instruction. Some scholars, such as Doughty (2003) and Ellis (2008), have raised concerns about the validity of these research findings on language acquisition. They argue that these studies rely too heavily on explicit knowledge tests, which measure declarative knowledge, as the primary means of evaluating language proficiency. For instance, many of the studies included in Norris and Ortega's (2001) meta-analysis predominantly used explicit knowledge tests rather than assessments of spontaneous language use. The scholars note that almost 90% of the

studies employed non-communicative, discrete point, or metalinguistic tests to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional methods.

Long's (1991) distinction between focus on form (FonF) and focus on forms (FonFs) represents another widely acknowledged categorisation that has profoundly influenced our understanding of grammar instruction. FonFs entails the conventional method of language instruction, which is structured around dissecting language into discrete components and presenting them to learners in an isolated and contextually detached manner (Long et al., 2001; Sheen, 2002; Shintani, 2013). In contrast, FonF directs learners' attention to linguistic structures "as they naturally arise during lessons primarily centred on conveying meaning or communication" (Long, 1991, pp. 45-46). Despite the generally favourable impact of incorporating attention to form within meaning-centred classrooms, studies that directly compared "focus on form" and "focus on forms" instruction did not uncover a significant distinction between the two approaches. For instance, Norris and Ortega (2000) conducted a comprehensive analysis that juxtaposed "focus on form" studies, which incidentally teach linguistic structures within a context primarily focused on meaning, with "focus on forms" studies, which present language forms in isolation, removed from communicative contexts. Their findings indicated that both approaches exhibited similar effectiveness, yielding comparable effect sizes (FonF, $d = 1.92$; FonFs, $d = 1.47$).

The distinction made by Norris and Ortega (2001) between FonF and FonFs studies can be challenging to interpret because most studies categorised as FonF typically involve some form of explicit instruction. Nevertheless, a few more recent studies (e.g., de la Fuente, 2006; Ellis & Shintani, 2013; Shintani, 2013, 2015; Valeo, 2013) have conducted comparisons between these two types of instruction and found no significant differences between them. Interestingly, one significant distinction between traditional language teaching methods and TBLT is their respective focus on forms and form. If there is no significant difference between FonF and FonFs, then why is there so much debate over the use of TBLT? The reasons for advocating TBLT are that it emphasises meaningful communication (Ellis, 2003), focuses on real-world tasks (Nunan, 2004), integrates various language skills (Willis & Willis, 2007), is more learner-centred (Skehan, 1998), prioritises task completion over accuracy (Skehan, 1996), is flexible and adaptable in different contexts (Ellis et al., 2020), possesses strong theoretical foundations (Long, 2015), and evaluates task performance as an assessment practice (Long & Norris, 2000).

English Language Teaching Practices in Pakistan

English has maintained its dominance in Pakistan since the country's inception, to the extent that researchers now commonly refer to it as ESL. However, it remains debatable whether English should be classified as an ESL or EFL in the country (e.g., Ahmad & Lanfeng, 2024; Jeevan et al., 2023). Students begin learning English as a second language (L2) from their early education in Pakistan; however, many undergraduate students appear to be incompetent in the English language – despite studying it for 11 to 12 years during their school education – especially those who have limited exposure to English in their environment (Baumgardner, 1990). In some regions of Pakistan, students commonly use their regional languages such as Punjabi, Sindhi, etc., and learn Urdu as a second language, making English their third language in such cases. Most of these students lack proficiency in all four major English language skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Akram, 2017; Warsi, 2004). This indicates that the teaching of the English language in Pakistan at the secondary level does not yield the desired results. Generally, the primary source of learning English is the classroom, where English is predominantly taught through GTM (Nawab, 2012). Students memorise essays, stories, and letters. Only a handful of private schools provide a conducive environment for English language learning (Shahid, et al., 2022).

All of this makes it very challenging for university teachers to enhance students' English language skills, especially considering that students possess very little basic knowledge of English. Consequently, teachers face numerous issues, including the implementation of advanced approaches in their English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. Despite some initiatives taken by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) (Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, n.d.), little significant change has been noticed in English language teaching practices in the country. Irfan et al. (2022) reveal that the curriculum of English language in Pakistani universities is designed without the need and situation analyses and also lacks materials and program evaluation. ELT practices vary significantly among teachers, who generally adhere to course outlines for teaching content and assessing students' learning based on institutional policy. Similarly, Yasmin et al. (2019) find that, despite some teachers' awareness of innovative ideas of language learning such as self-directed learning, teachers are unable to implement such practices in their classrooms due to educational, socio-political, psychological, and cultural issues such as extra workload, outdated curriculum, lack of resources, motivation, confidence, and a sense of responsibility, among others. Similarly, Manan et al. (2017) argue that English teaching practices

in Pakistan are contrary to what is assumed and anticipated. Some other studies (e.g., Arif et al., 2021) also highlight the shortcomings of ELT practices in Pakistani higher education institutions. Among various factors contributing to these prevailing practices, teacher cognition is important, as researchers (e.g., Borg, 2006, 2019; Johnson, 2006; Li, 2019) argue that teacher cognition, generally shaped by their education and experiences, directly influences their actions in English language classes. Therefore, this study aims to understand teacher cognition regarding the TBLT method, with a specific focus on grammar instruction as English language teaching in Pakistan is predominantly centred around grammar instruction.

Background of this Study

Most Pakistani university English language teachers hold an MPhil degree in English literature or linguistics, while a few possess an MPhil degree in ELT or TESOL. However, despite their prior educational specialisation in English, teaching predominantly occurs more traditionally. Generally, there are three English language courses at the undergraduate level recommended by the HEC: Functional English, Communication Skills, and Technical and Business Writing. Teachers deliver these courses based on their own teaching and learning exposure and their interpretation of the course outlines. Since the course outlines lack extensive details regarding teaching methodology, teachers often determine the approach and method of teaching themselves. Consequently, as the names of the courses suggest, these courses are taught using a mixed approach according to their contents. Sometimes, teachers focus on grammar instruction, while at other times, they emphasise oral proficiency using direct methods. There is little consensus among teachers regarding the teaching methods for these courses; furthermore, there is a notable lack of awareness among teachers of modern teaching methods such as TBLT (Zada, 2018). Although teachers may not be well-versed in the philosophy of TBLT, they may possess some basic knowledge of the TBLT framework due to a recent shift towards communicative teaching approaches at the university level. Moreover, there was some emphasis on improving English language teaching capacity by the HEC between 2004 and 2013 (Zaidi et al., 2020). Therefore, it would be interesting to explore the teacher cognition, mainly, their knowledge, beliefs, and attitude towards TBLT and assess how closely their practices align with TBLT principles while teaching grammar.

Research Questions

The study specifically focuses on the following research questions:

1. What are the Pakistani teachers' cognitions about TBLT as a language teaching pedagogy?
2. How do teachers perceive using TBLT for teaching grammar to undergraduate students at Pakistani universities?
3. How do their teaching practices interact with their cognitions?

Research Methodology

Research Setting and Participants

The study achieves set objectives through qualitative research methodology. Since the objectives of the study were to know the teachers' cognitions and their practices about task-based language teaching and see how their practices are aligned with their practices, the researchers collected data in the form of classroom observation and interviews. Our selection of teacher participants employed a purposive sampling strategy, aiming for diversity in data and specifically focusing on institutional context. We recruited teachers from five universities within Lahore, encompassing both public and private sectors. The public sector institutions included the University of the Punjab and the University of Education. Private universities were represented by the University of Central Punjab, the University of Management and Technology, and Riphah International University. We sought informed consent from 25 teachers, ultimately obtaining participation from 20. Classroom observations of these 20 teachers were conducted to examine their practices in action, followed by interviews to explore their cognitions regarding TBLT. Considering the dynamic nature of cognition, we intentionally included teachers with varying experience levels, ranging from 2 to 15 years. The participants were teaching English language courses at the undergraduate level at the aforementioned universities. Furthermore, the respondents comprised an equal number of male (n=10) and female (n=10) participants. These educators held advanced degrees, including MPhil or MS degrees in English Literature (n=5), Linguistics (n=8), Applied Linguistics (n=4), and ELT/TESOL (n=2), as well as a PhD in Applied Linguistics (n=1). Notably, none of these teachers had participated in task-based language teaching (TBLT) training or studied any courses on TBLT.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was conducted in two stages. First, classroom observations were employed to gather evidence on teachers' practices in task-based language teaching. These observations occurred in natural classroom settings, with the first author as a non-participant observer (Dörnyei,

2007). A semi-structured approach was used, combining elements of both structured and unstructured observation techniques (Cohen et al., 2007). To minimise observer reactivity, extended observation periods of at least one hour were implemented. Additionally, we assured teacher anonymity by providing only minimal information about the observed aspects to preserve natural teaching behaviours. Teachers were provided with minimal information about the observed aspects and were encouraged to conduct their lessons as they typically would. Additionally, they were assured of their anonymity. While live video recording would have been ideal for further mitigating reactivity, contextual limitations prevented its use. However, audio recordings of all observed lessons were captured using a mobile phone. Field notes were concurrently taken to supplement the audio data, as not all classroom interactions could be fully captured through audio alone. Pictures of material presentations and other teaching activities were also collected. Each teacher participant was observed once, with an average observation duration of 50 to 65 minutes.

The other data collection method employed was semi-structured interviews. Interviews were of two types: interviews on teacher cognitions about TBLT and stimulated recall discussions (Sanchez & Grimshaw, 2019) about observed practices. This approach aimed to avoid obtaining predetermined responses lacking depth and breadth in the participants' narratives (Dörnyei, 2007). The structured component of the interviews incorporated questions adapted and modified from Nishimuro and Borg (2013). The interview began by gathering background information from the teachers, including their prior English language learning experiences at the university level. The subsequent section focused on three key areas: teachers' general beliefs regarding TBLT, contextual factors influencing their practices, and any perceived discrepancies between their beliefs and their actual teaching methods. Later, stimulated recall interviews served as another data collection tool. These interviews were conducted concurrently with other interviews and scheduled shortly after classroom observations to maximise recall accuracy. While minimal prompts were required due to the recent observations, three main sources were utilised to stimulate participants' cognitive processes: audio recordings, classroom pictures, and field notes.

The data from observations and interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed into text using Microsoft Word's dictator and Otter.ai, a voice-to-text converter, ensuring transcription accuracy. The transcriptions were then analysed following general steps proposed by researchers (e.g., Clarke & Braun, 2017; Griffee, 2012). First, the data were grouped according to the research objectives. Next, codes were

defined, and themes were analysed using these codes with the help of MAXQDA 24 software. The major themes analysed included teachers' knowledge and beliefs about task-based language teaching (TBLT), the implementation of TBLT in Pakistani university ELT classrooms, the use or avoidance of TBLT by participants, and discrepancies between beliefs and practices.

Findings and Discussion

Teachers' Understanding of TBLT

The data analysis indicates that most teachers possess some level of understanding of task-based language teaching (TBLT), regardless of their educational background—whether an MPhil in English Literature, Linguistics, or Applied Linguistics. However, those with a degree in Applied Linguistics or ELT demonstrate a relatively better grasp of TBLT concepts, although their number is as low as two teachers. Additionally, in the Pakistani context, an MPhil degree in Literature and Linguistics—held by 18 out of 20 teachers in this study—has little focus on language teaching methodology. This is one of the obvious reasons why most teachers do not possess an in-depth knowledge of TBLT. Therefore, the data reveal that many teachers attempted to infer its meaning from the term itself, and some claimed they had heard of it but did not possess a detailed understanding.

Most teachers perceived TBLT as a language teaching method that engages students in performing tasks and expressed a positive attitude towards it, aligning with the findings of Liu et al. (2021) in the Chinese context. Nonetheless, their understanding of TBLT was superficial, showing minimal alignment with the theoretical and empirical discussions found in Ellis and Shintani (2013), Long (2015), Nunan (2006), and Willis and Willis (2007). For instance, most teachers (n=14) praised TBLT without providing a detailed description of tasks and the process of implementing them. Many conflated task-supported and task-based language teaching, indicating that while they are familiar with the term, they lack a thorough understanding of its principles (cf. Zada, 2018).

Teachers defined tasks as any activity conducted in English, such as carrying out interviews or giving presentations. However, they were uncertain whether these tasks were real-life scenarios or fabricated exercises typically used in communicative classroom teaching. Some teachers (n=7) consider traditional activities such as fill-in-the-blank exercises in grammar books as L2 tasks. This uncertainty indicates their limited understanding of the distinction between pedagogic tasks and real-

life tasks (e.g., Ellis, 2018b, p. 13). Similarly, approximately eight teachers perceived that TBLT prioritises function over form compared to traditional methods. In other words, these teachers advocated for a focus on meaning (FoM) rather than form, disregarding form-focused instruction, also indicated in Ahmed and Mahmood (2024). However, Ellis et al. (2020) argue that while methodological differences exist regarding the "focus on form", there is a growing consensus on the importance of attending to form, even as meaning remains the primary focus (p. 17). This notion is supported by Heydarzadeh et al. (2018), who compared FoF and FoM, finding FoF to be more effective. For instance, Rafia states:

> Most linguists focus on the functions of language rather than its structure, so task-based language teaching is one of the methods that help students perform specific functions. It essentially represents an advanced form of the communicative approach, wherein students are assigned tasks to complete using language. Therefore, I prefer this approach because it is innovative and effective.

Additionally, teachers' responses suggest a perception of TBLT as similar to the direct method (cf. Naik, 2013). Consequently, when advocating for TBLT, they often contrasted it with traditional methods like the Grammar-Translation Method. Considering other pedagogical aspects of TBLT, some teachers (n≈6) also expressed that TBLT fosters collaboration among students by engaging them in collective tasks. This aligns with one of the methodological principles suggested by Long (2015). Additionally, a few respondents view TBLT as a student-centred approach, a perspective supported by Ellis et al. (2020). Moreover, these teachers consider TBLT appropriate in the Pakistani context. As Tehseen asserts, "Since English language communication can be found in real Pakistani contexts, engaging students in communicative tasks is beneficial." Such findings suggest that a small group of teachers have some understanding of TBLT; however, it is rarely practised. For instance, classroom observations revealed that only two teachers implemented a partial TBLT approach, primarily focusing on writing skills for grammar instruction. A majority (n=11) adhered to traditional methods, while seven teachers employed the PPP method (Table 1). These findings underscore a significant discrepancy between teachers' professed beliefs about TBLT and their actual classroom practices.

Table 1 *Overview of Participants' Teaching Practices*

Pseudonym	Topic	Method	More Detail	% of the Use of L1
Intizar	Active and passive	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	90
Shakir	Subject-verb agreement	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	80
Suhail	Conjunction	PPP	Skill integration, exercises, focus on language	10
Faiza	Parts of a sentence	PPP	Focus on forms, terminology	40
Tayaba	Parts of speech	Traditional method	Skill integration, exercises, focus on language	10
Aadil	Subject-verb agreement	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	10
Rafia	Sentence structure	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	90
Uzma	Subject-verb agreement	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	90
Zainab	Punctuation	PPP	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	40
Tehseen	Parallelism	Traditional method	Focus on forms,	60

			exercises, terminology	
Sheraz	Parts of a sentence	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	50
Ali	Writing - general grammar	TBLT	Focus on skills, implicit grammar teaching,	50
Ishfaq	Parts of speech	Traditional method	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	60
Khan	Writing - general grammar	TBLT	Skill integration, exercises, focus on language	10
Janhzeb	Parts of a sentence	Traditional method	Focus on forms, terminology	50
Shabana	Writing - general grammar	PPP	Skill integration, exercises, focus on language	10
Sidra	Tenses	PPP	Focus on forms, exercises, terminology	80
Mustafa	Parallel structure	PPP	Skill integration, exercises, focus on language	80

In conclusion, it can be argued that while teachers in Pakistani universities are aware of TBLT as a modern teaching pedagogy, they lack a comprehensive understanding of its principles and applications. Their

understanding of TBLT is somewhat superficial and not necessarily grounded in research or practice.

Teachers' Cognitions about Grammar Instruction Through TBLT

One primary objective of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of TBLT for grammar instruction, given the predominant focus on grammar in Pakistani English language teaching. While most teachers viewed TBLT as suitable for oral communication, they generally preferred traditional methods for grammar. These findings align with previous research (e.g., Ali & Ali, 2018). However, a minority recognised TBLT's potential for grammar instruction, consistent with Yildiz and Senel (2017).

Regarding grammar teaching methods, explicit instruction was favoured by most, with a smaller group supporting task-based approaches. As Long (2015) emphasises, differentiating between FonF and FonFs is crucial for distinguishing TBLT from traditional methods. However, most teachers (n≈14) exhibited a limited understanding of this distinction, mirroring Sharif's (2021, pp. 14-15) findings on teachers' uncertainty about "what to teach" and "how to teach". A few teachers demonstrated a grasp of implicit grammar teaching, integrating grammar into communicative activities. Nevertheless, the majority's practices aligned closely with traditional, FonFs approaches.

For instance, Adil's teaching exhibited a PPP structure, despite his expressed support for a different approach during the interview.

> Although my understanding of FonF and FonFs is not entirely clear, I believe that teaching grammar implicitly through integration with communicative tasks, such as writing an email using specific grammatical structures, can be more effective. This approach is preferable to teaching parts of speech, clauses, and phrases in isolation, without incorporating them into meaningful communicative activities.

Teachers (n=14) consistently prioritised grammatical components like parts of speech, punctuation, phrases, and clauses as the foundation for their grammar lessons. Their instructional approach typically involved initial explicit teaching followed by reinforcement through practice activities. When further queried about instructional methodologies, teachers emphasised the role of exercises in student engagement. These exercises were commonly administered in class or as homework (cf. Akram, 2017, p. 13). For example, Suhail advocated for the use of grammar exercises, stating:

> A general practice at our university is that I rely on grammar exercises sourced from reputable international grammar books, such as "Oxford Practice English Grammar" by John Eastwood. Additionally, I generally present grammar to the students as it is generally presented in these books. I believe that to increase students' grammar knowledge and proficiency, they should be made to practice grammar exercises found in such grammar resources. Moreover, it is also useful to explore online platforms to access additional exercises.

Teachers expressed varied approaches to assessing grammar knowledge. While some favoured traditional methods such as multiple-choice exercises, which also aligned with their regular assessment practices, others advocated for using writing tasks for grammar assessment. The emphasis on teaching grammatical terminology, supported by nearly 15 teachers, often correlated with assessment practices. For instance, Sheraz believes:

> Yes, it is very much important because they are students of language. So, while assessing the language, they must be able to know the functions of different words. I believe that they should not memorise, but rather have a clear understanding of all of it.

Assessing terminology and forms in isolation is easier, especially when class sizes are larger, a common challenge in implementing TBLT in the Asian context, as highlighted by Ji (2017, p. 158).

Teachers' Cognitions about Implementing TBLT for Grammar Instruction

Most teachers (n=12) appear optimistic about the possibility and necessity of implementing TBLT for grammar instruction at Pakistani universities. This perspective is also supported by several studies (e.g., Ahmad et al., 2021; Rashid, 2017; Tahir, 2023), which suggest that TBLT can be effectively implemented at various levels to teach English in the Pakistani context. However, while most teachers agree on the potential for implementing TBLT, some exhibited uncertainties about its practical implementation. For instance, despite scholarly debates on the issue, some believe that TBLT prohibits the use of the mother tongue (L1), which may complicate task-based language learning activities in the Pakistani context. Ellis et al. (2020) argue that whether L1 should be used or avoided in TBLT classes is debatable. Similarly, Hung (2012) suggests that L1 can be utilised in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, provided it does not impede the L2 learning process.

Furthermore, many teachers perceive opportunities for implementing TBLT in their English language classes. They believe there is a natural space for adopting a language teaching method, as it is common among teachers to adhere to specific methods for effective English language instruction. However, they also acknowledge the potential challenges in implementing TBLT. For instance, Tayaba expressed:

> I believe that teachers never rely solely on one method and often incorporate multiple methods in their classroom teaching. TBLT can indeed be effectively implemented by assigning different tasks to students in every class, thereby emphasizing the practical application of language skills similar to real-life contexts. Despite the availability of sufficient time and flexibility in the classroom environment, implementing such approaches can be challenging at times, particularly due to large class sizes.

Despite expressing enthusiasm for TBLT implementation in Pakistani universities, most teachers (n=13) identified several challenges. Large class size, as discussed above, a prevalent issue in the Asian context (Ji, 2017; Mushtaq, 2023), emerged as a significant obstacle. While the average undergraduate class size is around 40 to 60 students, private universities often enroll even larger cohorts, particularly in programs like DPT and BSCS. Insufficient classroom facilities, as highlighted by Sumaira, further compounded these difficulties. For instance, most of the public sector universities lack modern resources in language classes, for instance, internet, multimedia, heater or air conditioner, etc. Moreover, a lack of teacher training in TBLT posed an additional barrier to its widespread adoption.

Reasons for Using or Avoiding TBLT

Many teachers claimed to incorporate elements of TBLT into their grammar instruction, expressing readiness to implement it whenever feasible. However, a notable discrepancy emerged between teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its actual implementation. Teachers often equated any assigned task or assignment with TBLT, demonstrating a misconception about the approach. This perception is widespread among teachers and highlights a common gap between TBLT theory and practice (Bygate, 2020). Despite the widespread use of tasks and assignments, classroom observations revealed a significant discrepancy between these activities and authentic TBLT tasks. Consequently, the observed teaching practices could not be classified as TBLT.

Despite divergent interpretations of TBLT among teachers and researchers, some teachers believe that they implement TBLT for reasons

such as (a) its focus not solely on forms, unlike traditional teaching methodologies. For example, Uzma responded:

> One of the dilemmas in Pakistan is that students may understand the mechanics of the language, such as grammatical rules, but they struggle with the practical application of language skills in communicative activities. For instance, while students may know that they need to add an "S" with a singular subject in the present indefinite tense, they often encounter difficulties when it comes to engaging in communicative tasks.

Similarly, (b) a few also highlighted that TBLT offers a more communicative approach compared to previous methodologies. (c) Some also emphasised that TBLT engages students in active tasks rather than passive reading and writing, aligning closely with the core philosophy of TBLT. (d) Another important aspect discussed by most teachers is that TBLT maintains students' interest and motivates them to learn, which is crucial for L2 learning.

Teachers with a background in literature (n=6) demonstrated limited awareness of TBLT. While they reported involving students in performing tasks, they were uncertain whether these tasks aligned with TBLT principles. This group of teachers did not appear to advocate for TBLT, although most agreed on the importance of engaging students in task-based activities. This may be due to their limited familiarity with TBLT.

It can be noted that teachers employ TBLT based on their individual cognitions and understanding of the approach. Additionally, it is concluded that teachers who rely on traditional teaching methods may incorporate certain tasks and perceive their teaching as somewhat aligned with TBLT. However, most of them support TBLT as a potential language teaching method in the Pakistani higher education context.

Conclusion and Recommendations

TBLT is one of the well-researched teaching pedagogies in modern language education and is widely practised for teaching second languages. Given its potential applicability in the Pakistani context, this study aims to investigate teachers' cognitions about TBLT and its utilisation. The findings reveal that teachers possess some understanding of TBLT and perceive the potential for its implementation for grammar instruction at the undergraduate level in Pakistani universities. Despite their somewhat limited understanding, teachers generally endorse the use of TBLT in teaching English language. Therefore, it is implied that teachers may

readily embrace TBLT in their classrooms if provided with adequate training, materials, and support. Based on the study's findings, we recommend that Pakistani universities' management take the initiative in implementing suitable methodologies for English language teaching and organise teacher training programs on methodologies like TBLT. While the Higher Education Commission has previously invested resources in improving English language teaching conditions in Pakistan (Higher Education Commission, n.d.), there has been little focus on adopting appropriate teaching methodologies. Therefore, the study recommends that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) prioritise the adoption of effective teaching methodologies at the university level in Pakistan. Additionally, since this study includes participants solely from Lahore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies incorporating participants from other cities to ensure broader representation.

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Appendix

Interview Protocol and Post-Observation Discussion

Teachers were generally asked the following types of questions; however, the exact questions varied across teachers depending on their responses to certain questions and observations made in their classes.

Section I: Introduction and Learning Experiences

1: Background

- Background Information
- Years of ELT experience
- Educational Background

2: Experience of Learning the English Language

1. Can you describe your experiences of leaning English grammar? How did you learn it: during language studies, your teaching experience, or never learnt?

2. Are you familiar with any theories of second language acquisition (SLA)?

3. What are your perspectives on utilizing tasks to teach grammar to English language learners?

Section II

3: General Beliefs about Teaching Grammar through Tasks

1. Do you think grammar instruction is necessary to acquire English?

2. Do you think students should be taught grammar in English courses at the undergraduate level?

3. What is the role of grammar in language teaching?

4. Are you the proponent of teaching grammar explicitly or implicitly focusing more on communicative task completion than on focusing on grammatical forms?

5. Do you follow any particular method of English language teaching?

a.   Which is the most suitable method of language teaching in your opinion?

6.   How do you define a "task" in English language teaching?

7.   What are your beliefs about integrating grammar instruction within task-based language teaching or task-supported language teaching?

8.   Can you discuss specific grammar tasks you use in your ELT classes?

9.   What are the benefits of teaching grammar through tasks compared to traditional methods?

10.   What challenges have you encountered when implementing grammar tasks in your teaching?

11.   Do you perceive TBLT as a potential language teaching approach for teaching English at the undergraduate level in Pakistan?

A Comparative Study on Gender Identity Construction in Item Songs of Lollywood and Bollywood

Syed Hamza Imam[1*]

Abstract

Songs have the ability to construct and reinforce gender identity when they are exposed to young audiences. It conveys these identities to adolescents in such a way that they adapt them unconsciously. Past studies have analyzed Lollywood and Bollywood songs separately but did not compare them. The purpose of this study was to find the role of Lollywood and Bollywood, particularly their item songs, in gender identity construction. Furthermore, the study compared the representations of men and women in Bollywood and Lollywood songs, which gives insight to the embedded similarities among them. The data analysis involved the thematic analysis of 10 item songs from both the music industries, i.e., Lollywood and Bollywood, selected through the purposive sampling technique. The analysis was conducted according to Clarke and Braun's (2017) method of thematic analysis. The results disclosed several elements of sexist language in the selected item songs. The major themes found in the data were misogyny, magnification of one-sided love, biasness towards men and women, and stereotypical description of men and women. The findings of this research may help scholars to comprehend diverse types of sexist element constructing gender and make suggestions to remove this component from the entertainment media.

Keywords: Bollywood, Comparison, Item songs, Lollywood, Sexism, Thematic Analysis.

Introduction

Language is an important equipment for communicating emotions, beliefs, and attitudes, and these beliefs, feelings, and behaviors are strongly impacted by language use and play a relatively important role in establishing gender roles (Wilson, 1997). Verbal language is one of the most effective means through which gender norms are executed and nourished. The basis of gender stereotypes like the expectation from women to display cooperative qualities (e.g., caring, loving, and soft), and expectations from men to display certain qualities (e.g., productive, and

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strong) are generated in the lexical selections of normal communication (Maass & Arcuri, 1996). Language does not only generate stereotypes but also influences people's awareness and attitude, the use of verbal language compatible with gender stereotypes establishing and reinforcing such notions and can generate real discrimination between men and women (Eagly, 2000).

There is a clear distinction between sex and gender. As per Thomas and Wareing (1999), sex means physical classification and gender means social classification. Gender is mostly used to explain the social attitudes and traits related to the sex of the individual. The differences in physical features affect social exercises. Therefore, gender is based on people's perception of themselves as either a male or a female (Bem, 1993). Gender establishment is not a short process; it takes a lot of repeated training and a long time to practice gender by the people (Zaidi, 2016). This idea is deep rooted in our everyday life. Resultantly, a person must adapt to the set of roles, characteristics, and rules, associated with gender. Gender is comprehended as reconciled and established through language and structure (Whittle, 2000).

Gender roles are systematic structures of behaviors and attitudes expected of people established on their physical sex (Lindsey, 2015). These structures of attitudes are established on gender standards, which are guided by attitudes in certain circumstances. Gender identity refers to the individual inference of someone as a man or a woman or sometimes both. Patriarchy is a system in which men are dominant over women and have all the privileges of society (Stacey, 1993). It is a set of social discrimination based on gender, which gives advantages to men while giving serious restrictions on women (Humm, 1989). In opposition to this notion of patriarchy, feminism came into existence. Daly (1978) argues that the purpose of feminism is to make both male and female gender independent from the strict societal roles, which are been required of them.

Background of Study

The people of Pakistan and India have a shared history of more than a millennium. Their cultures, attitudes, and beliefs are similar up to a large extent, as both are typical patriarchial societies. Another common thing between both countries is their love for cinema. The population of both the countries enjoy both Lollywood and Bollywood cinemas and their music. Lollywood and Bollywood cinemas are nurturing the cultural properties through films and songs, which are originated from the old history of the sub-continent. It has been verified that the media in general and music in specific has the power to influence people's thoughts and beliefs. Exposure

to music is a substantial component of youngsters' lives, as it becomes a tool of identity formation for them (Hargreaves et al., 2003). Traditional music affects and contributes the most in construction of youngsters' identities (Martino et al., 2006). Moreover, Nowotny (2016) argues that the sexual perceptions of the audience are influenced by the involvement of sexual scenes in music videos. As per Tager (1997), watching films and dramas leads the audience to another world of imagination, the imagination on which our opinions are shaped, and we compare these imaginations to our real-world knowledge. Therefore, it would be beneficial to investigate Lollywood and Bollywood songs as they are listened to and comprehended by almost two billion people living in both countries.

Statement of the Problem

Gender identity is generated among people through exercise and repeated practice in such a way that people are restrained to accomplish gender uniformity. Passive Audience Theory of media suggests that the audience has usually no choices to select from when it moves toward media content and therefore, they consume whatever the media is generating (Wallace & Wolf, 1995). Like this view, songs can be perceived as influential stimuli in opinion construction whose content people do not get to select rationally. Ali and Batool (2015) asserted that media primarily promote and reinforce the patriarchal system, and their portrayals are approved as standard. Thus, songs should be viewed as the makers of socio-cultural beliefs and not only as a form of art (Cook, 1998). In addition, Holtzman and Sharpe (2014) argue that messages in songs give backgrounds that educate gender norms. The current study regards gender as a societal notion that affects visions and beliefs in the subcontinent community. It claims that the patriarchal system in the subcontinent is the root cause of gender inequality in present Pakistan and India. Item songs in Lollywood and Bollywood reflect patriarchal society and strengthen social values and beliefs. Item songs have been chosen because these songs are prevalent in both countries. They influence a large number of people in society.

The main objective of this study is to analyze how gender identity of both men and women is constructed in prevalent item songs in both Lollywood and Bollywood. The study also aims to find out the gender roles associated with both genders, by analyzing the sexist lyrics of the recent item songs in both film industries i.e., Lollywood and Bollywood. As the study exposes the sexist language, it is presumed that these songs leave psychological impacts on the listeners of Pakistani and Indian audience. Therefore, the study highlights the linguistic choices that have been made in these item songs, which exhibit gender identity construction. It also

compares both the music industries i.e., Lollywood and Bollywood, which may help understanding the behavior towards both the gender's mindsets.

Research Question

The study addresses the following research question:

1) How do Lollywood and Bollywood item songs construct gender identity through their linguistic choices?

Literature Review

Gender establishment is not a short process; it takes a lot of repeated training and a long time to practice gender by the people (Zaidi, 2016). This idea is deep rooted in our everyday life. Resultantly, a person must adapt to the set of roles, characteristics, and rules, associated with gender. Then this gender makes us work on distinct roles like a mother, father, son, or a daughter. Society has lofty expectations from a person to act in such a way that is according to that role (Chakravarty, 1989). Whittle (2000) specifies gender identity as a reply of a person to the question which is asked by themselves whether they are a woman or a man. Gender is comprehended as reconciled and established through language and structure. Theories of the social construction of gender demonstrate that there is no critical, worldwide-accepted identity that is either feminine or masculine. Gender is established and reinforced in an everlasting process of social relations (Edley & Wetherell, 1997). The construction of gender identity comprehends the effective role a person played in the formation of their identity. It demonstrates that a person can assume a gender from the range of male and female. The establishment of gender identity is dynamic, unstable, variable, and shifting (Carrigan et al., 1985).

In the past, several studies have explored the phenomenon of gender identity construction in various domains of society. For example, the application of male terms to refer to all people in general has been researched by many studies. Pauwels (2003) argues that women are often prey to sexist language, but it is not limited to them. Rasool et al. (2019) investigated the use of sexist language in the text of primary-level English textbooks in the schools of Punjab, Pakistan. He found that the male characters in these textbooks are over-represented. He also found out that the roles assigned to the characters are also stereotyped. He concluded that the language used in these textbooks is also gender-biased and promotes sexism. Similarly, Talosa and Malenab-Temporal (2018) conducted a study to analyze the presence of sexist language in the written discourse of

preschool teachers by doing content analysis. They found out that written discourses were generic pronouns 'he' and 'she.'

In the case of media, Ullah and Khan (2014) argued that television commercials depict women as sexual objects. Sexually objectification is communicated to women that if they use a specific beauty item such as shampoo, a whitening lotion, or body cream, it will boost their probability to find a handsome man. In Pakistani drama serials, the women are mostly represented as restrained, weak, and voiceless. The vastly tried and experimented procedure to get a large viewership in drama serials is to show a woman as a crybaby. Another example of extreme characterization is that a woman is portrayed as cunning and bitter. A drama that shows a suppressed woman, depicted as "white," also characterizes a bitter woman, who is the ambassador of "black" (Armaan, 2021).

Qazalbash et al. (2021) conducted research on the songs of South Asia. They found the representation of women in South Asian Punjabi songs, using the same methodology. They found out that in South Asian Punjabi songs, the male singers often used certain lyrics in their songs that portray women as materialists. They also argued that men control language in South Asia, and they represent everything, as they want to. These songs give a notion that woman is unfaithful and disloyal. Hence, the women are represented very negatively in South Asian Punjabi songs. The study also revealed that the main cause of this biased representation is the patriarchal system in our society. Similarly, Zaidi (2016) analyzed Urdu wedding songs to find their role in the construction of gender. She translated the lyrics of Urdu wedding songs and analyzed them thematically. The study marriage is portrayed in these songs as the goal of women; they are not concerned about any other thing in their lives. The study then concluded that the wedding songs give the notion that it is the duty of married women to be submissive to their husbands and in-laws.

In the case of Bollywood, Rizwan (2011) conducted a study to find out how the femininities and masculinities are linguistically represented in the songs of a Bollywood film i.e., Dabbang. He argued that the prevailing notion of women's place and roles in society has been clearly depicted in the songs of this film. Using the same feminist lens, Siddiqi (2020) explored how lyrics of sexist songs promote patriarchal system and sexism. By analyzing nine Bollywood songs, he found out that these sexist lyrics depict women in their societal gender roles, and they portray women as inferior to men. Furthermore, Slatewala (2019) argued that Indian cinema has started to produce a lot more item songs recently, as compared to previous decades. As Bollywood has an enormous effect on everyday lives of people, it is wrong to say that these item songs do not affect the

mentality of the people. On analysis, it was evident Bollywood item songs promote sexual violence and normalize sexual aggression. Hence, Bollywood contributes to promoting gender roles, sexist behaviors, and sexual violence.

On the other hand, Zaidi (2016) analyzed the Lollywood Urdu wedding songs to find their role in the construction of gender. The study found that the brides are over-praised in these songs. The event of the marriage is the goal of women; they are not concerned about any other thing in their lives. The main aim of the women in their marriage is to look beautiful; their marriage will be happy and triumphant if they look extremely beautiful. The study then concluded that the wedding songs give the notion that it is the duty of married women to be submissive to their husbands and in-laws. Although some research, as discussed above, has already been conducted on songs of different genres in both Lollywood and Bollywood music industries, no study has analyzed the item songs of these industries specifically. Furthermore, the current study is unique in its approach as it compares the items songs of both the industries, thus reflecting the similarities between them.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach because it aims to explore the underlying themes, discourse patterns, and linguistic choices in item songs that construct gender identity. A qualitative approach is particularly suitable as it allows for an in-depth interpretative analysis of how gender norms are reflected in media representations (Creswell, 2013). Given that media discourse analysis is interpretative in nature, qualitative methods provide a deeper understanding of implicit gender ideologies and power structures embedded in song lyrics.

Sampling and Data Collection

The study employed purposive sampling because the focus was on highly popular and widely recognized item songs that had the most impact on audience perceptions. The selection was based on viewership data (e.g., YouTube views, music chart rankings), cultural influence, and social discourse surrounding the songs. The time frame (2011-2018) was chosen to reflect contemporary gender portrayals rather than outdated trends.

Table 1. The details of selected songs

No.	Song	Album/Movie	Lyricist	Industry
1	Chirya	Chakkar	Sarmad Qadeer	LW12022
2	Noori	Superstar	Azaan	LW22019
3	Item Number	Teefa in trouble	Ali Zafar	LW32018
4	Billi	Na Maloom Afraad 2	Nabeel	LW42017
5	Tutti fruity	Karachi se Lahore	Shakeel Sohail	LW52016
6	Makhna	T-series	Honey singh	BW12019
7	Yeh Baby	Yeh Baby	Garry Sandhu	BW22018
8	Coca cola	Coca Cola Tu	Tony Kakkar	BW32018
9	Na Ja Na Ja	Na Ja Na Ja	Manav Sangha	BW42017
10	Main Tera Boyfriend	Raabta	Rakesh Kumar	BW52017

Technique of Data Analysis

The current research gave insights of the cinematic representations of men and women and the projection of sexist ideologies in the item songs of Pakistan and India i.e., Lollywood and Bollywood. The study was thus descriptive in nature. In this study, Clarke and Braun (2017) method of thematic analysis integrated with Saldana's (2013) codification technique was used to explore the representations of men and women and ideologies behind these representations in Pakistani and Indian cinema. Thematic analysis is a process of finding the themes within qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The following six steps were undertaken for the data analysis:

- Familiarization with data – The lyrics were transcribed and examined multiple times.

- Generating initial codes – Gender-related phrases (e.g., objectification, stereotyping) were coded.
- Searching for themes – Codes were grouped into broader themes like misogyny, gender stereotyping, and objectification.
- Reviewing themes – Patterns across Lollywood and Bollywood were compared.
- Defining and naming themes – Themes were refined based on recurring linguistic elements.
- Producing the report – Themes were contextualized using feminist media discourse.

To ensure reliability and validity, the coding was cross-verified by an independent researcher, and data triangulation was conducted using secondary sources such as media reviews and audience reception.

Analysis and Discussion

The main themes found in the selected data were *misogyny*, *magnification of one-sided love*, *biasness towards men and women*, and *stereotypical description*.

Table 2. Misogyny in Lollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Me karaari karaari hun... Aa chabaa le supari hun... jo bhulaa dai saara jahaan... who nasheeli booti hun me" (LW52016), "Gutka me hun chabaa le... Baaja me hun bajaa le... Gadda me hun bicha le Jhandaa me hun lgaa le" (LW42017), "Nashe di me poori than... Me crazy puri han... Sab ka dil lay ur jau... Me aesi chiriya" (LW12022)	karaari karaari, chabaa, supari, nasheeli booti, gutka, baaja gadda, jhandaa, nashe di poori, me crazy puri, chiriya,	Objectification	Misogyny
"Agar kaatu me rasta to dange krau" (LW42017)	dange krau	Women as conflict	

Table 3. Misogyny in Bollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Tujhe diamond jese sambhal ke rakhna (BW12019), "Teri life me dena chahta hu dakhal... Meri ex se milti hai teri shakal... Meri lambe sabar ka tu hai phal" (BW12019), "O Sandhua kabutri nu rakh saamb ke. Kithe hath chon pharak na jave" (BW22018)	Diamond Dakhal, phal Saamb, pharak, kabutri,	Objectification	Misogyny
"Mundyan vich sare paasay tere charchay... Daang na kharak kithe jave" (BW22018)	Charchay	Women as alluring	

The emergent theme of *Misogyny* was found equally in both Bollywood and Lollywood songs. The verses like "Tujhe diamond jese sambal ke rakhna" (Safeguard you as a diamond) clearly show that women are considered a possession of men, which is a common form of misogyny. There are various shapes of misogyny present in the selected songs. These forms include objectification, women as alluring, considering women as possession, and portraying women conflict. Slater and Tiggemann (2002) argued that those women experience more sexual objectification than other women who live in those environments and cultures where the objectification of women is facilitated and celebrated. Hence, in most patriarchal societies like Pakistan and India where men enjoy dominance, they consider women as their possession. The second category of misogyny was *women as alluring*. It is often seen in sexual violence cases in sub-continent contexts that people blame the victim (women) for tempting men. They blame women for inviting men toward them. Victim blaming for sexual assault cases is quite common in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The filmmakers of these countries, such as those extremely well-known Bollywood directors, should also be held responsible (Shahid et al., 2021). The third category of misogyny found in the selected data was women as conflict. In patriarchal society, women are often called the apple of discord.

Table 4. Magnification of one-sided love in Lollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Me item number nahi karu gi... Jo karna hai karwa le. O tera item number full chale ga... Tu likh ke ye rakhwa le" (LW32018)	Nahi karu gi, bht chale ga	Self-created beliefs	Magnification of one-sided love

Table 5. Magnification of one-sided love in Bollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Kyu ghabraati baaten chupati... Paas Bula ke dur kiyu jati" (BW12019)	Ghabrati, Dur kiyu jati, Han kara ke chadni	Inability to accept refusal.	Magnification of one-sided love

The next emergent sexist theme found in the selected songs is the *magnification of one-sided love*. The selected item songs of Bollywood and Lollywood have many examples where several men are portrayed as one-sided lovers. The lyrics portray that the persuading of women by the one-sided lover is considered heroism, even though they are repeatedly answered 'no.' The young audience believes that the reel is real and eventually makes ideas about them. However, when these expectations are not fulfilled in real life, it leads to disappointment. The first category that emerged in this category was the *inability to accept refusal*. This concept is also deeply rooted in the sub-continent context. This is a typically patriarchal notion that being rejected by a woman is a danger to a man's manliness. Thus, they do not accept the fact that they are rejected and keep on trying repeatedly to achieve their goal. The next category of this emergent theme is self-*created beliefs*. This belief has emerged from the very concept that men are the ultimate power in society. According to Fuller (2001), the expression of masculinity for a man in a patriarchal society is correlated with governing the women in their households and assuring that women play their roles excellently. The women who fail to fulfill those gender roles are said to threaten a man's manliness.

Table 6. Biases towards men and women in Lollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Tutti frutti hu me... Bari beauty cutie hu me... Dekho koray malmal jesi meri jawani ko" (LW52016), "Patli kamariya, teekhi nazariya" (LW12022), "Billi tere roop kay jalway zamana jaanay" (LW42017)	Beauty, cutie, jawani, patli kamariya, roop	Power in form of appearance	Biasness towards men and women
"Mere nakhre utha le jo. Us ki sari ki sari hu me" (LW52016)	Sari ki sari hu	Power in the form of wealth	

Table 7. Biases towards men and women in Bollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Patli qamar teri OMG... Tight jeans teri D & G" (BW12019)	Qamar, jeans	Attention to the appearance of women	Biasness towards men and women

The next emergent theme in the selected data was *Biasness towards men and women*. The first category under this emergent theme is *power in form of wealth* for women. Notably, this sub-theme is present in all the selected item songs of Lollywood and Bollywood. It is quite common that women are given extra importance because of their looks and physical appearance. In these sexist item songs, the extra focus of the lyricist is on the minute physical details of the women's body to catch the attention of the viewers, as portrayed by the lyrics. The second category in *power in form of wealth for men*. These criteria are visible in sub-continent societies in specific and the entire world in general. Men are judged based on their earnings and financial status in society. Zhang et al (2019) who defines Evolved Preference Theory examine this problem. It states that men look for fertile partners who can produce healthy children for them. On the contrary, women look for potential men who have healthy resources. Such notions give depression to those men who cannot earn a significant amount of money and think that they have failed badly.

Table 8. Stereotypical Description in Lollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Dil jalon ki hai... Mann chalon ki hai... Mere piche kattaar" (LW52016)	Kattaar (line)	Men as stalkers	Stereotypical Description
"Mere nakhre utha le jo. Us ki sari ki sari hu me" (LW52016)	Sari ki sari	Women as materialistic	

Table 9. Stereotypical Description in Bollywood

Text	Code	Category	Theme
"Me or mere kalakar... Sab beth ke karen cheer" (BW12019), "Ruk te ja meri gal te sun le, o mainu kehendi na na na na" (BW52017), "Rurka da munda piche mar da ae geriyan... Vekh de aa morni aj kiven bachdi" (BW22018)	Beth ke, cheer Ruk te ja, Mar da ae, geriyan	Men as stalkers	Stereotypical Description
"Nakhre tere da tapmaan kiven jhailan" (BW22018), "At tera nakhra tera hi kusur" (BW42017)	Nakhre, tapmaan, kusur	Women as tantrum showers	

The fourth and final emergent theme was the *Stereotypical description*. This theme indicates the role of lyrics in producing and maintaining gendered stereotypes. These songs work as catalysts in creating a gender gap. A gendered stereotype that was found in the data was *women as materialistic*. Notably, no man in these songs was portrayed as materialistic. This trait was given to only female characters. Unconsciously, the media illustrates the norms of society and thus reinforces them through its portrayal. It is a usual notion in these societies that women always go after money and the financial status of men. In the lyrics found in the selected data, the woman is asserting that he will be that man's possession who will take care of her finances. These words give a notion that a woman is always materialistic and always goes after a man who can feed her and make her happy and satisfied with his money. This

makes the next category of *men as stalkers.* The one-sided lovers in sexist songs are often depicted as stalkers. When they cannot approach a girl directly, they start to stalk her to achieve their goals. Many films and songs show that one-sided lovers often use the means of stalking to fulfill their desires and achieve their goals. It is also worth noting that there was no sign of men being stalked in these item songs. They were always portrayed as indolent stalkers and women as victims. Thus, the songs contribute to the stereotype that only men are stalkers, forgetting the effects of stalking on the human mind.

The last category of this theme is *women as tantrum showers*. In many of the selected item songs, the women were shown as tantrum showers, although there is not such research, which show that women are more tantrum showers than men are. Freeman (2020) conducted a study to find out the trend of throwing tantrums between men and women and found that there was a very slight difference between men and women, and men were slightly high on the list of tantrum showers. Still only women are shown as tantrum showers and not men in item songs of the selected data.

Conclusion

The study was conducted to see how gender identity was constructed linguistically in the item songs of Lollywood and Bollywood. The study also compared both the music industries i.e., Lollywood and Bollywood, which may help understanding the behavior towards both the gender's mindsets. To find the role of item songs of Lollywood and Bollywood in gender identity construction, ten item songs (5 each) from both Lollywood and Bollywood music industry were analyzed according to Clarke and Braun (2017) method of thematic analysis. The major themes found in the selected data were misogyny, magnification of one-sided love, biasness towards men and women, and stereotypical description of men and women.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its applicability, the study is restricted in various ways. Firstly, the sample data selected for this study is limited. Only 5 item songs from each music industry, i.e., Lollywood and Bollywood were analyzed. Secondly, the genre of the songs was only of one type i.e., item songs. Other genres of popular music like romantic songs and sad songs were not included, which could give a further comparative approach to the study. Moreover, the study did not find the effects of the construction of gender identity through these songs, in the minds of the audience.

Implications of the Study

The study is of interest to the researchers of both the countries i.e., Pakistan and India, due to its comparative approach. The findings of this research may help scholars to comprehend different types of sexist element constructing gender; it may provide a guide to lyricists and entertainers to reassess their linguistic choices to eliminate social tussle in terms of gender and make suggestions to remove this component from the entertainment media. Furthermore, it was also noted during the analysis that all the selected item songs of Lollywood and Bollywood music industry, were written by male lyricists. Hence, future studies can be conducted to find the role of men (male lyricists) in constructing gender identity through these songs.

Future Recommendations

Future researchers can use comprehensive data, i.e., use more songs in their studies, to find more elements in songs which construct gender identity. They can also compare several genres of popular music of both Lollywood and Bollywood music industry, as the current study used only one genre i.e., item songs. Furthermore, studies can be conducted using a psychological approach to find out the impact of these songs on the minds of the audience of both countries.

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Gemination in Pashto

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate gemination in the Yousafzai dialect of Pashto, spoken in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. To achieve this goal, audio data was collected from elder native speakers. The collected data was subsequently discussed multiple times with elders and linguistic experts to ensure accuracy. Later on, a list of ten words was created and presented to native Pashto speakers. The words were presented to participants in Pashto script alongside their English translations, and they were asked to utter them. The recordings were made using a Zoom H6 recorder and analyzed using Praat. During the acoustic analysis, the recorded data was segmented, revealing that geminate consonants have double duration compared to their singleton counterparts. The results revealed that the word /χkar/ means 'horn' carrying a voiceless velar /k/ has 13ms, and the same consonant has 22ms in the word /ra:χkkal/. Similarly, the words /mla/ and /sammla/ were acoustically analyzed and the results displayed that the segment /m/ has 8ms in /mla/ and 15ms in /sammla/ which has almost got twice duration in later. Furthermore, among the phonemes, the most frequently occurring consonants carrying gemination are nasal, dental, alveolar, and velar.

Keywords: Pashto, gemination, singleton, phonemes, duration.

Introduction

Pakistan has got a very diverse background having different languages, among them, Pashto is one of the dominant languages spoken in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is practiced in day-to-day routine in Pashto community and especially in public activities and interaction. Based on the 1998 census, over 80% of the province's population speaks the language (Khan & Khalid, 2017). Pashto is classified within an Indo-European language that is widely spoken in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It has a very rich background in terms of phonology and morphology (Tegey & Robson, 1996). It is also practiced in other countries such as Iran and UEA. To

consider as whole, it is spoken by almost 50 million speakers (Tegay & Robson, 1996; Hallberg, 1992). According to Rahman, Khan and Bukhari (2012), Pashto has five dialects naming North-Eastern (Yousafzai), North-Western (Central), South-Eastern (Quetta), South-Western (Kandahar), and Middle Tribal.

Many studies have focused on Pashto phonology (e.g., Hallberg, 1992; Tegey & Robson, 1996; Din & Rahman, 2011) in which they have highlighted various aspects of Pashto phonology. These attempts were made to compile a reference grammar of Pashto (Tegey & Robson, 1996), Pashto dictionary (Raverty, 1959), consonantal phonemes (Rahman, 2016), passivization in Pashto (Ali et al., 2019; Furnaz, 2023) and many more. However, the gemination in Pashto has not been under discussion yet; therefore, the current study aims to focus on gemination of Pashto and investigate its process and the involvement of phonemes in it.

In phonology the term 'geminate' normally refers to double or long consonant sound that phonemically contrasts with its singleton counterpart. These contrasts are mainly found in Italian and Japanese languages but not found in Spanish and English (Davis, 2011). Gemination is found in many languages such as Japanese, Swiss German, Italian and Swedish and it is considered one of the essential features of Arabic and Semitic languages as well (Al-Deaibes, 2016; Azam, 2024). Al-Deaibes (2016) also depicted that Arabic has word-medially and word finally gemination and it has two types of gemination e.g., true and fake. True gemination is the one there is no epenthesis of vowel but fake gemination has epenthesis of vowel that breaks the consonant that geminates. Similarly, Kraehenmann and Lahiri (2008) investigated word-initial geminates in Swiss German and identified that geminates (167ms) exhibit a longer linguopalatal contact compared to singletons (112ms). Also, the preceding and following vowels are longer for singletons than for geminates. This allows the preceding vowel to be relatively short when the following consonant is a geminate. In Japanese the preceding vowel is long before geminates and short after geminates. According to Ohala (2007), phonetic studies of singletons and geminates have also shown that C1 in a C1V1C2V2 template lasts longer when C2 is a geminate. In Hindi, C1 lasts longer when C2 is a geminate and shorter when C2 is a singleton. Han (1994) reported similar findings for Japanese geminates. Turco and Braun (2014) linked the lengthening effect of C2 on C1 to long-distance anticipatory effects. The above literature shows that this is an interesting feature of languages which makes a consonant sound double. However, the Pashto gemination has not introduced yet and is focused in the current study. Therefore, the primary objective of the current study was to find out gemination in Pushto and explore the phonemes that are involved in

it. This study is significant in identifying Pashto gemination, which is beneficial for speakers, students, and researchers, as it encourages further research on the language and exploration of its other aspects. Furthermore, it is delimited to a single dialect (Yousafzai). In this dialect, it is limited to investigate gemination at word level.

Literature Review

Geminates are long consonants that differ from singletons in terms of duration (Davis, 2011;). Gemination is mostly studied cross linguistically e.g., Khattab and Al-Tamimi (2014), Kraehenmann (2008), and Ridouane (2007). Phonetically, it is an increase in the duration of consonants (Payne, 2015). Davis (2011) extends the point further by stating that geminate consonant phonologically refers to a double or long consonant which phonemically differentiates it from another shorter counterpart consonant. Delattre (1971) has the view that gemination is double articulation of consonant, one is articulated in the coda and another is in the onset of the syllable. Chomsky and Halle (1968) mentioned the term gemination as having distinctive feature of [+long] even it is a single consonant. As Leben (1980) claims, gemination is long consonant but behaves like the sequence of two segments. Similarly, Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996) have the view that the duration of geminate consonant is considered double of a singleton counterpart. Aldubai (2015) also depicts the same by stating that gemination is twice in duration in comparison with singleton.

Thus, in autosegmental phonology, as implemented for example by Leben (1980), Clements and Keyser (1983) and Hayes (1986), long vowels and geminated consonants are distinguished from short vowels and single consonants purely on the basis of how many segments they spread across on the timed tier. The reasoning behind this is to reflect that the same sounds are pronounced but with either shortened or lengthened in period i.e. short versus long vowels and simple compared to geminate consonants. A melodic tier is formed by segmental features that do not correspond to timing or CV-structure. Association lines connect the melodic and timing tier representations, specifying (corresponding to) which time position is indicated in each melodic element (Lahiri & Hankamer 1988). Moreover, the reported duration ratios for singleton and geminate consonants vary greatly. According to Lehtonen (1970), Finnish geminates are approximately twice as long as their corresponding singleton consonants. According to Richardson (1998), Finnish /t:/ is approximately three times longer than /t/. Similarly, Han (1992) reports

that the duration ratio of Japanese singleton and geminate consonants ranges between 1:2 and 1:3.

Cross-linguistically, languages in which this contrast is made are not very common. Of 317 languages in a database, Maddieson (1984) found just 11 with contrastive singleton-geminated consonants. Geminated consonants manifest a broad typological diversity as they occur in word-initial (Swiss German: Lahiri & Hankamer, 1988), intervocalic (Italian: Esposito & Benedetto, 1999), or word-final position (Maltese: Hume et al., 2014). For instance, all types of geminates are well-formed in Tashlhiyt Berber (Ridouane 2010).

In addition, some studies examined acoustic formants as well. Geminate consonants in Cypriot Greek are observed to not influence the quality of surrounding vowels, neither the steady state quality nor the transitions into or out of a geminate sound, as Arvaniti and Tserdanelis (2000) claim from initial data on vowel formant F1 and F2 frequencies in test words used in that language. The plosives geminates in Moroccan Arabic are longer to be articulated (Tan et al., 2008).

According to cross-linguistic studies, voiceless geminates outnumber voiced geminates. In some languages, such as Tokyo Japanese, voiced geminates are partially devoiced (Kawahara, 2015). This devoicing is commonly attributed to aerodynamic constraints. Maintaining voicing and long closure duration in voiced geminates is difficult in terms of articulation (Ohala, 1983). Punjabi, an Indo-Aryan language, has been shown to distinguish between voiceless/voiced singletons and geminates (Bhatia, 1993). It is unknown, nevertheless, whether voiced geminates in Punjabi are fully voiced and how long they last in comparison to voiceless geminates. According to Bhatia (1993), geminates in Punjabi are limited to word-medial position and are always preceded by short vowels. Conversely, singletons can occur freely with both short (/ɪ ə ʊ/) and long (/i e ɛ a o ɔ u/) vowels. According to Hussain (2015), closure duration is the most significant acoustic correlate for Punjabi word-medial geminate stops. This is also evident in other languages, where geminate closure duration is significantly different from singletons (Hindi: Ohala, 2007; Bengali and Turkish: Lahiri & Hankamer, 1988).

Mahootian and Gebhardt (1997) focused the Dari Persian and introduced that its geminates are mostly found at medial positions. Gill and Gleason (1969) explored that Punjabi gemination is commonly found at middle positions, but it is rarely found in initial and final positions. Moreover, the study of Shackle (1980) analyzed Hindko and presented that it contains

gemination in barrowed words more than in native words. He also has the view that aspiration in Hindko sometimes is confused with gemination that effects perception. This literature indicates that gemination is a characteristic of many languages but has not been investigated in Pashto, which is the focus of the current study.

Research Methodology

The current study employed a quantitative research methodology as it focused on the duration of geminated and non-geminated phonemes which is a quantifiable aspect of speech. For doing this, the analysis was conducted using Praat to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex language phenomenon that exists in Pashto. This is one of the features that involves doubling the articulation of phonemes in Pashto nouns and verbs.

This study has taken a multifaceted approach to data collection to enable a comprehensive analysis of Pashto gemination. In order to create an audio corpus, the first step in the data collection process was interaction with native Pashto speakers. In it, the audio recording features different words and forms of Pashto gemination. Secondly, the data was listened many times carefully and focused on words having geminated sounds. In addition to this primary data source, a comprehensive review of the literature in the field of Pashto linguistics has been conducted. The secondary data includes words carrying this feature of the language from a wide range of sources, including dictionary, books, and magazines. This review of the literature serves as an additional source of information for strengthening the study objective and allowing for a comparative analysis of the gemination found in Pashto. Finally, ten male Pashto native speakers from Yousufzai dialect (35-42 years with a mean of 38.8) participated an audio data collection. The selected age range was chosen because speakers in this group exhibit stable speech patterns. Female participants were not included, as males and females differ in pronunciation, phonetic variation, and articulation. To ensure consistency and avoid gender-based variation in analysis and comparison, only male speakers were selected. All the participants were invited into a quiet room at University of Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Before conducting the actual recording, different recording sessions were conducted for understating and familiarizing the participants with the given tasks. The list of target words was written in Pashto scripts with English translation and presented to participants. They were asked to utter

the words with near minimal pair to contrast singleton and geminate in the language. Each participant uttered the words with their singleton six times (10 words x 10 participants x 6 repetitions = 600 tokens) and their utterances were recorded. This recording was conducted using Zoom H6 with a sampling rate at 44.1 KHz.

The current study adopted Autosegmental Phonology as a theoretical framework proposed by Goldsmith (1976). It provides a non-linear representation of different phonological structures that carry various features for analysis as compared to traditional linear models. It has the features to provide more structured and flexible approach for analyzing gemination and represents length/duration explicitly which are essential for acoustic analysis. On the other hand, liner phonology represents segments only in sequence, but doesn't carry the feature to represent gemination, nasalization, vowel length and tone separately. This framework proposes that phonological segments and their features, such as length, stress, or tone, are represented on separate tiers. These tiers interact through association lines, allowing researchers to analyze multiple phonological features simultaneously and understand their interactions more clearly. Therefore, it is suitable for this study as it entails non-linear and structured representation of gemination. It also effectively captures the phonetic and phonological properties of geminate consonants.

Data Analysis

The acoustic analysis of the current study was conducted using the framework of Goldsmith (1976). Based on this, the analysis was done to identify the physical properties and recognition of gemination. The geminate consonants were investigated with comparison to their singletons. This process entailed measuring and analyzing auditory parameters such as length and spectral properties. Moreover, the duration of consonants showed the significant difference between singleton and gemination. Duration referred to the amount of time a sound is kept during speech production and revealed information about temporal structure of speech. The spectral analysis of a segment entailed breaking down the soundwave into its different frequency components, which provides insight into the phoneme's acoustic structure. All of the above-mentioned gemination-related features were observed in this study for the acoustic analysis of Pashto gemination. Therefore, the findings of the acoustic analysis of gemination produced by Pashto speakers are presented below. This detailed procedure was carried out to achieve the objective of the study.

The recorded data for the present study was analyzed according to the required analysis. In it, Praat was used to segment the data and analyze each word separately. All words having the properties of gemination were analyzed acoustically and their spectrograms were taken accordingly. Although, the recorded data set had six tokens for each word, among them, five tokens were used for acoustic analysis. Five tokens were taken from the utterances of each participant, that made a collection of 500 tokens for acoustic analysis. In these tokens, the main focus remained on geminate consonants and their durations were carefully marked and measured. The process was done acoustically for each word and their spectrograms were taken as some are shown below.
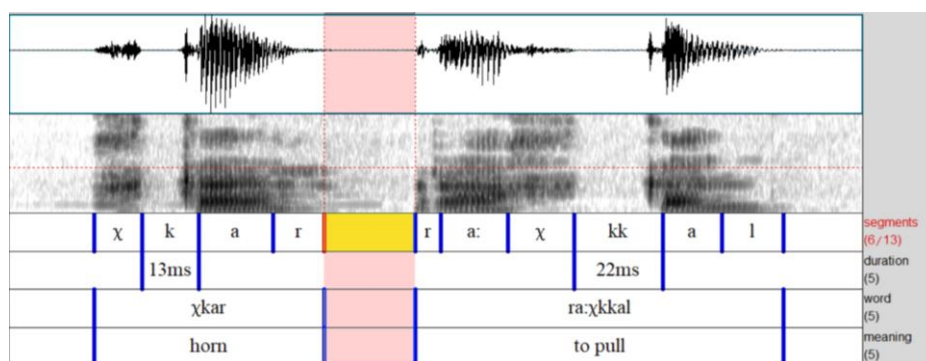
Figure 1: *Spectrogram of the words 'χkar' and 'ra:χkkal'*
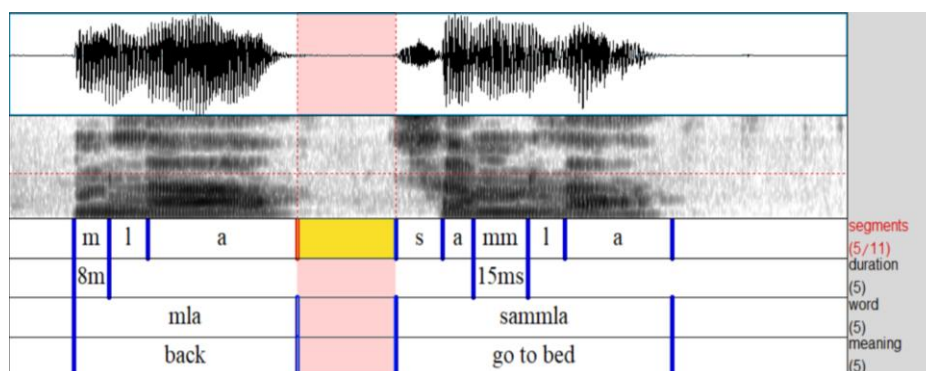
Figure 2: *Spectrogram of the words 'mla' and 'sammla'*

Figures 1 and 2 above have depicted the spectrograms of two singleton and geminate consonants. They showed various characteristics of these consonants. The above acoustic analysis showed that waveforms are shown at the top, followed by the spectrographic depiction, and then there are four tiers. The first tier carries the segments, the second represents their duration which is the most important, the third one shows the selected word, and the last one carries the meaning of both words.

Discussion

Gemination is the feature of many languages (e.g., Japanese, Swiss German, Italian and Swedish) and it is considered one of the essential features of Arabic and Semitic languages (Al-Deaibes, 2016; Azam, 2024). The findings of the present study are aligned with the above-mentioned studies, as they identified that gemination is also a feature of Pashto and plays a vital role in its phonology.

Geminates are long consonants that differ from singletons in duration (1970; Payne, Davis, 2011; Aldubai, 2015; Lehtonen, 2015). Delattre (1971) has the view that gemination is double articulation of consonant, one is articulated in the coda and another is in the onset of the syllable. According to Chomsky and Halle (1968), the term gemination as having distinctive feature of [+long] even it is a single consonant. Moreover, gemination is long consonant but behaves like the sequence of two segments (Leben, 1980; Ladefoged & Maddieson, 1996). The findings of the present study also match with the above studies in terms of consonant duration (gemination). In it, consonants exhibiting gemination have double duration compared to their singleton counterparts.

According to Bhatia (1993), in Punjabi, geminates are restricted to the word-medial position and are always preceded by short vowels. In contrast, singletons can occur freely with both short (/ɪ ə ʊ/) and long (/i e ɛ a o ɔ u/) vowels. Similarly, Gill and Gleason (1969) explored Punjabi phonology and investigated that its gemination is commonly found at middle positions. Mahootian and Gebhardt (1997) focused the Dari Persian and introduced that geminates are found at medial positions. However, the duration of geminates is sometimes reduced in fast spoken speech. Al-Deaibes (2016) depicted that Arabic has word-medially and word finally gemination. The findings of the current study align with those of Bhatia (1993), Gill and Gleason (1969), Mahootian and Gebhardt (1997), and Al-Deaibes (2016), as these findings reveal that Pashto gemination also occurs in the medial position of words. However, the current study contrasts with Gill and Gleason (1969) and Al-Deaibes (2016) findings, as Pashto does not exhibit gemination in the final position.

Moreover, the above analysis showed that Figure 1 carries the word /ra:χkal/ that has only one voiceless velar sound /k/. However, when it is uttered in this word, it is uttered twice. This word carries two syllables and this sound has got its occurrence in both. For the clarification, the word /χkar/ means 'horn' was recorded and found that voiceless velar /k/

has 13ms, and the same sound has 22ms in the word /ra:χkkal/. That's why, the voiceless velar /k/ is represented twice here. Similarly, the words /sammla/ and /mla/ were recorded. Both of them were acoustically analyzed and found that the segment /m/ has 8ms in /mla/ and 15ms in /sammla/. These analyses showed that in both words, the geminated segments carry double duration of their singleton occurrences. This process was done for all tokens of each speaker. Furthermore, along with the acoustic analysis, other words carrying this feature were categorized for understanding and examples. These words were categorized based on their classes and given below.

Table 1. *Stimuli for gemination in Pashto: /n/ and stop consonant*

Words/Transcription	Meaning	Category
sanggal	Elbow	Noun
sa:ngga	Branch	Noun
kanggal	Ice	Noun
manggwəl	Claw/paw	Noun
dʒʊnggaɽə	Home	Noun
zanggal	Forest	Noun

haɣa za:nla sanggal χʊg kɽa. He hurt his elbow.

haɣa ḓa wani: na jaw sa:ngga ma:ṯa kɽa. He cut a branch of tree.

The above examples clearly show that Pashto carries gemination which is formed using nasal /n/ followed by velar /g/. Mostly, this combination identifies the existence of gemination in the selected language. This uniformity shows that both of them are voiced and /g/ is articulated twice longer more than as it is articulated in singleton. In this pattern, gemination is preceded by /n/ and followed by long, short vowels, voiced and voiceless consonants.

If /g/ is not preceded by /n/ then there is no gemination like /magal/ 'to rub' and /gʊra:reɪ/ 'whispering'. This aspect also shows that gemination is always found in medial position of words. It does not occur at initial position /garmi:/ 'heat' and final position /marg/ 'death' of words. It is also noticed that gemination is found in disyllabic and trisyllabic words,

but doesn't occur in monosyllabic. Most of the time, the velar phonemes /g/ is occurring in Pashto gemination when it is preceded by nasal /n/.

Table 2. *Stimuli for gemination in Pashto: /n/ and stops/fricatives*

Words/Transcription	Meaning	Category
ʈɪnd̪d̪ak	Stumbling	Noun
d͡ʒwənd̪d̪ʊn	Life	Noun
χand̪d̪al	Smile	Noun
ɣwandda:ri:	Lump	Noun
kwəndda	Widow	Noun
band̪d̪awal	To close	Noun
prand͡ʒd͡ʒeɪdal	To sneeze	Noun

haɣa yawa:zi: d͡ʒwənd̪d̪ʊn ʈerawal ɣwa:ɽi:. He spends life lonely.

sʈa:su: χand̪d̪al ma:ʈa haɣa ja:d̪a wi:. Your smile reminds me of his.

The above examples also show that Pashto gemination exists in different combined patterns of consonants such as form with nasal /n/ followed by stops or fricatives. The observed uniformity above was noticed here too that both of them are voiced and the phoneme preceded by nasal /n/ is articulated longer more than it is articulated in singleton.

It is not necessary and common that every phoneme after nasal /n/ is geminated in the language, e.g., /ranzʊr/ 'sick' and /manda:w/ 'veranda' are the examples in which there is the combination of nasal /n/ and other phonemes like stops or fricatives, but don't have the features of gemination. Moreover, it is similar to the above examples that that gemination is always found in medial position of words but doesn't find at the initial and final positions of words. Along with this, it is always clear and identified that it is found only in disyllabic and trisyllabic words.

Table 3. *Stimuli for Pashto gemination in verb*

Words/Transcription	Meaning	Category
ʤʊχt̪t̪awal	To get close	Verb
tʃɪt̪t̪eɪɖal	To get low	Verb
ʊtʃat̪t̪eɪɖal	To rise	Verb
zɣəmmal	To bear	Verb
nammri:	Not dying	Verb
səmmla	Go to bed	Verb

dwa saɽi: lɪgja wʊ kamari: ji: pa la:r ki: ʤʊχt̪t̪awale. Two men tried to get close stones in the way.

haɣu: largi: swəzzawal. They were burning wood.

The above examples illustrate the existence of Pashto gemination having various patterns. In these patterns, one of them is having /t̪/ that is articulated twice longer than its singleton. It occurs after voiceless fricative and short vowel and is followed by vowel. Another pattern has nasal /m/ and indicates that it is preceded by vowels and followed by both vowels and consonants.

Furthermore, the existence of the above sounds/phonemes does not make sure gemination features everywhere in the language. There are numerous words carrying their occurrences but don't have gemination such as /waχt̪i:/ means 'early' and /kamar/ means 'stone'. This pattern has got similarity with the above by showing its occurrence in medial positions of words.

Table 4. *Stimuli for Pashto gemination*

Words/Transcription	Meaning	Category
zajəwwal	To fit/accommodate	Verb
ra:wwɽəm	To bring	Verb
ɣwəssawal	To cut with knife	Verb

tʊmbbal	To nail	Verb
tʃiːχχawal	To prick	Verb
ḍaːɣɣawal	To cauterize	Verb
raːχkkal	To pull	Verb

jaw saɽiː pa jawa almaːraɪ kiː kɪṭaːbʊna zajəwwal. A man tried to fit the books into the cupboard.

haɣa pa zaːn pa se darwaːza raːχkkal. He pulled the door after himself.

The above examples clarify that Pashto carries different patterns of gemination in which different phonemes are involved. In these occurrences, both voiced and voiceless phonemes have the features of gemination. Among them, /w/ and /s/ are preceded by vowels and followed by both vowels and consonants. Rest of them are preceded and followed by both vowels and consonants. Their articulations show that consonants are longer in gemination in contrast to their singletons. Similarly, these sounds don't have gemination everywhere in the language e.g., /awram/ means 'I hear' and /asaːn/ means 'easy'. These examples carry the same phonemes as mentioned in gemination but don't have the features of gemination here. Furthermore, these patterns have similar characteristics with the above by showing their existence in medial positions of words.

Conclusion

Pashto is an Indo-Iranian language spoken in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This language has been focused by different researchers and investigated various aspects of it. However, the present study focused on its phonology, particularly its gemination and identified different features which has not received the attention of researchers yet. To achieve the objective of the study, the data was collected from native speakers who speak the Yousafzai dialect. The elders were joined during conversation with each other and focused remained on lexical words. Their conversation was focused during lunch/dinner time, daily activities, formal tasks, and educational activities. Along with this, Pashto books and dictionaries were also used for this purpose to collect data and pinpointed the above-mentioned feature of the language. The collected data was discussed several times with elders and experts. The meaning of each word was

checked in the dictionary to ensure that these words are frequently used in everyday life. After this, these words were categorized in different classes and used in carrier sentences again to make sure their meaning and usage in daily routine. Later on, a list of words was presented to 10 participants in Pashto script with English translation. All were native speakers and uttered the list of words with singleton and geminated with six repetitions. The data was saved in laptop and analyzed acoustically using Praat. The findings of the study showed that Pashto carries this aspect in different classes and has been used in day-to-day routine. The findings revealed this features that geminated segments carry almost twice duration of their singleton segments such as /χkar/ means 'horn' carries velar /k/ and has 13ms, and the same sound has 22ms in the word /ra:χkkal/. The later carries the feature of gemination. Similarly, the words /sammla/ and /mla/ were recorded and analyzed acoustically. The results showed that the segment /m/ has 8ms in /mla/ and 15ms in /sammla/ that has got twice duration in the later. Furthermore, other words were taken that have the features of gemination such as /sanggal/ means 'elbow' and /manggwəl/ means 'paw'. These examples were taken from nouns and it turns out that most of the geminations are found in it. Moreover, this aspect of language was also found in the category of verb, such as /sasseɪḍal/ meaning 'to drip', and /ḍrazzawal/ meaning 'to hit'. This feature was predominantly observed in different phonemes such as /g/ after nasal /n/. Among phonemes, the most frequently occurring phonemes are nasal, dental, alveolar, and velar. It is considered that gemination is a characteristic of Pashto and is recognized in nouns and verbs. It is now suggested that further research should be done on this to identify Pashto gemination in the other parts of speech.

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A Comparative Study of Right Collocates of *Tiny, Small,* and *Minute* in the British National Corpus

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Abstract

The meaning of a word can be established, in part, by looking at the words frequently collocating with it. The present study establishes and compares the various senses and meanings of three apparently synonymous adjectives - *tiny, small*, and *minute* - by examining their immediate right collocates. The study draws upon the British National Corpus (BNC), comprising 100 million words. The results reveal that the three selected adjectives differ not only in their frequencies and register distribution but also in their sense and meaning. Out of the three adjectives, *small* is most frequently used in the BNC. Moreover, the positive forms of all three adjectives are most commonly used in the BNC as compared to their comparative and superlative forms. As regards the meaning, although there are some similarities, each of the three adjectives conveys certain sense(s) which are not shared by the others. The study concludes that the three selected adjectives are not strict synonyms and cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts. The findings of this corpus-based investigation are also compared with the definitions and illustrations of the three selected adjectives in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2010). The results of the present study have implications for lexicography and English language teaching.

Keywords: Collocation, Collocate, Semantic Sense, Adjective, Lexicography

Introduction

Collocation is one of the most controversial concepts in linguistics, although it is based on widely shared intuition that certain words have a tendency to occur near each other in natural language, for example, *ring* and *bell*, *kick* and *bucket*, etc. (Johansson & van Waarden, 2024; Evert, 2007). However, the term has been defined and used differently by various linguists belonging to different schools of thought in the past five

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to six decades. In fact, it has been approached from three prominent standpoints.

First, the viewpoint from which it was not only defined by Firth (1957) but many linguists of the present era is what is known by the *empirical view*. The proponents of the *empirical view* used this term for characteristic and frequently recurrent word combinations, arguing that the meaning and usage of a word can to some extent be characterized by its most typical collocates (Kim et al., 2024; Evert, 2007).

Second, the term was also defined in the field of phraseology to refer to semi-compositional and lexically determined word combinations like *stiff drink, heavy smoker*, etc. In this approach, collocates are divided into subcategories ranging from purely opaque idioms to semantically compositional word combinations, which are merely subject to arbitrary lexical restrictions (Evert, 2007, p. 2). According to this view, semantic relation between collocates is more basic than the syntactic one. Another important characteristic of collocation, as highlighted by this view, is the semi-compositionality, which means that the meaning conveyed by a pair of collocates is not necessarily the sum of the meaning of its parts (individual words).

Although both empirical and phraseological views agree on classifying most word pairs as collocates, they differ in examples where collocates give compositional meaning. For instance, a pair like *bad* and *time* is considered a collocate in the empirical view, but it is not held as such in the phraseological view (Coffey, 2022).

Finally, in computational linguistics, collocate is a generic term for any lexicalized word combination that has idiosyncratic semantic or syntactic properties and may therefore require special treatment in a machine-readable dictionary or natural language processing system (Evert, 2007, p. 3). In the present study, following Evert (2007), McEnery and Wilson (2001), and McEnery, Xiao, and Tono (2006), the terms *collocation* and *collocate(s)* are used in the empirical sense.

Firth (1957) introduced the term *collocation* when he investigated the frequent collocates of *ass*. He finds that there are very few adjectives which can collocate with *ass* (*silly, obstinate, stupid, awful*, and *young*) (Krishnamurthy, 2000) and it gives one of its meanings when it is immediately preceded by *you silly* or other forms of address. Similarly, he states that one of the meanings of *night* is attributed to its tendency to collocate with *dark* (Finlayson et al., 2024; Greaves & Warren, 2010).

Halliday (1966) was the first linguist who felt the need to measure the distance between two collocating items in a text. He also brought in the concept of probability in the research on collocations and, following empirical view, emphasized the need for data, quantitative analyses, and the use of statistical measures instead of simple frequency information (Krishnamurthy, 2000).

Before the development and popularity of machine-readable corpora, lexicographers and linguists used to undertake the daunting task of analyzing collocates manually. Sinclair (1970) was probably the first linguist who developed computational methods of looking at collocations in a corpus and brought in the parameter of position, which meant that collocations of very frequent words were positionally restricted (Kopotev, 2024; Krishnamurthy, 2000).

Evert (2007) presents the most frequent collocates of *bucket* in the BNC using different association scores (MI and simple-II), which take into account observed counts (O), frequency of first word (f_1), frequency of second word (f_2), and total number of words in a corpus (N). Using the threshold level of $f \geq 3$ and word span of L5 R5, he found that the most frequent collocates of *bucket*, on the basis of Simple-II association measure, were *water, a, spade, plastic, size,* etc., whereas the ones on the basis of MI were *fourteen-record, ten-record, full-track*, etc. (*bucket* used in the technical sense as a data structure in computer science). It shows one of the flaws of MI measure, which will be discussed later (Pu et al., 2024).

With the help of corpus data, Moon (2010) shows that verbs of motion are usually followed by adverbials or prepositional phrases of direction or manner. He also reports that the verb *comply* is usually preceded by something that indicates coercion, necessity, willingness, etc. (*incentive, must, force, fail(ure), hesitate*), and/or is followed by *with*, itself typically followed by a noun phrase indicating a constraint (*agreement, decision, law, obligation*, etc.) (p. 200).

O'Keeffe *et al.* (2007) find that the verbs *go* and *turn* are similar in the sense that both collocate with *grey, brown,* and *white*, but they are different due to the reason that they do not always both collocate with many other words. For instance, *go* can combine with *mad, insane, bald,* and *blind* but *turn* cannot collocate with these (Greaves & Warren, 2010).

Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998) compare the immediate right collocates of *big, large*, and *great* in academic prose and fiction registers of Longman-Lancaster corpus. They find that *big* frequently collocates

with *enough* and *traders* in academic prose, and with *man, enough, and, black, house*, etc. in fiction. *Large*, on the other hand, frequently collocates with *number, numbers, scale*, etc. in academic prose and with *and, black, enough, house, room*, etc. in fiction. *Great* frequently collocates with *deal, importance, number, majority*, etc. in academic prose and with *deal, man, burrow, big*, etc. in fiction (Aldereihim, 2023).

Comparing different meanings and senses conveyed by *big, large,* and *great* in connection with their most frequent collocates, Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998) observe that in both academic prose and fiction, *big* is most commonly used to describe the physical size of objects. On the other hand, the most frequent collocates of large in academic prose indicate that it most commonly refers to a quantity or amount of something, physical size, and magnitude of various processes; whereas it is commonly used to describe physical size in fiction. It is less commonly used to refer to an amount or quantity in fiction. The adjective *great*, apart from referring to an amount or quantity, is used to show intensity in academic prose which makes it different from the other two adjectives; while in fiction, it refers to amount, a sense of importance, and, less commonly, large physical size. They argue that the three adjectives differ in meanings due to different words with which they frequently collocate (Riches et al., 2023).

Research on collocations has benefitted lexicography and dictionary writing a great deal. McEnery, Xiao, and Tono (2006) compare the immediate right collocates of adjective *sweet* in the first (intuition-based) and fourth (corpus-based) edition of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (henceforth LDOCE1 for first edition and LDOCE4 for fourth edition) considering the most frequent collocates of *sweet* in the BNC. They observe that the use of corpus data has brought improvements in LDOCE4 in two ways. First, LDOCE4 defines and illustrates *sweet* in a much greater detail and with the help of a large number of examples than its definition, illustration, and number of examples in LDOCE1. Second, more collocates (42.86 percent) of *sweet* appearing in the example sentences provided in LDOCE4 fall in the top ten most frequent collocates of *sweet* in the BNC than the ones provided in LDOCE1 (33.33 percent). This shows that paying attention to most frequent collocates has helped improve dictionary entries (González-Díaz, 2021).

Based on the most frequent left and right collocates of *deal* as a noun in a sample from London-Lancaster corpus, Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998) highlight the most important uses of *deal* as a noun and compare

their findings with the definitions of *deal* provided in five different dictionaries. They observe that dictionaries include one or more of the following seven senses of *deal* as a noun: a) a large but indefinite amount, b) an agreement or arrangement, c) the distribution of cards in a game, d) treatment received, e) the act of distributing, f) wood of fir or pine trees, and g) a business transaction (p. 39). Comparing these seven senses of *deal* as a noun in five dictionaries, they conclude that although most dictionaries cover all seven senses, they differ in the order in which these senses are presented. Comparing these seven senses with their own findings, they point out that the corpus-based analysis yielded additional senses of *deal* as a noun which were not covered in many dictionaries. Moreover, one sense of *deal,* mentioned in many dictionaries (distribution of cards in a game) was not found in the corpus-based analysis (Dang et al., 2022).

Although there is a fair amount of published research on collocation in general and on collocates of adjectives in particular, the researchers were unable to locate any research focusing on the comparison of the three selected adjectives in terms of their most frequent collocates and the similarities and differences in their meanings due to their collocates. Moreover, there is an apparent semantic similarity among the three adjectives selected for this study which makes English language learners assume that these are synonymous and can be used interchangeably but this assumption has never been tested with empirical evidence. To bridge this gap, the present study seeks to compare the immediate right collocates of the three seemingly synonymous adjectives (*tiny, small,* and *minute*) in the British National Corpus to establish and find out the similarities and differences among the senses and meanings of these adjectives and to compare the findings with their definitions given in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2010). The present study seeks to answer the following research questions.

- What are the most frequent immediate right collocates of *tiny, small,* and *minute* in the British National Corpus?
- What are the semantic similarities and differences among *tiny, small,* and *minute* with respect to their most frequent collocates?
- How do the findings compare with the definition(s) of these adjectives in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2010)?

Methodology

Data Source

The British National Corpus (BNC) (accessed through Brigham Young University's English-corpora.org) was used as the data source because it is a) publicly available, b) tagged for parts of speech, and c) considered as an authentic and representative sample of British English. It consists of approximately 100 million words and is one of the largest corpora of the English language. 90 percent of the corpus consists of different types of written texts, whereas 10 percent is dedicated to the transcribed version of spoken texts. Written section of the BNC includes texts from a variety of disciplines including natural science, applied science, social science, world affairs, commerce, arts, etc., while spoken texts represent different situations such as business, institutional, leisure, conversations, lectures, etc. The BNC was constructed between 1960 and 1993. A number of variables were taken into consideration while including texts in the BNC such as gender, age, education, etc. (McEnery, Xian, & Tone, 2006; Meyer, 2004). The corpus is divided into seven sub-sections (registers), which include spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, non-academic, academic, and miscellaneous. Out of these registers, miscellaneous and magazine contain most and least number of words, respectively. Table 1 provides the total number of words for each register included in the BNC.

Table 1. *Number of words in sub-sections of the BNC*

No.	Sub-section	Number of words (approximate)
1	Spoken	10 million
2	Fiction	16 million
3	Magazine	7 million
4	Newspaper	10 million
5	Non-academic	16 million
6	Academic	15 million
7	Miscellaneous	20 million

Type of Co-occurrence

Evert (2007) identifies three types of co-occurrences (collocates), which include a) surface co-occurrences (two words which appear within a certain distance measured by the number of intervening word tokens); b) textual co-occurrences (two words which appear in the same textual unit, that is, sentence, utterance, or even the whole document); and c) syntactic

co-occurrence (two words which have a direct syntactic relation between them, e.g., part of the same noun phrase, etc.). Of these, the present study focuses on surface co-occurrences.

Statistical Measures

Several statistical measures are used to determine the strength of association between members or parts or constituents of collocates. The most common of these is raw frequency which shows the number of times two words co-occur in a corpus or sub-corpus. However, it does not take into account the frequencies of individual words, high frequency words (grammatical words) tend to be the most frequent collocates of a node.

Z score is another statistical measure used for the strength of collocation. It compares the observed frequency with the frequency expected if only chance is affecting the distribution (McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006, p. 57). The higher the z score, the greater the degree of collocability. However, this statistical measure assumes data to be normally distributed, which is not true of most corpus-based text analyses. Due to this reason, it lists many rare words as the top collocates of a node. That is why, this is less frequently used in corpus-based studies of collocation (Evert, 2007; McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006).

Yet another statistical measure of association is t score which is computed by subtracting the expected frequency from the observed frequency and then dividing the result by the standard deviation. A t score of 2 or above is normally considered to be statistically significant, though the specific probability level can be looked up in a table of distribution, using the computed t score and the number of degrees of freedom (McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006, pp. 56-57).

Finally, there is MI (Mutual Information) score, which takes into consideration observed frequency as well as expected frequency (computed by multiplying the raw frequencies of first and second word in a collocate and dividing the result by total number of words in the corpus) (Evert, 2007). It measures the possibility of two words appearing together within a specified span of words (Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998). A higher MI score is associated with a strong link between two words. If MI score is close to 0, it means that the two words co-occur most probably by chance. A negative MI score indicates that the two items tend to shun each other. An MI score of 3 or higher is considered to be evidence that the two items are collocates. However, in practical applications, MI is found to have a tendency to assign inflated scores to

low-frequency word pairs, especially for data from large corpora. Thus, even a single co-occurrence of two-word types might result in a fairly-high association score (Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998; Evert, 2007; McEnery & Wilson, 2001; McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006).

Many other statistical measures are also used by researchers to determine the strength of association between a node and its collocate, including log-likelihood (LL) score, MI3 score, log-log score, etc. (McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006). However, only raw frequency and Mutual Information (MI) score are used to generate the most frequent collocates of *tiny, small*, and *minute* in the present study since these scores can be automatically computed by the BNC. Other scores, although more robust, cannot be easily computed. Moreover, the two measures (raw frequency and MI scores) were also used to find out the similarities and differences in the most frequent collocates of the three selected adjectives generated by the two measures.

Procedures for Data Analysis

First, the raw frequency lists were generated for the three selected adjectives on the basis of lemma which were manually converted into normalized frequencies. Second, the three adjectives were compared based on their raw and normalized frequencies. Third, lists of ten most frequently occurring immediate right collocates were generated for the three adjectives. Word span was set to L0 R1. Fourth, each list was re-organized on the basis of MI scores in descending order. Fifth, based on the raw frequencies, top ten collocates of each adjective were analyzed to find out its meanings. Sixth, the meanings derived for the three adjectives were compared to find out the semantic similarities and differences among them. Finally, the findings were compared to the definitions of the three selected adjectives given in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2010).

Results and Discussion

Overall Frequencies of *Tiny, Small*, and *Minute*

An open lemma search for the three selected adjectives provided instances of their use not only as adjectives but also as nouns (surprisingly, *small* and *tiny* were also found to have been used as nouns). In order to avoid this, more restricted search strings were used. For instance, in order to generate the raw frequency of the lemma *tiny*, [tiny].[j*] was used as the search string which resulted in generating the raw frequency of the lemma *tiny* used as an adjective in the BNC. Figure

1 presents the comparison of the three adjectives based on their normalized frequencies.
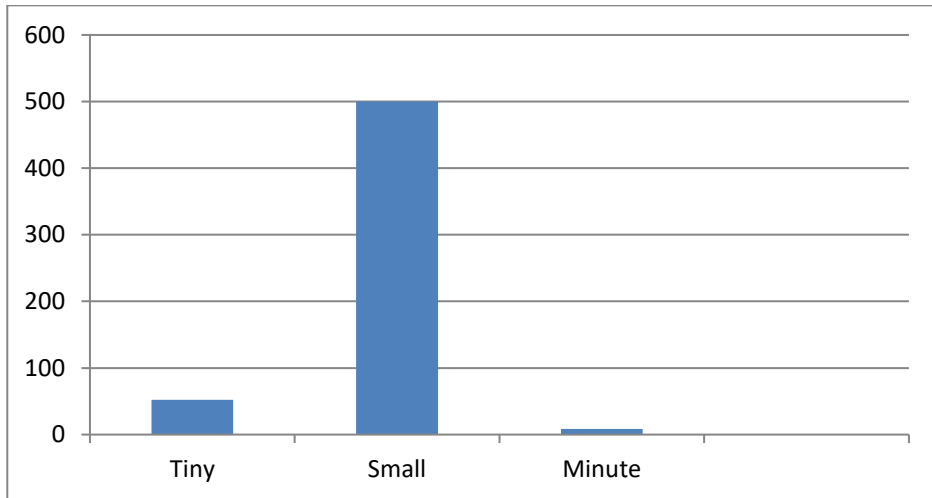
Figure 1 *Normalized Frequencies of Tiny, Small, and Minute*

Figure 1 shows that the lemma *small* was found to be the most frequent among the three adjectives with a normalized frequency of 499.78 per million words, followed by *tiny* with 52.36 per million words, which was followed by *minute* with 8.42 per million words.

Frequency of the Lemma *Tiny*

A glance at the different forms of the lemma *tiny* in the BNC, as presented in Table 2, reveals that the positive form (tiny) was by far the most frequent with a raw frequency of 5127 and a normalized frequency of 51.27 per million words, which constituted 97.92 percent of all the occurrences of the lemma *tiny*. This was followed by the superlative form (tiniest) which constituted 1.91 percent with a raw frequency of 100 and a normalized frequency of 1 per million words. Only 9 instances of the comparative form (tinier) were found in the BNC.

Table 2. *Frequencies of the Different Forms of the Lemma Tiny*

	No. of Tokens	Normalized Count (per million)	Percentage
Tiny	5127	51.27	97.92%
Tinier	9	0.09	0.17%
Tiniest	100	1	1.91%
Total	5236	52.36	100%

Frequency of the Lemma *Small*

As with *tiny*, the lemma *small* was found to be used most frequently in its positive degree (small) with a raw frequency of 41845 and a normalized frequency of 418.45 per million words, which constituted 83.73 percent of all the occurrences of the lemma *small*. With a raw frequency of 7101 and a normalized frequency of 71.01, the comparative form (smaller) was identified as the second most frequent form of the lemma *small*, constituting 14.21 percent. The superlative form (smallest) was the least frequent with a raw count of 1032 and a normalized count of 10.32, resulting in only 2.06 percent of all the occurrences of the lemma *Small*. Table 3 presents raw frequencies, normalized counts, and percentage of various forms of the lemma *small*.

Table 3. *Frequencies of the Different Forms of the Lemma Small*

	No. of Tokens	Normalized Count (per million)	Percentage
Small	41845	418.45	83.73%
Smaller	7101	71.01	14.21%
Smallest	1032	10.32	2.06%
Total	49978	499.78	100%

Frequency of the Lemma *Minute*

The lemma *minute* was found only in positive and superlative forms. No instances of the use of its comparative form were found in the BNC. It was most commonly found in its positive form (minute) with a raw count of 817 and a normalized count of 8.17 per million words. Hence, 97.03 percent of all the occurrences of the lemma *minute* consisted of the positive form. 25 instances of the superlative form (minutest) were also found in the BNC, which constituted 2.97 percent of all the occurrences of the lemma *minute*. Table 4 summarizes these findings.

Table 4. *Frequencies of the Different Forms of the Lemma Minute*

	No. of Tokens	Normalized Count (per million)	Percentage
Minute	817	8.17	97.03%
Minutest	25	0.25	2.97%
Total	842	8.42	100%

Tables 2-4 highlight many similarities and differences among the use of the different forms of lemmas *tiny, small*, and *minute*. One of the most notable similarities is that the positive forms of the three selected adjectives are by far the most frequent forms in the case of lemmas of all three adjectives. However, the three adjectives differ in the percentage of use of these positive forms. Positive forms of *tiny* and *minute* were almost identical with 97.92 percent and 97.03 percent, respectively, whereas the positive form of *small* was found with a percentage of 83.73. The comparative form of the lemma *small* was quite frequent (14.21%) as compared to those of the lemmas *tiny* (0.17%) and *minute* (0%). The three adjectives were similar in the use of their superlative forms with a percentage of 1.91, 2.06, and 2.97 for tiniest, smallest, and minutest, respectively.

Register-wise Distribution of *Tiny, Small,* and *Minute*

As mentioned earlier, the British National Corpus consists of seven sub-registers including Spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, non-academic, academic, and miscellaneous. The three selected adjectives were also compared based on their register-wise distribution in the BNC. This was done by comparing their normalized frequencies since the total number of words in each register is not the same.

Register-wise distribution of the lemma *tiny*. The most frequent use of the lemma *tiny* was found in fiction with a normalized frequency of 121 per million words. With a normalized frequency of 84.57 per million words, the second most frequent use of *tiny* was found in magazine. Interestingly, it occurred almost with the same frequency in spoken, newspaper, non-academic, and miscellaneous with normalized frequencies of 39.3, 45.7, 43.25, and 46.45 per million words, respectively. With a frequency of 15.8, it was found to be the least commonly used in academic writing. Figure 2 presents a visual picture of these findings.
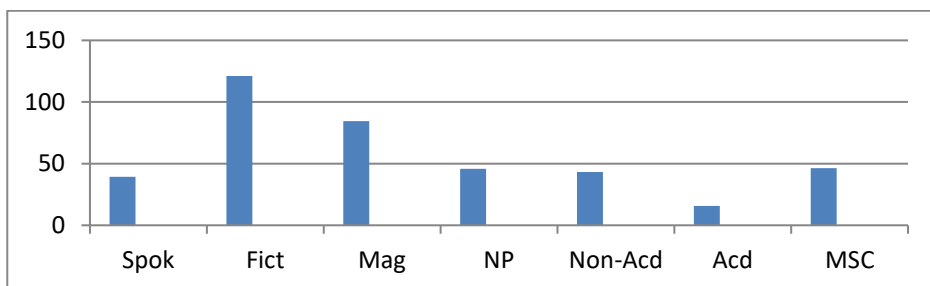
Figure 2. *Register-wise Distribution of the Lemma Tiny*

Register-wise distribution of the lemma *small*. Amongst the seven sub-registers of the BNC, the lemma *small* was found to be most commonly used in magazine with a normalized count of 672.28 per million words. After this register, it was almost equally frequent in miscellaneous, fiction, and non-academic, with normalized frequencies of 623.6, 597.37, and 576 per million words, respectively. Moreover, it was fairly common in academic writing with a normalized count of 537.8 per million words. Furthermore, with a frequency of 269.9 per million words, *Small* was least frequently used in the spoken register. Figure 3 presents the summary of register-wise distribution of the lemma *small* on the basis of the normalized frequencies.
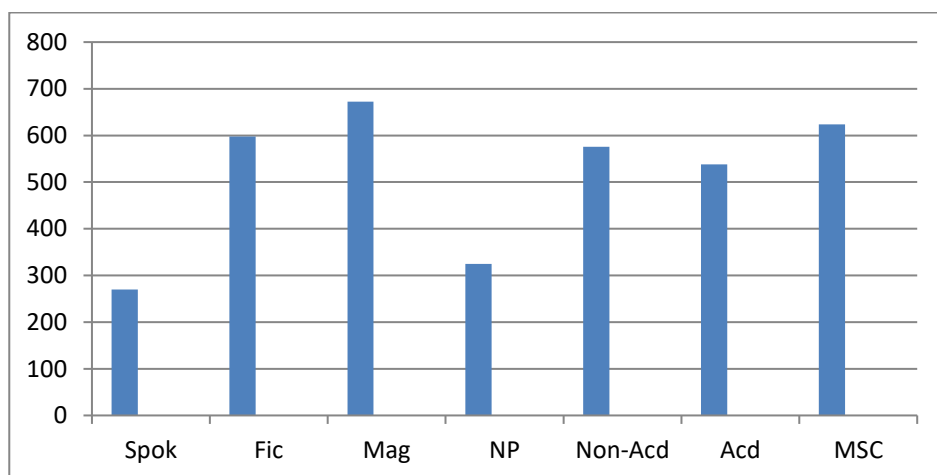
Figure 3. *Register-wise Distribution of the Lemma Small*

Register-wise distribution of the lemma *minute*. The lemma *minute* was found to be most commonly used in miscellaneous and magazine with normalized counts of 12.90 and 12.57 per million words, respectively. Moreover, it was also fairly frequent in academic, spoken, newspaper, and non-academic with normalized frequencies of 11.07, 8.8, 7.20, and 6.87 per million words, respectively. With a frequency of 3.75 per million words, *minute* was observed to be used least frequently in fiction. A summary of these findings can be seen in figure 4.
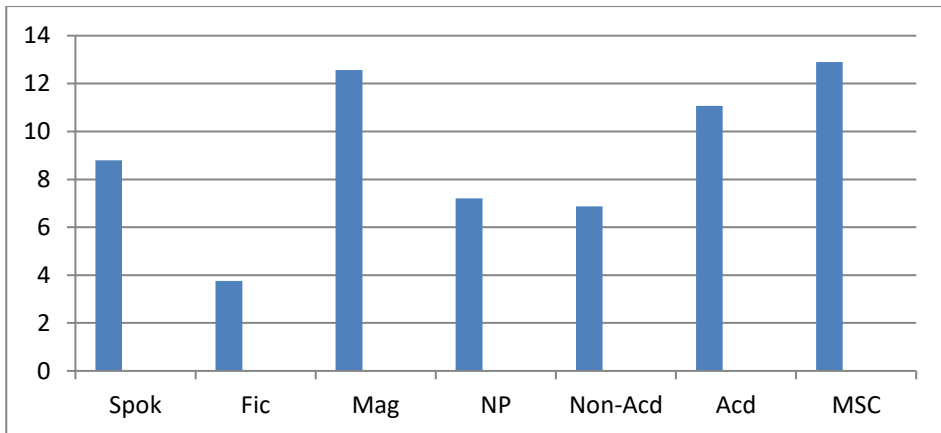
Figure 4. *Register-wise Distribution of the Lemma Minute*

A close look at figures 2-4 can help compare register-wise distribution of the lemmas of *tiny, small*, and *minute*. While *tiny* is most frequently used in fiction, the most frequent instances of *small* and *minute* were found in magazine and miscellaneous, respectively. Furthermore, *tiny* shows almost similar distribution in spoken, newspaper, non-academic, and miscellaneous, whereas fiction, non-academic, and miscellaneous display almost similar frequencies of *small*. Similarly, *minute* shows fairly similar distribution in newspaper and non-academic. The three adjectives also differ in their least frequent use. While *tiny* is least frequently used in academic, *small* and *minute* were found to be used least frequently in spoken and fiction, respectively. In case of comparison between spoken (an informal register) and academic writing (very formal), it can be seen that *tiny* is more than twice as frequent in spoken as it is in academic writing. Conversely, *small* is almost twice as frequent in academic as it is in spoken. This means that *tiny* is more associated with informal registers, whereas *small* tends to be more common in formal ones. Interestingly, *minute* is fairly frequent in both spoken and academic, although it is a little more common in academic than in spoken.

Most Frequent Collocates of *Tiny, Small*, and *Minute*

This section discusses the ten most frequent collocates of the three selected adjectives based on both raw frequency and MI score.

Most frequent collocates of *tiny*. Table 5 presents two separate lists of the ten most frequent immediate right collocates of the lemma *tiny*. The first list (on the left) displays the ten most frequent collocates of *tiny* on the basis of their raw frequencies in the BNC. The list only includes content words. Function words and punctuation marks, although

frequently collocating with *tiny*, were not taken into consideration. The second list (on the right) consists of the ten most frequent collocates of *tiny* based on their Mutual Information (MI) score.

Table 5. *Collocates of the Lemma Tiny*

No.	Collocate	Raw Freq.	No.	Collocate	MI Score
1	Bit	96	1	Tots	12.24
2	little	94	2	Specks	11.02
3	minority	57	3	Rowland	10.67
4	village	53	4	Speck	10.23
5	fraction	47	5	Tot	10.00
6	amount	38	6	Oblong	9.93
7	pieces	34	7	Hamlet	9.24
8	Room	34	8	Fraction	9.23
9	island	32	9	Galley	8.61
10	Part	32	10	Pores	8.37

As far as the most common right collocates of *tiny* on the basis of raw frequency are concerned, table 5 shows *bit* and *little* to be its most common right collocates. The rest of the collocates are also quite frequent, although not as much as the first two. The second list, based on MI scores, has quite a bit of rare words, such as *Rowland, oblong, galley,* etc. Surprisingly, *fraction* is the only collocate of *tiny* which is common in both frequency-based and MI-based lists, although its ranking is different in both lists. In the frequency-based list, it is ranked fifth, whereas in the MI based list, it is ranked eighth.

Most frequent collocates of *small*. Table 6 presents two separate lists containing the ten most frequent immediate right collocates of the lemma *small* in the BNC on the basis of raw frequency and MI score. The frequency-based list only includes content words. This list was generated after excluding function words and punctuation marks that frequently collocate with *small*. The second list consists of the ten most frequent collocates of *tiny* on the basis of their MI scores.

Table 6. *Collocates of the Lemma Small*

No.	Collocate	Raw Freq.	No.	Collocate	MI Score
1	number	1020	1	Imbricating	10.06
2	group	724	2	Intestine	9.57

3	amount	454	3	Mammal	9.45
4	groups	453	4	Cetaceans	9.29
5	businesses	451	5	Mercies	9.17
6	firms	451	6	Self-administered	8.97
7	proposition	402	7	Scale-like	8.65
8	scale	359	8	Crustacea	8.53
9	companies	330	9	Bowel	8.23
10	part	315	10	Tortoiseshell	8.20

In terms of raw frequency, *number* was observed to be the most common collocate of *small*. The whole list contains familiar words. The MI-based list, on the other hand, includes many unfamiliar words including *imbricating, cetaceans, crustacea*, etc. There is not a single collocate of *small* which is part of both the lists. This shows, as discussed earlier, that MI tends to rank rarely occurring collocates higher.

Most frequent collocates of *minute*. In the BNC, *walk* was found to be the most frequent right collocate of *minute* as an adjective on the basis of raw frequency, followed by *period, intervals, cheap, video*, etc. However, *equilibration* was ranked the topmost right collocate of *minute* on the basis of MI score. Surprisingly, five collocates of *minute* were common in the two lists, though with different rankings. *Walk* is ranked first in the frequency-based list, while it is fifth in the MI-based list. Interestingly, *intervals* is the third most frequent collocate of *minute* in both the lists. Furthermore, *cheap*, *amounts*, and *stroll* are ranked fourth, eighth, and tenth in the frequency-based list and sixth, ninth, and second in the MI-based list. Table 7 presents the top ten collocates of *minute* in terms of their raw frequencies and MI scores.

Table 7. *Collocates of the Lemma Minute*

No.	Collocate	Raw Freq.	No.	Collocate	MI Score
1	walk	67	1	equilibration	14.04
2	period	28	2	stroll	11.09
3	intervals	27	3	intervals	10.90
4	cheap	17	4	slot	9.65
5	video	13	5	walk	9.59
6	detail	13	6	cheap	9.02
7	drive	12	7	collections	8.81
8	amounts	11	8	quantities	8.75

| 9 | flight | 10 | 9 | amounts | 8.73 |
| 10 | stroll | 9 | 10 | samples | 8.17 |

A close look at the frequency-based lists of immediate right collocates of *tiny*, *small*, and *minute* reveals that there are some words which frequently collocate with at least two of the three selected adjectives. For instance, *part* is the tenth most frequent collocate of both *tiny* and *small*. Similarly, *amount* is the sixth frequent collocate of *tiny*, third frequent collocate of *small*, and the plural form *amounts* is the eighth frequent collocate of *minute*. This means that these three adjectives have some similarities in terms of meaning. Surprisingly, there is no common collocate of these adjectives as far as the MI-based lists are concerned.

Common Meanings and Senses Associated with *Tiny, Small*, and *Minute*

Stubbs (2002) is of the view that there is always a strong semantic association between a node and its collocates. Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998) claim that each collocate of a word has a strong tendency to be associated with a single sense or meaning, although more than one collocate may be associated with the same sense. This section discusses and compares some of the most common meanings and senses associated with the three selected adjectives by examining the ten most frequent collocates of each adjective on the basis of their raw frequencies. Lists of collocates of the three selected adjectives based on their MI scores were not taken into consideration since these lists contain many rare words.

Common meanings associated with *tiny*. Generally, *tiny* was found to mean the less size or quantity. However, it gives specific meanings when occurring with a certain collocate. First, In the BNC, *tiny* is frequently found as an adjective modifier, intensifying the lesser size or quantity. In this use, it most frequently collocates with *bit* and *little*. This meaning can be clearly seen in the following examples.

1) A tiny little thing of the size of a tomato house. <s_conv>
2) Not too much milk and a tiny bit of sugar. <s_conv>

Second, *tiny* also refers to a small group of people or fewer instances which are part of a larger population. It conveys this sense especially when it collocates with *minority*. For example,

3) All but a tiny minority of authorities have set affordable budgets and council taxes. <W_newsp_other_report>

Third, it denotes something which is small in size or unimportant. For instance,

4) My mother was an innocent young country lass, born and brought up in a tiny village in the far north of Scotland. <w_fict_prose>

5) It was a tiny room shaped rather like a ridge tent. <w_fict_prose>

In example 4, *tiny village* can refer to a village that is small in size or an unimportant village or both. However, in example 5, it clearly refers to a small size.

Fourth, it also conveys the sense of a lesser quantity or amount. The following example illustrates this point.

6) Some contain only cheap vegetable oils with just a tiny amount of fragrance. <w_pop_lore>

Tiny amount of fragrance means a lesser quantity of fragrance.

Common meanings associated with *small*. A close look at the most frequent collocates of *small* reveals that it conveys various meanings. First, when collocated with *number, small* is predominantly used to refer to fewer people, institutions, groups, instances, things, etc. This meaning can be seen in examples 7 and 8.

7) By November, however, a small number of them had returned to work. <w_ac_polit_law_edu>

8) The scale of the problem was quite different in that only eight local authorities and a small number of colleges were involved. <w_ac_polit_law_edu>

In 7, *small* indicates fewer people, whereas in 8, it refers to fewer institutions (colleges).

Second, it is sometimes used to indicate a group of people which is not big. For example,

9) But the matter only came to a head when a small group of nursery nurses made a formal complaint to a course tutor. <w_ac_polit_law_edu>

Here, *small* refers to a group of nurses which was not large. This sense is conveyed especially when *small* collocates with *group*.

Third, *small* also refers to a quantity (both physical and abstract) which is not large. Examples 10 and 11 prove this point.

10)   There is a small amount of water in it, but hardly any flow. <w_ac_polit_law_edu>

11)   They only had a small amount of intelligence. <w_misc>

In example 10, small refers to a lesser physical quantity, whereas in 11, it indicates a lesser abstract quantity.

Fourth, it is also used in financial terms. In examples 12 and 13, it is used with *businesses* and *money* in financial sense.

12)   Small businesses are bearing the brunt of John Major's recession. <w_newsp_tabloid>

13)   At the beginning of each day's trading you will be given a small amount of money (eg 20) in small change. <w_misc>

Fifth, it also indicates something which is not large in size or unimportant or both. In 14, it refers to venues which are not of great size or are unimportant.

14)   Productions will play at the forum for 10-14 days before touring to small scale venues in the north. <w_newsp_other_arts>

Finally, *small* is used in terms of proportion of something. In example 15, *small* is used in the sense of proportion which is not large.

15)   I have described only a small part of the whole mythological root system.

Common meanings associated with *minute*. A detailed analysis of the collocational meaning of adjective *minute* in the BNC revealed that, surprisingly, majority of the instances generated by the search string [minute].[j*] were that of noun *minute*. Actually, all the examples of eight out of ten most frequent collocates of *minute* on the basis of raw frequency contain the noun. This can be seen in examples 16-20.

16)   The centre is a thirty minute walk or a five minute taxi ride away. <w_advert>

17)   If there was persistent delayed transit at the end of the three minute period, the transit time was regarded as 180 seconds. <w_ac_medicine>

18)   Bile was collected at 15 minute intervals. <w_ac_medicine>

19) Each call costs 36p a minute cheap rate. <w_newsp_tabloid>

20) Magistrates watched the seven minute video before passing sentence. <w_news_script>

All the above examples contain *minute* as noun, but the corpus generated these examples for *minute* as adjective. This is probably because the BNC reads noun-noun sequence as adjective-noun sequence. Hence, out of the ten most frequent collocates, the adjective *minute* was found to be collocating with only *detail* and *amounts*. The following are the two most common meanings associated with *minute*.

First, *minute* refers to a quantity which is not large as can be seen in example 21.

21) Even with the lids on tightly, they release minute amounts of chemicals which may be dangerous if the accumulate. <w-pop-lore>

Second, when it collocates with *details*, it refers to the finer or thorough details. For instance,

22) They had a passion for clothes, and every particular of how a dress or coat was made was studied in the most minute detail. <w-biography>

In 22, *minute* indicates finer or thorough. It is also worth noting that in this sense, *minute* is almost always used in superlative form. Table 8 summarizes the above discussed uses and meanings of *tiny, small*, and *minute*.

Table 8. *Common Meanings and Senses Associated with Tiny, Small, and Minute*

No.	Tiny	Small	Minute
1	As intensifier	Fewer people, institutions, groups, etc.	Finer or thorough
2	Small group of people or fewer instances which are part of a larger population	A group which is not large	
3	Not large in size or unimportant	Not large in size or unimportant	
4	A quantity or amount which is not large	A quantity (physical and abstract) which is	A quantity which is not large

	not large
5	In financial terms
6	In the sense of proportion

Table 8 presents the similarities and differences among the meanings of *tiny, small*, and *minute* on the basis of their most frequent collocates in the BNC. The three adjectives are similar in referring to quantities which are not large. There are more similarities between *tiny* and *small* than between either *tiny* and *minute* or *small* and *minute*. *Tiny* and *small* both refer to a size which is not small or something which is unimportant. They also refer to groups of people which do not contain a large number of people; however, *tiny* refers to the groups which are part of a larger population, whereas *small* refers to them in general. Moreover, the role of *tiny* as an intensifier is not shared by the other two adjectives. *Small*, on the other hand, gives a wide range of meanings than those given by *tiny* or *minute*. For instance, the sense of proportion and association with financial terms is peculiar to *small* only. Finally, although *minute* is associated with only two meanings, one of its meanings (i.e., finer or thorough) is not conveyed by either *tiny* or *small*. This shows that the three selected adjectives, though similar in many respects, cannot be considered strict synonyms and cannot be used interchangeably in every context.

Comparison with Dictionary Definitions

The meanings of three selected adjectives derived from their most frequent collocates in the BNC were also compared with the definitions of these adjectives as given in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2010) (henceforth OALD).

As far as *tiny* is concerned, OALD defines it as "very small in size or amount" (p. 1624). OALD mentions only two uses of *tiny* (small size and small amount), whereas our collocation-based analysis reveals that *tiny* can give four different meanings. Both the meanings of *tiny* given in OALD are captured in table 8. In addition, our collocation-based analysis indicated two more meanings (No. 1 and 2 in table 8) which are not mentioned in OALD. There are two example sentences given in OALD in which *tiny* collocates with *baby* and *minority*. Our findings reveal that *minority* is the third most frequent collocate of *tiny* and *baby* is the thirteenth most common collocate of *tiny*. This shows that OALD under-represents the range of meanings expressed by *tiny*.

In case of *small*, however, OALD lists eight uses which include a) not large in size, number, degree, amount; b) describe one size in a range of sizes of clothes, food, products used in the house; c) not as big as something else of the same kind; d) young; e) not important; f) not doing business on a very large scale; g) not written or printed as capitals; and h) not much (p. 1453). Most of these senses (senses a, c, e, f, and h) are confirmed by our analysis either directly or indirectly. However, our analysis could not identify three senses (senses b, d, and g) of *small* as given in OALD. This is because we looked at only ten most frequent collocates of *small* in our study. OALD, on the contrary, does not define *small* in the sense of proportion and referring to groups which are not large. Furthermore, Out of the thirteen collocates of *small* (*number, wedding, voice, children, boy, changes, errors, detail, achievement, farmer, businesses, cause,* and *hope*) given in the example sentences in OALD (p. 1453), only four occur in the list of top 100 (*number, businesses, children,* and *boy* ranked as first, fifth, eleventh, and nineteenth, respectively) collocates of *small* in the BNC. It means that some of the senses associated with *small* are not informed by frequency information.

For *minute*, OALD provides two meaning: a) extremely small and b) very detailed, careful and thorough which perfectly correspond to our findings. Moreover, three (*detail, amounts,* and *details* ranked as fifth, eighth, and fifteenth, respectively) out of five collocates of minute as an adjective given in OALD occur in the list of top 100 collocates of *minute in the BNC*. This may be because, as explained earlier, most of the collocates generated for *minute* as an adjective gave collocates of *minute* as a noun. Furthermore, OALD also confirms our finding that *detail* usually collocates with the superlative degree of *minute*. This shows that out of the three selected adjectives, only the meaning of *minute* given in OALD perfectly matches our findings.

Conclusion

The present study compared the most frequent right collocates of three seemingly synonymous adjectives (*tiny, small*, and *minute*) in the British National Corpus. The three adjectives were compared on the basis of their frequencies of occurrence, register distribution, ten most frequent right collocates, and meanings. The meanings established with the help of the ten most frequent collocates of these adjectives were compared with their definitions given in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2020).

The study shows that out of the three adjectives, *small* was found to be the most frequent in the BNC. It was also found that the positive forms of all three adjectives were most commonly used as compared to their comparative and superlative forms. The three adjectives showed great differences in terms of their register-wise distribution. As far as the meanings are concerned, although there were some similarities, each of the three adjectives conveyed certain sense(s) which were not shared by the others. Furthermore, similarities and differences were also found in the dictionary definitions of these adjectives and the meanings established on the basis of our analysis. All in all, enough differences were found among the meanings conveyed by the three selected adjectives to safely conclude that the three selected adjectives are not strict synonyms and cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts.

This study has certain limitations. First, the corpus used in this study only contains one variety of English (British English). Second, the corpus is somewhat outdated as new texts were not added to it after 1993. Third, the study compares the findings with the definitions of the selected adjectives given only in one dictionary. Fourth, it only analyzed the ten most frequent collocates of the three selected adjectives. Finally, it did not take register differences into consideration while establishing the meanings of the three selected adjectives. Future researchers should try to minimize these limitations to the possible extent.

Despite these limitations, the results of this study have important implications for lexicographers in general and for English language teachers in particular. The findings of the present study can help not only in improving the dictionary definitions of these adjectives but also help English language teachers explain these seemingly synonymous adjectives with the help of their immediate collocates and real-life examples.

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Visual Communication in Advertisement: A Social Semiotic Analysis of Selected Billboards in Awka Metropolis

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Abstract

This paper examines the use of visual communication in advertising, specifically focusing on the social semiotics analysis of selected billboards in Awka metropolis. The research explores how billboards use visual signs and symbols to convey meaning, and how these meanings are interpreted by the target audience. The study adopts a qualitative research design, using content analysis and social semiotics and multimodality as frameworks for data analysis. The finding of the research contributes to our understanding of the role of visual communication in advertising and provides insights into the effectiveness of billboards as a medium of advertising in the Awka metropolis. The study also has practical implications for advertisers on how to use visual communication effectively on billboards to reach the target audience.

Keywords: Advertisement, Awka metropolis, billboards, multimodality, social semiotics, visual communication

Introduction

Language, be it written, spoken or visual, is a means of communication between two or more people. It is a symbol of complex signs peculiar to human beings, often used to disseminate information, ideas, feelings or emotions. Communication can be passed not only through written and spoken channels but also through visual communication. Visual communication contributes to the discussion on semiotics and critical discourse analysis (CDA) (van Leeuwen, 2004, p. 15) as the incorporation of nonverbal and verbal cues contributes to meaning realization in every communication.

Visual communication, in the words of Belch and Belch (2014), can be used to create a sense of brand identity and recognition in advertising and marketing. Visual communication in advertisement refers to using visual elements such as colours, images, typography, graphics, and other visuals to convey a message to a target audience. Through visual communication,

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brand identity is created, as the tone of the advertising message is conveyed via resources available in visual representation, which in turn helps to elicit the audience's emotions. In representing products visually to a target audience, advertisers have been found to rely heavily on billboard advertisement, which constitutes one of the media through which products are pushed to consumers (Makinde, 2024; Jamodu, 2023; Fortenberry Jr, 2007; Zafar, 2024). Billboards are essential parts of outdoor advertising, and they are used by businesses worldwide to promote products and services. Billboards are large, eye-catching displays that are strategically placed in high-traffic areas to capture the attention of a large audience. The design and content of billboards play a crucial role in their effectiveness, and as such, there is a need to analyze them in detail to understand how they work.

With the expansion in the use of billboard advertisements, which are strategically positioned in various areas within Awka metropolis (the capital city of Anambra State, Nigeria), this study explores how billboards function as a form of visual communication in advertising in Awka metropolis; it examines the types of meaning-making resources used in billboard advertisements and how these resources work together to create a more effective advertising campaign.

Statement of the Problem

Billboards are a popular form of advertising in Awka metropolis, and they are often used to promote products and services to a wide audience. However, there is a need to better understand how billboards work as a form of visual communication, and how they can be analyzed using social semiotic theory. Review of literature shows that there is a lack of research on the use of social semiotic analysis of billboards in Awka metropolis. In view of the above, this research aims to fill this gap by providing insights into the ways in which billboards are used as a form of visual communication in advertising, and how social semiotic and multimodal analyses can help to create more effective advertising campaigns.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. to explore the ways in which billboards function as a form of visual communication in advertising in Awka metropolis.
2. to understand what types of meaning-making resources are used in billboard advertisements in Awka.
3. to help viewers understand the different meanings being conveyed by these billboard advertisements.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

1. In what ways do billboards function as visual communication in advertising in Awka metropolis?
2. What meaning-making resources are used in billboard advertisement in Awka metropolis?
3. How do viewers understand the meaning being conveyed in billboard advertisements within the study site?

Literature Review

Visual Communication

Visual communication refers to the use of visual elements, such as images, videos, diagrams, charts, and info graphics, to convey information or messages. It is a powerful tool that can help people understand complex information quickly and effectively. Visual communication has been shown to enhance learning outcomes and improve information retention. According to a study by Mayer (2001), visual aids can improve learning outcomes by up to 89%. Visual communication is also effective in conveying emotions and evoking empathy. In a study published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, Nummenmma *et al.* (2014) note that when people see a face expressing an emotion, the same part of their brain that is activated when they experience those emotions themselves is also activated. This means that visual communication can help people understand and connect with the emotions of others. Visual communication also helps people remember information more easily. It is on this note that Meyer (2000) points out that visual elements when incorporated with written information can increase recall by up to 65%. Thus, visual communication remains a powerful tool for enhancing learning outcomes, improving information retention, conveying emotions and empathy, and making information more engaging and interesting.

Advertisement

Advertisement refers to a form of communication that aims to promote or sell a product, service, or idea to a target audience. Advertisement can take various forms, such as print ads, commercials, billboards, social media posts, and sponsored content. Advertisement has been shown to increase brand recognition and brand loyalty. In the words of Kim *et al.* (2016), exposure to advertisements can increase brand recognition and familiarity, which can lead to increased sales and customer loyalty. A study by the Association of National Advertisers found that companies that consistently advertised their products experienced an average sale of 8% (Association

of National Advertisers, n.d.). Advertisements are found to influence consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions. This view is supported by Mackenzie *et al.* (1986) when they assert that advertisements can increase the likelihood of consumers purchasing a product by up to 19%. Also, in another study, Nielsen found that advertising on social media platforms, such as Facebook, and Instagram, billboards, can increase brand awareness and drive purchase intent (Khan, 2024; & Nielsen, 2019). Advertisements can inform and educate consumers about products, services, and ideas. Advertisement also provides information about a product or service, increases consumer knowledge and leads to more informed purchasing decisions (Bettman *et al.*, 1998). It helps to promote social issues, such as public health campaigns, increase awareness and understanding of important issues among the public (Waters *et al.*, 2015). Advertisement, therefore, is a powerful tool that can increase brand recognition and loyalty, influence consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions, and inform and educate consumers about products, services, and ideas. Thus, how billboard advertisements are represented contributes to how consumer behaviour and purchasing power are influenced.

Billboard advertisement is a form of outdoor advertising that uses large, stationary signs placed in high-traffic areas, such as along highways, in cities, and near shopping centers, to promote a product, service, or idea to a target audience (Makinde & Adejumo, 2024; Adegbola *et al.*, 2021; & Belch & Belch, 2014). Billboard advertising can reach a large and diverse audience and increase brand recognition and recall. It is in line with this that Lacobucci *et al.* (2016) note that billboard advertisements can increase brand recall by up to 84%. As a powerful form of advertising, billboard advertising is found to influence consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions. Through their strategic position, this mode of advertisement can reach a large and diverse audience, increase brand recognition and recall.

Empirical Review

A Google search shows limited empirical studies explicitly focusing on "Visual Communication in Advertisement: A Social Semiotics Analysis of Billboards in Awka Metropolis"; however, some studies have explored similar themes and can provide relevant insights. One such study is that of Adegbola *et al.* (2021), which examines the impact of billboard advertising on consumers buying behaviour in Nigeria. The study found that billboard advertising had a significant impact on consumers' buying behaviour and that factors such as visual design, message content, and cultural context, among others, played an essential role in the effectiveness of billboard advertisements.

In another study, Makinde and Mgbodi (2022) conducted a study on "A social semiotic discourse analysis of gender expressions in selected Nigerian newspapers". The study, through a social semiotic lens, draws on Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) visual semiotic and Halliday's (1978) Systemic Functional Linguistics approach to multimodal discourse analysis to investigate how visuals and other semiotic resources are employed in communication in the selected Nigerian newspapers. Findings from the study show a whole lot of complementarities between visuals and textual elements used in the representation of data presented.

In their study of billboard advertisements in the United States, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) found that certain visual elements, such as colour, shape, and composition, can convey specific meanings and messages to the viewers. Moving to more recent work, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the visual elements of advertisements, including billboards. They argue that visual communication is as important as written or spoken communication and that understanding the grammar of visual design is essential for analyzing and interpreting visual texts. Other studies include a visual and multimodal representation of cartoons in Nigeria (Makinde, 2024, Aluya, & Iangba, 2024; Makinde 2023).

Overall, while there are limited empirical studies on social semiotic analysis specifically focusing on billboards in Awka metropolis, these studies demonstrate the importance of visual design and message content in the effectiveness of billboard advertising. As shown in the study by van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001), which highlights the potential of social semiotics analysis for understanding the complex messages conveyed by billboards, our current study investigates how billboard advertisements, with their strategic positioning, contribute to the semiotic landscapes of Awka metropolis in addition to their aesthetic and advertisement purposes. Awka, spelled *Ọka*, is the capital territory of Anambra, a prominent state in the southeastern Nigeria. The city of *Ọka* is one of the oldest settlements in southeastern Nigeria. The city is considered as the cradle of Igbo civilization comprises of seven groups who share common blood lineage. For the purpose of this study, Awka metropolis constitutes our study site.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006, 2020) notions of social semiotics and multimodality. Social semiotics, according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), is "the study of the formation of meaning in social life through the analysis of semiotic systems that are used in the production and reception of texts and practices". Social

semiotics examines how meaning is constructed through signs and symbols in different social contexts. According to Hodge and Kress (1988), social semiotics can also involve the study of texts, how individuals create and understand meanings, how social interests and ideologies influence semiotic systems, and how these systems are modified as society evolves.

This general framework of social semiotics is currently receiving extension beyond its linguistic roots to explain the increasing significance of sound and visual images, as well as the fusion of modes of communication in traditional and digital media (semiotics of social networking) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006, 2020). This fusion of modes in communication is what Kress and van Leeuwen (2020) regarded as multimodal, which involves using colour, font, and layout that can work together to create a particular impression on the reader, as is common in billboard advertisements as well as the use of camera angles, music, and sound effects all contributing to the emotional impact of a scene in a film or television show. Semiotic modes, therefore, incorporate visual, verbal, written, gestural and musical resources for communication. Various "multimodal" ensembles of these modes are also included to serve as semiotic resources in the ongoing representation of meaning in social interactions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

Methods

This study uses qualitative research design. Data for the study, comprising of eight (8) billboards, were purposefully selected for this study within the study site. To get the required amount of data for the study, qualitative methods, which include observation (which involves physically visiting the different locations where billboards are displayed and observing the various visual elements of the advertisements, such as the images, colours, typography, and other design elements used), photography (involving taking pictures of the billboards and using these images as a basis for analysing the visual communication used in the advertisements), and thematic analysis to identify recurring themes, visual motifs, and other design elements that are used across different advertisements. This involves systematically analysing the images, colours, typography, and other design elements used in the advertisements. For the purpose of analysis of this study, we adopt Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis; this model is useful for this study in that it provides a flexible and useful research tool for a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data on the visual representation of billboard advertisements. Since our data set is on billboard advertisements, we are able to categorise

the data into two: those advertising landed properties and those on advertisements for drinks. Within these categorisations, we used the adopted theoretical framework to examine how advertisers employ meaning-making resources to push their products to the consumers via visual communication on billboards.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this section, the researchers provide in-depth analysis of the various selected billboard advertisements in the ongoing visual communication in Awka metropolis. In the first part of this analysis, we analysed the visual communication in the billboard advertisement of Homeland United and Max Heights Estates. In the second, we examined a Social semiotic analysis of Life, Tiger, Gulder Larger Beer, Guinness and Fayrouz Billboard advertisements within Awka metropolis.

Visual Communication in the Billboard Advertisements of Homeland United and Max Heights Estates

Using visual elements to communicate information or messages, such as pictures, films, charts, graphs, and infographics, is known as visual communication. It is still a potent instrument that can facilitate people's rapid and efficient understanding of complex material. Also, in the ongoing visual communication as regards advertisements, billboards serve as a popular form of visual communication in advertising. Billboards are large outdoor advertising structures designed to capture the attention of passers-by, drivers and commuters and to communicate a specific message or brand image to them. The figures below show how billboards function as visual communication in advertisements within Awka metropolis.

Figure 1: *Showing Homland United Estate Billboard Advertisement*

Figure 2: *Showing Max Heights' Advert of Sales of Land*

The billboard adverts in Figures. 1 and 2 represent the advertisements of landed properties within Awka. Representation of these billboards in their strategic position contributes to the economic cum business operation within the city. As a capital city which is still undergoing structural development, a number of estate developers are shown to present their business via billboard advertisement creating awareness about sales of landed properties in different parts of the city. The use of visual communication in the billboard advertisement of these brands is to communicate a specific message. Visual elements such as images, text, colours, and even numbers used in the billboards make them easily read and understood.

Figure 1 presents a visual representation of HOMLAND UNITED ESTATE with such semiotics as represented participant of a woman with other affordances, such as colours, foregrounded image of an estate, text and numbers. The represented participant is presented as demanding information from the viewer with her gaze and her two hands raised and partially opened mouth, showing her upper teeth. The billboard is presented in a frontal view, with the information value presented in a top-to-bottom direction. The artistic design of the text "HOMLAND" along with other texts "UNITED ESTATE" bearing the name and the location of the estate positioned at the top is made salience via size and colour. The use of bright colours, white and orange, helps draw viewers' attention to the affordances that depict the advertised product. There is a line segmenting the frame into information value that both offers and demands information. The first presents the advertised product via different affordances. At the same time, the other directs the would-be consumers to the value of the advertised product, depicting how the product could be purchased via the use of such resources as contact address, account details, mobile phone number, cost of the land, email address as well as the square meter, all serving as a mechanism for pushing the product to the consumers. Using a female-represented participant in the billboard, as is common with most advertisements, adds to attract male viewers who are most often the target audience. Therefore, the product's name, as stated on the billboard, along with the prices and address, all contribute to the resources directing the intended customers to how the product could be acquired.

Figure 2 represents the PWAN Max Property and Solution Estate advertisement, Awka. The figure presents the visual of a female participant with other textual and visual elements as affordances for promoting the PWAN Max Estate. From a left-right and top-down information value, the image in Figure 2, with all its affordances, employs appealing semiotic

resources such as backgrounded colours, images, framing, salience, and other salient information for the viewer's consumption. Via the represented participant's gaze, smiles and body posture, the viewer is connected and, on that note, invited to be part of the ongoing representation.

Furthermore, the figure is framed into two, with the first segment in a left-right information value. At the left-hand side of the first frame is the visual of the represented participant, which depicts Kress and van Leeuwen's interactive meaning. The visual is depicted to demand information from the viewer and serves as the point of departure for the textual elements by the left; this is complemented by the artistic designs of the textual element at the right-hand side, which is presented to offer information to the viewers and at the same time depicting the promise of what the product offers. The offer, *I WILL DASH U 1 PLOT*, is premised on the condition, *IF YOU BUY 2 OUTRIGHT*, of purchasing the product being advertised. This is further elaborated with the expression *try me!*.

The second segment of the frame offered more detailed information on how the product could be purchased. In between the two segments is a line framing the advert into two parts; on this line is a rectangular shape with the information depicting the cost and square meters of the landed property along with the timeline for the payment. In this way, the property's price tag, *N2.5M*, is made prominent via its strategic positioning for the viewer's attention. Like the visual in Figure 1, Fig. 2 includes in its second frame a blue background colour, which allows the visibility of the texts that are rendered in white and red colours as well as such information as the Zenith account number, the estate's contact address, website, email, and the use of media platforms depicting the accessibility of the product online. Also, all the affordances on the represented participants are made salience via size, colour, shape, gaze cum eye contact. In this way, the viewer is presented with an image of a beautiful lady with a dark complexion and all the aura of sensual invitation. It is worth noting that the advertiser makes part of the lady's skin visible from the chest upward to make her a point of attraction. This supports the view of her being the point of departure for all other affordances in this advert.

A Social Semiotic Analysis of Life, Tiger, Gulder Larger Beer, Guinness and Fayrouz Billboard Adverts in Awka Metropolis

As part of visual elements in the representation of advertisement in Awka metropolis, a number of cultural resources are used as affordances for creating awareness about the products being represented. Here, language, Igbo cultural attires, indigenous participants and local settings are affordances employed in the figures presented in this segment. Thus,

meaning-making resources, which are semiotic resources, are elements or tools that are used to communicate meaning through signs and symbols. Billboard advertisements rely on visual and textual resources to create meaning and capture the attention of passers-by. Some meaning-making resources used in billboard advertisements include images, graphics, text, colour, typography, humour and wit. In the figures below, several meaning-making resources are employed to represent Life, Tiger, Gulder Larger Beer, Guinness and Fayrouz billboard advertisements to viewers.

Figure 3: *Showing advert on Life Drink*

The billboard above uses unique affordances to create meaning and capture the attention of passers-by. In Figure 3 above, there is an image of a famous Nollywood actor, Yul Edochie, an image of the Niger Bridge with a branded text – ENJOY Life Larger Beer, an image of a sunset, a Life Larger Beer logo and a crown. There is also a text, "TURU UGO LOTA", and its English version, "BRING HOME THE GLORY", which serves as affordances depicting the semiotic landscape of the billboard. The text is made prominent through bold and a big font size with white colour. The Nollywood actor's image helps create a sense of recognition, appeal, and emotional connection. Emotional connection in the sense that the Nollywood actor is a well-known Igbo actor in the movie industry. The use of an indigenous represented participant speaks volume of the product and influence consumption perception of the consumers to patronise the brand due to their familiarity with the Nollywood actor. The actor is dressed in Igbo attire, featuring the product portrayed in the advert as a testament to the Igbo culture.

Compositionally, the image represents Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) left-right reading direction. Using a bridge with the text *Enjoy Life* is a direct link to the name of the product *Life* to be enjoyed. Of a truth, *Life Lager Beer* is indeed produced across the bridge at the land of the Igbos,

Onitsha. Beneath the bridge are images of a bottle and a can of *Life Beer* that the viewers can enjoy. The Niger Bridge is used to signify home, while the sunset depicts a sign of hope. The use of Igbo text shows that Igbo is the dominant language in Awka. In contrast, the use of English text shows that although Igbo is the dominant language, there are also residents of Awka who are not Igbo speakers. This factor contributes to the use of English that must be considered in the product's advertisement. The text "TURU UGO LOTA" signifies a message of reward, honour, and victory. Other semiotic resources evidence in the billboard adverts include the use of bold text to convey a clear message and using bright colours that help attract attention to the billboard. The billboard has a horizontal view as it is positioned strategically on the highway for viewer's scrutiny.

Figure 4: *Showing Life Alcoholic Drink*

Figure 4 above is another advert for Life Lager Beer. In this advert, we have a visual representation of two participants: an image of Life Lager Beer and a male-represented participant. The billboard's affordances are positioned in a left-right reading direction with the textual element "NDU KA" and "STAY SAFE" placed at the centre of the billboard advert. With the strategic positioning of the image of Life Lager Beer, the product's brand identity and all its resources are made salient for viewer's attention. Here, the text "NDU KA", "STAY SAFE" signifies a message of life and safety.

There is complementarity in the representation of the billboard advertisement; for instance, the positioning of the product "Life" at the left-hand side of the frame interacts with the text and the visual of the human participant at the left to convey meaning. In essence, the text "NDU KA", which means 'life is greater' is an injunction to the young man at the

right-hand side of the image and, by extension, to all lovers of Life to 'STAY SAFE' because life is greater. By comparing the promise of what the product "Life" offers to what life itself offers, the advert has conveyed many messages as it draws the potential audience to the benefit of what they stand to get when they consume Life Lager Beer. It is worth noting here that the text "NDU KA", "STAY SAFE" is made salient/prominent via size with bold font size in capital letters as it is centralized for the viewer's attention. Also, using the Igbo language as a resource shows its use as the dominant language in Awka. At the same time, the English text complements the Igbo version, helping the non-residents of Awka who are not Igbo indigenes to relate to the advert. With its horizontal view, the billboard is strategically positioned high enough on the highway for commuters and passers-by to see it from a far distance.

The image of the man on the billboard, a celebrity, is depicted from the chest upward at the left-hand side of the billboard. The image is positioned to face the viewers and connect with them through gaze, an invitation to connect with 'NDU KA' for a great life and to stay safe. By typically framing the visual of the represented participant from the chest upward with a shot showing the face of the character, the participant is thus made prominent and visible for the viewer's attention.

Figure 5: *Showing advert on Tiger Alcoholic Drink*

Figure 5, a billboard on Tiger, presents the picture of a famous Nigerian artist, Ruger, the head of a tiger and a bottle of 'Tiger' drink. The billboard depicts Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) Left-Right information value. Without framing, the advert is divided into two parts: textual elements on the left-hand side and images of a represented participant, the head of a lion, and a bottle of Tiger drink on the right. On the left side of the billboard is the text "LIVE UNCAGED", signalling to live a life free from bondage (freedom) as indicated in the picture of the uncaged tiger. The text "Live

Uncaged" demands information and is a pointer to the visual elements, offering information to the viewers. This is evident in the use of size and colours as well as the Nigerian artist, Ruger. The tiger (animal) is a metaphorical representation of the Tiger drink that is advertised. As per the billboard's position, the advert is positioned on the highway and placed high enough for the attention of passers-by. Its strategic positioning with bold and capital letter text, along with the size of the images at the right-hand side of the frame, is made visible for viewers scrutiny. The image of the represented participant creates a connection with the viewer through gaze; this is coupled with the raised right hand of the participant, a communicative motif to the youth to live uncaged and enjoy the best of their life. This is a call to a life of freedom and enjoyment with the product "Tiger" and be bold. All these affordances are employed as resources for making meaning.

Figure 6: *Showing advert on Gulder Drink*

Figure 6 presents the advertisement for Gulder Larger Beer. In a left-right reading direction, which depicts Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) idea of information value, the advert presents such affordances as text and visual representation of a man, a bottle of Gulder Larger Beer and a branded cup. On the left-hand side is the text, "OWN YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS", which serves as a point of departure to the visuals being represented. The text calls for the viewers and, in turn, the consumers of Gulder to *own their journey to success*. The text, "OWN YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS" is a signifier that encourages viewers to take charge of their journey to success. The text is made prominent through bold text and big font sizes positioned at the left upper side of the billboard advert. Viewers may take the message as a form of motivation, and this can make them patronise the brand because they believe that when they do so, they are on their way to owning their journey to success and taking

charge. The image of the represented participant is framed from the chest up to reflect the facial and body posture of the participant. In this way, the viewer is provided with the visual of a successful man already owning his journey to success. The outfit of this participant, with his look, posture, and carriage, is used as a resource to portray his successful journey. Using the picture of a celebrity helps create a sense of familiarity with the viewers, and this helps draw the viewers' attention to the information on the billboard.

The third stage of the advertisement is the visual representation of the product, which is the focus of this advertisement. With the journey motif to success, the advertiser has persuasively woven together text along with the visual representation of the represented participant to push the product to the consumers. As an advertisement technique, viewers are first presented with the desire for success (promise of what the product offers), shown a visual representation of a successful man, and then presented with the product that will facilitate their journey to success.

It is worth noting that all the affordances used in this billboard are situated within the context of a backgrounded cityscape. A mode that makes the advertisement more powerful and attractive to the viewers. Other resources employed in the representation of this billboard advertisement include colour, colour saturation, strategic positioning, and the use of frontal angle, which invites the viewers to be part of the journey to success. By relying on a represented participant who is indigenous to the location of the advert and using an Igbo outfit with the red cap, the advertiser domesticated the advert by placing the product on the scale of localisation. These affordances contribute to the semiotic resources employed in representing Gulder Larger beer.
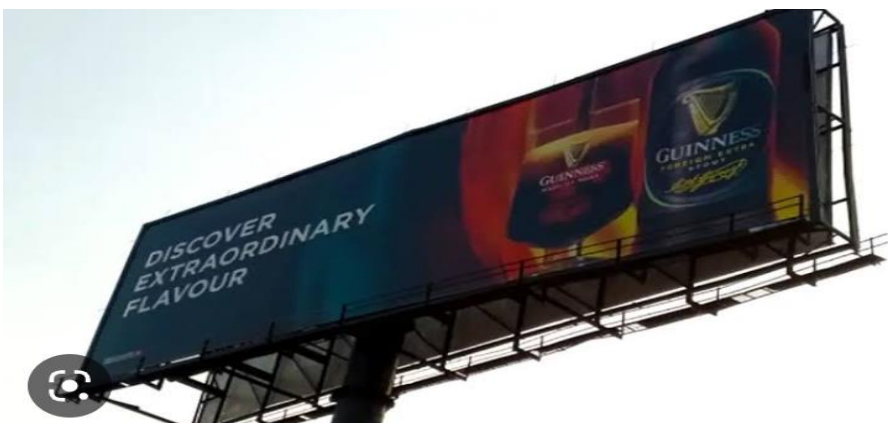

Figure7: *Showing advert on Guinness Drink*

In relation to Figure 6 above, Figure 7 presents multiple modes in its representation with text and two images: a branded Guinness cup and a bottle of Guinness as affordances for depicting the Guinness billboard advert. Compositionally, the billboard presents a Left-Right information value in its reading direction. At the left is the text, "DISCOVER EXTRAORDINARY FLAVOUR", followed by the images of a branded Guinness cup and a bottle of Guinness. Through this text-image relation, the image is depicted to complement the text so that the visual provides an answer to the extraordinary flavour to be discovered. In this way, the text directs the viewer to the product to be discovered with its extraordinary flavour. Other compositional elements employed in this advert include framing, colour, and salience.

In terms of framing, the Figure is divided into two via such affordance as colour and line. The textual element is positioned on a dark mixture of colours on the left-hand side. In contrast, the visual elements are positioned in a mixture of red and yellow with a dark colour flavour. In this way, the dark and red colours form a line that serves as a vector connecting the two sides. At the interactive level, the elements of the advert are depicted to offer information to the viewers with the perspective of the object showing a frontal angle. As per the spatial mobility of the billboard, the advert is strategically poisoned on the highway with affordances such as big and bold font size; the elements of the adverts are made prominent as the advertiser deploys salience in the visual representation of the elements of the advert. Via this strategic positioning, the passers-by are attracted to the advert from a distance and are propelled to look as they approach the billboard.

Figure 8: *Showing advert on Fayrouz Non-Alcoholic Drink*

Figure 8 presents the advertisement of Fayrouz, a non-alcoholic drink. Like most advertisements, the billboard has short but captivating text, an image of the Fayrouz bottle, five represented participants and some fruits. The backgrounded colour of different shades serves as a frame and a

connector to the left and right visual elements presented in the advert. Following Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) compositional meaning, the billboard presents a Left to Right reading information value with colour, connector, overlapping and form serving as the frame connecting the two sides of the billboard.

From the interactive meaning, the visual representation of the represented participants is presented to offer information to the audience, as depicted in their different strategic positioning as well as their facial expressions: laughing, gesturing, and talking to one another with gazes in different directions. Also, the composition of the objects in this advert is presented in a longshot and vertical high angle. This helps to present the entire frame of the visuals in the advert. The visual representation of the advert first presents the viewers with the image of Fayrouz drink, followed by the text "DRINK", "HANGOUT" and "ENJOY". In this way, "Fayrouz" is depicted as the best product to be enjoyed when it comes to picnics or at a time to "HANGOUT". The texts "DRINK", "HANGOUT", and "ENJOY" are signifiers that convey a message of excitement, enjoyment, and celebration. The text is made prominent through its positioning between the product and the images of the participants depicted in the advert as well as the use of big font sizes. By adopting visuals of smiling youths, the product draws the youths' attention to take an interest in the brand.

From the foregoing, this study's data presentation and analyses give insights into the importance of visual communication and advertisement, as evident in the use of such affordances as colours, texts, numbers, and images, as well as the meanings and messages conveyed by the advertisers of these products. The table below shows the semiotic distributions in the visuals presented above, giving a tabular overview of resources used for visual communication in billboard advertisements in the Awka metropolis.

Discussion of Findings

This study provides an in-depth analysis of the signifiers, signified and the various signs and symbols used in the billboards under analysis. The data presentation and analysis show how advertisers use visual cues, such as images, colours and texts to communicate their messages to the target audience. Via these resources, we are able to examine how the various elements of the billboards work together to create meaning and influence the audience's interpretation of the advertisement. Overall, it provides a detailed understanding of the role of visual communication in advertising and how it affects the perception and interpretation of the audience. Table 5.1 below presents the summary of the various semiotic resources used to

convey visual communication in the advertisement of the selected billboard advertisements in Awka metropolis.

Table 1: *Showing summary of the semiotic resources identified in this study*

SN	PRODUCT'S NAME	SEMIOTIC RESOURCES							
		TEXT	COLOUR	IMAGES	NUMBERS	INFORMATION VALUE	FRAMING	FONT SIZE	ADDRESS/ PHONE NUMBER
1	Figure 1. Homland United Estate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Top to bottom	Yes	Big	Yes
2	Figure 2. Max Heights Awka	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Top to bottom	Yes	Big	Yes
3	Figure 3. Life Alcoholic Drink	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Left to right	Yes	Big	No
4	Figure 4. Life Alcoholic Drink	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Left to right	Yes	Big	No
5	Figure 5. Tiger Alcoholic Drink	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Left to right	Yes	Small	No
6	Figure 6. Gulder Alcoholic Drink	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Top to bottom	Yes	Big	No
7	Figure 7. Guinness Alcoholic Drink	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Top to bottom	Yes	Big	No
8	Figure 8. Fayrouz Non-Alcoholic Drink	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Top to bottom	Yes	Big	No

Figure 1 of Table 1 above shows that the advertisers use semiotic resources such as text, colour, images and numbers to communicate. The information value of the billboard is from top to bottom. The billboard is framed into two with the upper part showing the visuals that represent the product to the viewers while the lower segment presents the value of the product as well as how the product could be purchased. In Figure 2, the table shows that the advert uses semiotic resources such as text, images, colour and numbers to communicate. The information value of the billboard is depicted from top to bottom, with the billboard framed into two segments of information values (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020). In Figure 3, the table shows that the advert uses semiotic resources such as text, images, and

colour but no numbers to communicate. The information value of the billboard is from left to right with the billboard framed into two segments. In Figure 4, the table shows that the advert uses semiotic resources such as text, images, and colour but no numbers as its means of communication. The information value of the billboard is from left to right with the presence of framing and salience as part of the compositional element.

Also, in Figure 5, the table shows that the advertiser uses semiotic resources such as text, images, and colour but no numbers as its means of communication. The information value of the billboard is from left to right. As part of the compositional element, the billboard uses framing in its representation. For Figure 6, the table shows that the advert uses semiotic resources such as text, images, and colour but no numbers as its means of communication. The information value of the billboard is from top to bottom. The billboard uses framing in its compositional element.

In Figure 7, the table shows that the advert uses semiotic resources such as text, images, and colour but no numbers as its means of communication. The information value of the billboard is from top to bottom. The billboard is framed. In Figure 8, the table shows that the advert uses semiotic resources such as text, images, and colour but no numbers as its means of communication. The information value of the billboard is from top to bottom while the billboard is framed into two segments following left to right information values (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020).

Conclusion

The billboards presented in this study constitute part of the predominant and common products being represented in Awka metropolis. It therefore underscores how products of these kinds with the visual representations are employed to show the culture, economic sources as well as the semiotic landscape of the study site. In conclusion, this study has provided a social semiotics analysis of billboards in Awka metropolis to understand visual communication in advertising. The study used the framework of social semiotics to analyze the visual elements such as colour, images, typography, and language as well as some aspects of cultural heritage commonly used in the representation of billboards in Awka metropolis. The analysis revealed that the billboards in Awka metropolis use a combination of visual and textual elements, cultural heritage such as indigenous participants, indigenous outfits and cultural setting to communicate messages to the audience. The study found that the visual elements used in billboard advertisements in Awka metropolis are images of famous indigenous artists, metaphorical images of non-humans, typography, cultural heritage, and language to create emotional

connections with the audience. In this way, the advertisers placed their products and brand on the scale of localisation, a term that represents how locally made products are being given prominence through local affordances. Other resources employed include colour, typography, and texts with bold and big fonts to emphasize important information and create visual interest. The study also revealed that language was an essential element in billboard representations in Awka metropolis. English was the dominant language used in billboards, but some billboards used the local language, Igbo, to connect with the target audience. The language used on billboards was often simple and direct to ensure that the target audience understand the message easily. Overall, the social semiotics analysis of billboards in Awka metropolis revealed that advertisers use visual and textual elements to create meaning and to persuade the audience to take a particular action, such as purchasing a product or service. All of these influence viewers' perception of the meaning conveyed in these billboard advertisements, which in turn help them draw meaning from the billboard advertisement via the affordances used as resources for making meaning.

Implications for Further Studies

This study has implications for further research on the visual representation of billboard advertisements within the entire state to identify recurrent products being projected on billboards within Anambra state. A comparative analysis could also be carried out in other regions of the country to examine the similarities and differences existing in the semiotic resources employed in representing billboard advertisements. This will enable the examination of similarities or otherwise in the meaning-making resources employed by designers of the billboard advertisements within the country. This will also enable further research on the linguistic landscape of the various study sites.

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Analyzing Post-Traumatic Transformation in Tara Westover's *Educated* through Transitivity Analysis

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Abstract

This study aims to study the role of transitivity processes in Tara Westover's memoir, *Educated* to explore the post-traumatic transformation of the female protagonist who experiences various traumas and distress. This paper utilizes Halliday's transitivity analysis and Richard Tedeschi's post-traumatic growth as its analytical and theoretical framework respectively. The analysis explores post-traumatic transformation in the life of the female protagonist Tara. A total of 284 clauses are extracted from the text *Educated*. All the extracted clauses are categorized into processes and participants etc. to conduct an in-depth analysis of the depiction of the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist. The study reveals that the material process is the dominant process counted as 137; the verbal process is 63; the mental process is 43; and the behavioral process is 41. It is evident from the findings that the material processes of Tara's journey from victim to empowered woman reflect a linguistic and psychological shift. Furthermore, the mental processes demonstrate Tara's belief in her strength and the support of her brother; the behavioral processes reflect Tara's physical and emotional transformation; and verbal processes indicate Tara's ability to express herself and engage and connect with others after experiencing different distressing situations thus uncovering her resilience and growth. So, the writer's use of material and other transitivity processes in her text unveils the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist Tara. This study draws attention to understanding the function of language by creating meaning in the text, hence, signifies the importance of transitivity analysis.

Keywords: clauses, transitivity analysis, transitivity process, participants.

Introduction

The objective of the study is to examine the role of transitivity processes in exploring the post-traumatic transformation of the female protagonist

by experiencing different life traumas in the memoir, *Educated* by Tara Westover. This study examines the memoir, *Educated*, through the lens of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to explore the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist Tara, with a particular focus on transitivity analysis. The memoir, *Educated*, presents a compelling circumstance for an analysis of the existing study, as Westover's memoir presents Tara's transformation from an isolated, traumatic childhood to a self-empowered woman through education. By examining the distribution of different transitivity processes, the current study reveals how linguistic choices reflect psychological and social transformation. The linguistic analyses in terms of transitivity analysis of the memoir *Educated* remain relatively unexplored. Therefore, this study expands the area of linguistic research by integrating transitivity analysis with post-traumatic growth providing a new perspective of how language encodes and represents post-traumatic transformation.

Individuals communicate their ideas, concepts and feelings by employing different forms of language such as verbal and non-verbal, and sign language with the help of which they convey messages meaningfully. Therefore, meanings are created when people use language. Hence, people are interested in learning how language is used and how it constructs meanings while using and studying it. To create particular meanings in a particular context people use different choices of words. Therefore, the analyses and interpretation of three metafunctions of language in systemic functional grammar facilitate the formation and understanding of meanings in various texts.

Language has three metafunctions according to an Australian Linguist, M.A.K Halliday (2014), Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual. There are two parts of Ideational metafunction: experiential and logical. According to Butt et al (2003), transitivity analysis represents experiential metafunction and it is subdivided into participants, processes, and circumstances, etc. The processes are further categorized into various types such as material, mental, behavioral, verbal, relational, and existential. Likewise, interpersonal metafunction is defined as the use of language to share concepts and feelings as well as to preserve social interaction in a society. Whereas, textual metafunction is to organize what is said by using language. Therefore, to convey powerful thoughts and meanings related to different characters writers use several processes in their writings.

Transitivity in functional grammar refers to a system that defines a clause, but, it cannot be confused with the relationship of a verb in a sentence with the object (Thompson, 2013). The transitivity system consists of several

types of processes for different life events, occasions and experiences. The processes classified as are material, mental, verbal, behavioral, relational and existential. Similarly, there is a participant in every process in a clause i.e. an actor, sensor, sayer, behaver, carrier and existent.

Trauma signifies those events or experiences that lead to the death or loss of family members or loved ones, remaining in solitude due to specific circumstances, emotional, physical, domestic and sexual abuse or violence of an individual in life. The consequences of trauma be influenced by different aspects such as the person's nature, his surroundings including his parents, siblings, friends, relatives and employment setting, etc. A person leads to two entirely different situations while encountering distressing situations; one is termed as post-traumatic stress in which an individual cannot come out of the damage produced by the suffering, and another is post-traumatic growth in which a person acquires and begins to grow after the distress and trauma. The concept of post-traumatic growth is used in psychology for the progress, strength and growth attained after suffering numerous life traumas. The concept of post-traumatic growth is defined by Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996) "as the most used construct to describe positive changes experienced as a result of the psychological and cognitive efforts made to deal with challenging circumstances" (quoted in Zacchaeus, 2020). According to Tedeschi and Calhoun, this concept has five different dimensions such as personal strength, appreciation of life, new paths and possibilities, and improved relationships with others, spiritual change and a new understanding of life.

The existing study analyzes different transitivity processes and makes a valuable addition to the exploration of innovative ideas and themes in linguistics after unveiling the concept of post-traumatic transformation. Moreover, with the in-depth analysis of the extracted clauses of the selected text, this study paves diverse ways to connect linguistics specifically systemic functional grammar with the field of psychology and psychological theories. In short, a thorough transitivity analysis of the selected novel offers pedagogical implications to the teacher and learners. Besides, this study has highlighted the scope and significance of Halliday's systemic functional grammar.

All in all, the primary objective of the existing study is to analyze extracted clauses of the selected memoir at the level of experiential metafunction to reveal the protagonist's post-traumatic transformation. This study analyzes extracted clauses linguistically by utilizing Halliday's transitivity analysis and also finds the predominant transitivity processes that portray the exploration of the post-traumatic growth of Tara in the text *Educated.*

Statement of Problem

The present study through Halliday's transitivity analysis aims to explore the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist of Tara Westover's *Educated*. A significant amount of research work has been conducted on diverse literary texts utilizing Halliday's transitivity analysis or as a research tool however, it is important to highlight that all those studies vary differently in their focuses. Several researchers like Zahoor and Janjua (2016), Manggala (2017), and Yahyaa and Nirmalab (2021), etc. have employed transitivity analysis by concentrating on the character construction and representation of anxiety of female characters respectively. These studies mainly focus on aspects like hardships, terrors, fears, and anxiety, instead of exploring the personal growth, improvements, and development that can emerge after overcoming adversities and challenges. Therefore, to address this gap, the existing research will employ transitivity analysis to explore how Tara's challenges and distress transformed and empowered her into a resilient and independent woman in society, instead of accepting post-traumatic stress and anxiety. In short, this study aims to utilize Halliday's transitivity analysis approach and to examine how the linguistic choices of the writers in the form of transitivity processes reflect the transformation of the protagonist of the selected text by enduring different life challenges and traumas.

This research has some objectives such as to find the prevailing transitivity processes that demonstrate the protagonist's post-traumatic transformation in the text *Educated*. Another objective is to study the role of transitivity processes in uncovering the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist in the selected text.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered at the end of the existing research.

1. What are the prevailing transitivity processes that demonstrate the protagonist's post-traumatic transformation in the text *Educated*?
2. How do the transitivity processes in the selected text help in uncovering the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist?

Significance of Study

Following an in-depth analysis of the selected novel, this research work enhanced the understanding of examining and analyzing a text under systemic function grammar, particularly the experiential function of

language by employing Halliday's transitivity analysis. Keeping this understanding in mind, the readers and writers can improve their comprehension of the use of different words and their role in meaning-making in texts as well as in communication. Furthermore, examining the concept of post-traumatic transformation by analyzing different transitivity processes, this study makes a valuable contribution to the exploration of creative and innovative ideas, concepts and themes in the area of linguistics. Moreover, this study also developed various ways to connect linguistics particularly systemic functional grammar with the field of psychology and psychological theories. In short, a thorough analysis of the selected text under systemic functional grammar offers pedagogical implications to the learners, readers and teachers. It also improves the importance and scope of Halliday's systemic functional grammar.

Literature Review

A considerable amount of work has been conducted on various genres of literature like short stories, poems, and novels, by employing transitivity analysis such as, Zahoor and Janjua (2016) study analyzed Malala's character in the song "I Am Malala", utilizing transitivity analysis as a research tool. The findings of their study of participants and processes of the song reveal that Malala alone suffered physical and psychological dilemmas but she was optimistic and looking for support from other girls and women to transform and make a difference in the world. Likewise, Manggala (2017) conducted a study on the characterization of Tam in the story "The Story of Tam and Cam". She has utilized transitivity analysis and explored different patterns of participants, processes, and circumstances for several traits and attributes (diligent, obedient, and kind) of Tam. Besides this, Yahyaa and Nirmalab (2021) have worked on the short story "The Things Around Your Neck" to investigate the main character's anxiety. The findings of the analysis revealed that mental processes depict distress and anxiety in the story instead of hope and a positive attitude.

Furthermore, Ahmad and Hussain (2022) have conducted a research study on the novel *When the Moon Is Low* by employing transitivity analysis as a research tool to explore how Nadia Hashmi constructs experiential meanings in the novel. The findings of their analysis revealed that the material process is the dominant process used in the text that describes what is happening and what is being done by the characters. Their research findings proved that transitivity analysis is an effective tool for unveiling experiential meaning in the texts. Similarly, Amelia (2023) has studied transitivity analysis in J.D. Salinger's short story "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" by exploring which transitivity processes are used by the

writer to demonstrate the mental state of the protagonist in the story. The findings of his work revealed that four types of processes i.e. verbal, mental, material and relational are employed by the author. But, verbal processes are frequently used by the author which indicates that the character has experienced a mental disorder known as post-traumatic stress disorder. Hence, the existing study has analyzed the extracted clauses of the chosen text from a new and fresh perspective i.e., post-traumatic transformation by using Halliday's (2014) transitivity analysis.

Apart from transitivity analysis, an extensive amount of research work has been done on the notion of post-traumatic growth after traumas like child abuse, breast cancer, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and war, etc. For example, Woodward and Joseph (2003) in their research study have investigated three key themes of post-traumatic growth: the inner drive toward growth, vehicles of change, and psychological changes after an in-depth analysis of the narratives of various respondents regarding various childhood abuse and growth following various sufferings. Similarly, Kroo & Nagy (2011) in their study on traumatized Somali refugees in Hungary examined the substantial accounts of post-traumatic growth involving hope, religiosity, social support and optimism by employing Tedeschi's post-traumatic growth inventory scale.

Likewise, Beck and Watson (2016) conducted a study examining various women who had suffered from birth trauma by utilizing the theory of Calhoun and Tedeschi. They have recognized growth in four areas i.e. opening oneself up to a new present, achieving a new level of relationship nakedness, fortifying spiritual-mindedness, and forging new paths after birth trauma in women. The first domain tells the openness and preparedness for new distress because they have endured challenging process which has empowered them. The next domain of relationship nakedness signifies that women build close relationships and share openly with their partners, friends, and children. The fortifying spiritual-mindedness domain contains a deeper sense of trust and belief of women in God after a traumatic birth. The fourth domain, forging new paths, highlights the creation of new possibilities through joining nursing schools.

Transitivity analysis and post-traumatic growth offer an interdisciplinary perspective for analyzing trauma narratives, yet their intersection remains underexplored. Halliday's transitivity analysis offers an outline for examining how linguistic choices in terms of transitivity processes construct meaning, revealing patterns of events, perception, and life experiences in the text. Meanwhile, Tedeschi's theory of post-traumatic growth explains the psychological dimensions of trauma recovery,

emphasizing shifts in self-perception, life perspectives and relationships, etc. The integration of these two frameworks offers a new lens to the linguistic analysis of how language encodes and reveals different dimensions associated with post-traumatic transformation. Previous research in linguistics such as (Amelia, 2023) has focused on the mental state of the character and the study explored post-traumatic stress disorder through transitivity analysis instead of the positive impacts of trauma. Similarly, post-traumatic growth research (Woodward and Joseph, 2003; Kroo & Nagy, 2011; and Beck and Watson, 2016) has examined trauma recovery but lacks linguistic evidence or any linguistic model like transitivity analysis to explore the changes. Therefore, by integrating transitivity analysis with post-traumatic growth theory, this study bridges the gap between these disciplines, demonstrating how transitivity analysis serves as a tool for constructing meanings in a text.

Extensive research has been conducted on many texts utilizing Halliday's transitivity analysis. The focus of most of the previous studies is on the thematic analysis, on character construction and finding the most dominant processes in the text. Simultaneously, a substantial body of work has enquired about the concept of post-traumatic growth, highlighting its importance in the context of positive transformation following trauma and challenging situations. Other than this, the selected text has been unexplored from the standpoint of transitivity analysis and post-traumatic transformation together. Thus, there seems a noticeable gap where transitivity and post-traumatic growth intersect. Furthermore, the transitivity analysis has been applied in various studies, but its potential for exploring patterns of growth, resilience, and agency in post-traumatic growth remains underexplored. Hence, there is a need to introduce an innovative and novel perspective to the existing body of linguistic research especially to transitivity analysis. So, this study provides a fresh and new approach to the study of transitivity analysis by exploring the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist Tara in the memoir *Educated*.

Methodology

This research paper adopted Halliday's transitivity analysis as an analytical framework and the post-traumatic growth of Tedeschi as a theoretical framework. It aims to identify the dominant transitivity processes that lead to the exploration of the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist in the selected text i.e., *Educated*. The existing study has adopted a mixed methodological approach that employs a quantitative and qualitative method. To achieve the study's objectives, the extracted clauses are analyzed and presented as quantitative data in the form of tables. The analyzed clauses are further elaborated as qualitative data in the form of a

description and interpretation. To facilitate analysis, the extracted sentences have been categorized into different clauses related to the protagonist's traumas, distress, struggles and growth. To align with the research objectives, those sentences are extracted which are specified to trauma, suffering and resilience of the protagonist of the text. All the extracted clauses from the selected texts relate to the psychological, emotional, and physical struggles of the character, which are further analyzed through **transitivity analysis**, in terms of its **process type** to uncover how trauma and post-traumatic growth is linguistically constructed in the texts. Secondly, processes like material, mental, behavioral and verbal and their respective participants in the extracted clauses are identified and labeled. Then instances are cited in the form of tables to elucidate and simplify the dissection of participants and different processes in the clauses.

Theoretical Framework

This study has employed Halliday's framework of transitivity analysis to explore the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist Tara in the text *Educated*. The transitivity system consists of various types of processes for different life events and experiences. These processes are material, behavioral, mental, verbal, relational and existential. All the processes carry their participants in a clause such as an actor, behaver, sensor, sayer, carrier and existent.

The process of doing and happenings is known as **material process** and it signifies concrete actions in a clause (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014; Eggins 2004). The material process in a clause is represented by a verbal group. It has two main participants; one who acts is the actor and another participant is the one who receives the act. The one who acts is termed as the 'actor'. Another participant who receives the action in the clause is known as the 'goal'. The second process is the **mental process** which is the process of sensing and experiencing the conscious world (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). It has only one participant a 'sensor' which needs to be a conscious human that thinks, feels and perceives something. There is another thing in the mental process clause known as a 'phenomenon' which describes what is thought of, perceived, wanted and felt by sensor. The third type of process as Halliday and Matthiessen defined as a **behavioral process** is the one that indicates the psychological and physiological behaviors of human beings. It is the integration of material and mental processes in a clause. The behaver is the participant of the behavioral process and it is also the conscious being. The next process is the **verbal process** which is the process of sayings and verbal action (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014; Thompson 2013; Eggin 2004). Its

participant is known as a 'sayer' who is responsible for what is said. There is another participant known as the 'receiver' who receives what is being said by the sayer. Another entity of the verbal process clause is 'verbiage' in the form of a nominal group that is a statement of what is being said by sayer.

Butt et al (2003) define a **Relational process** as a description of participant and its attribute in a clause. It has two types; relational attributive process and relational identifying process. The relational attributive process relates a participant in a clause to its characteristic or attribute and its participant is known as a 'carrier'. Whereas the characteristic is known as an 'attribute' in a clause. The relational identifying process relates a participant to the role, meaning or identity in a clause and its participant is known as a 'token'. A relational identifying clause has two participants namely 'token' and 'value'. A 'token' is the one that is being defined" and a 'value' is the one which defines" (Eggins, 2004). Likewise, the **existential process** is the process that indicates the happening or existence of something (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). The existential process clause typically begins with 'there' and has one participant known as 'existent'. The word 'there' in the existential process clause has no particular name and purpose except it is used for the presentation of or existence of new information.

One after another, the existing study will be based on the concept of "post-traumatic growth" for which alternate expression can also be used, as suggested by Ramos, and Leal (2013). This particular term "post-traumatic growth" according to Ramos and Leal (2013) was coined in 1995 and was primarily used by Tedeschi and Calhoun in 1996. Tedeschi and Calhoun defined post-traumatic growth as "the most used construct to describe positive changes experienced as a result of the psychological and cognitive efforts made to deal with challenging circumstances". This concept of "post-traumatic growth" consists of four main coping mechanisms. The first coping mechanism is relating to others which involves primarily personal and social behavior, willingness to accept others' help and self-disclosure to heal from the previous distress or ongoing trauma. The next is the mechanism of the new possibilities which includes shift in goals and opportunities that were not present before the distressing situation. Another coping mechanism is personal strength which features a change in behavior and identity. It also includes a greater understanding of the adverse consequences of distress and trauma and the competencies to deal with future challenges. The last coping mechanism is a spiritual journey and appreciation of new life which signifies a change in some aspects of

the belief system. It shows how experiencing trauma leads an individual to build a stronger belief in a higher religious entity.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The text selected for the analysis of the study is the memoir *Educated* by Tara Westover. There are a total of 284 clauses chosen from the text. All the extracted clauses are labeled in the form of tables according to the corresponding processes and participants. The following sub-section is the analysis of different processes and participants.

Material Processes

The analysis of extracted clauses of the memoir *Educated* reveals that there are 284 processes overall and material processes are the most dominant among all. There are a total of 137 material processes in the selected clauses of the text. These material processes are further categorized into three groups. The first group consists of those material processes that only represent material action or everyday happenings such as *found, located, opened, rested, fixed, returned, perched, finish, stood,* etc. The other material processes represent the trauma and sufferings of Tara and these processes are; *teach, caught, try to get, decreased, afford, leave, to quit, lost, lived, and kill*. Apart from these processes of trauma, other material processes represent the post-traumatic growth of Tara throughout her life. These material processes are, *transformed, grew, stay, read, help, wrote, studied, clapped,* etc. Hence, the analysis of these material processes reveals Tara's post-traumatic transformation in the text.

The transitivity analysis of the extracted clauses of the text shows that the main character Tara has undergone traumas in her life. But these traumas have positively transformed her as according to Tedeschi and Moore (2016) trauma can be the mother of strength. Her family including her father and brother Shawn physically and psychologically abused her and she also led a life in isolation from her family. In the memoir, Tara's sufferings become her 'mother of strength' transforming her adversities into positive post-traumatic transformation. Below are some of the instances of material processes that demonstrate Tara's post-traumatic transformation.

Table 1.

My interest	Grew	More accurate	With every deadening hour	In the junkyard
Actor	Process: material	Range	Circumstance: time	Circumstance: place

Table 2.

I	Made	some efforts to keep up	my schooling	In the free time I had between scrapping and helping Mother make tinctures and blend oils
Actor	Process: material	Range	Goal	Circumstance :time

Table 3.

The next day,	I	Drove	forty miles to the nearest bookstore	and bought	a glossy ACT study guide
Circumstance: time	Actor	Process: material	Circumstance: distance	Process: material	Range

Table 4.

I'd	earned	A's	in every subject except Western Civ
Actor	Process: material	Range	

Table 5.

I	would get	a scholarship	for half of my tuition.
Actor	Process: material	Range	Circumstance: purpose

In another instance, *I made some effort to keep up my schooling in the free time I had between scrapping and helping Mother make tinctures and blend oils* (Westover, 2018, p. 73), the material process 'made' clearly shows her determination to get an education under difficult circumstances. So, it indicates how Tara tries to find strength and meaning in a distressing situation. It is clear from one of the instances of material process from the text such as "Dad won't like it, but I'm gonna go" (Westover, 2018, p. 140). All her struggle and hard work to get an education show her interest and concern which ultimately became her strength. Tara's determination and efforts led her to new life paths and possibilities in the form of getting admission to college and having good grades and expecting a scholarship. This personal strength, new life paths and possibilities and appreciation of her life are best portrayed by material processes in the clauses such as, The *letter arrived in a normal envelope, I'd been admitted for the semester beginning January 5. , Grades had been posted. I'd passed. More than passed. I'd earned A's in every subject except Western Civ. I would get a scholarship for half of my tuition, I had built a new life* (Westover, 2018, p. 173, 200). This is why she started appreciating life because she had achieved so much in her life from teaching herself to pursuing a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. At the end of her book, Tara appreciates her life by using material processes like 'come' stating that she has achieved peace but *That peace did not come easily* (Westover, 2018, p. 375)*.* In the text *Educated*, there is a significant shift in material processes**,** signifying her transformation from a victim of familial oppression to a self-directed and empowered individual**.** Material processes like caught, decreased, afford, leave, to quit, lost, lived, and kill etc. are used which shows her trauma and the distressing situation at home. But the author has used other material processes later in the text like transformed, grew, stay, read, help, wrote, studied, clapped, which ultimately reflects the transformative nature of Tara in the novel. In short, the author's frequent use of material processes with the protagonist in the clauses unveils how she has experienced various traumas and how her struggle leads her to accomplish a positive post-traumatic transformation in her life. In short, the shift in the use of material processes signifying abuse and trauma, into material processes that reflect

the post-traumatic transformation of Tara in the text fulfills the research objective.

Verbal process

The verbal process is the second most dominant process of the extract of *Educated*. There are a total of 63 verbal processes used in the extracted clauses of the text. In the selected text, the writer herself is the narrator of the novel for which the pronoun 'I' is used 22 times at the sayer position. Apart from this, other sayers include; 'he, she, Dr. Kerry, Dr. David, Prof. Steinberg, we, Tyler, Dad and mother. These verbal processes are; "said, talk, called, shout, speak and asked". They are used at different points to convey the thoughts and ideas of different characters in the text. Verbal processes are the second most dominant processes in the novel *Educated*. Following are some of the extracted clauses labeled as verbal processes.

Table 6.

I	Said	I was finished with the junkyard, finished for life, and hung up
Sayer	Process: verbal	Verbiage

Table 7.

"It's time to go, Tara,"	Tyler	Said
Verbiage	Sayer	Process: verbal

Table 8.

I	Told	Them I'd been ignorant
Sayer	Process: verbal	Verbiage

The author's use of verbal processes assists in exploring the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist. Tara's post-traumatic transformation including support and improved relationships with others and personal strength are indicated by the author's use of verbal processes. In the journey of getting an education, different people have motivated and supported Tara. This motivation and support of others after trauma is

termed as an 'improved relationship with others' by Tedeschi which is depicted by verbal processes in clauses like It's time to go, Tara," Tyler said. "I think this is the worst possible place for you." He'd spoken softly, but it felt as though he'd shouted the words. "Where could I go?" "Go where I went," Tyler said. "Go to college." (Westover, 2018, p. 140).

Another aspect of post-traumatic growth according to Tedeschi is 'personal strength' which is depicted through the use of verbal processes and verbiage used by the writer. This example is seen in clauses like. *I said I was finished with the junkyard, finished for life, and hung up. I told them I'd been poor, I told them I'd been ignorant, and in telling them this I felt not the slightest prick of shame* (Westover, 2018, p. 201, 315). These instances of verbal processes show how she speaks for herself and how she struggles in the face of adversity which ultimately makes her life successful, happier and at peace. In short, the verbal processes indicate the positive transformation of Tara by showing her ability to express herself and engage and connect with others after experiencing different life adversities. Thus, this interpretation complies with the research objective of examining the role of transitivity processes in unveiling the protagonist's post-traumatic transformation in the novel.

Mental Process

The mental process is the 3rd dominant process in *Educated* and there are 43 mental processes out of 284 processes. The writer used these processes in the text to show the psychological state of the characters. The writer of the memoir *Educated* uses mental processes like 'hated, want, thought, understood, felt, and dream, etc. which depict the mental state of the protagonist regarding her trauma and post-traumatic growth. The participant in mental processes is known as a senser. Tara in this text is the senser of the mental process and as it is a memoir the pronoun 'I' is used 31 times as senser for Tara. Another senser used in the extracted clauses of the text *Educated* is 'he, dad, you, and it'. The writer has employed mental processes in the text mostly with Tara as the senser. Mental processes like 'want, thought, known, understood, felt, and hated' etc. play an important role in exploring post-traumatic transformation. Some of these material processes help in exploring the post-traumatic transformation of the protagonist of the novel. As she was not allowed to go to school but she knew that her life would be different from her brothers. She struggled from a very young age to go to school and get an education. Her psychological trauma leads her to explore her strength and explore new life paths and possibilities. Following are the instances of mental processes in the form of tables.

Table 9.

I	Think	this is the worst possible place for you
Senser	Process: mental	Projected clause

Table 10.

but it	Felt	as though he'd shouted the words
Sayer	Process: mental	Projected clause

Table 11.

I	don't understand	why I wasn't allowed to get a decent education as a child
Senser	Process: mental	Projected clause

Table 12.

I	Knew	I would leave
Senser	Process: mental	Projected clause

Table 13.

I	Didn't think	I was dreaming	but only because my imagination had never produced anything so grand.
Senser	Process: mental	Projected clause	Circumstance: reason

One aspect of post-traumatic growth which is 'an improved relationship with others' is seen when Tara's brother Tyler advised and supported her

to leave this place. This aspect of transformation is seen in the text, for instance, *I think this is the worst possible place for you. He'd spoken softly, but it felt as though he'd shouted the words* (Westover, 2018, p.140). This instance reveals how her brother has convinced and supported her to leave this place and go to a place where her capabilities are appreciated. Moreover, she had experienced post-traumatic transformation by believing in her own strength and new life paths and possibilities. The mental process in another clause explores her transformation after her trauma such as "*I knew I would leave*" (Westover, 2018, p. 173). It means that she was aware of her potential capabilities which would make her escape an environment in which she was physically and psychologically abused. Therefore these mental processes demonstrate Tara's belief in her strength and the support of her brother. This belief and assistance lead her to achieve peace and make her life better and different from others thus reflecting her journey of post-traumatic transformation.

Behavioral Process

There are 41 behavioral processes used in the extracted clauses of the memoir *Educated*. The writer uses this process to show the physiological and psychological state of the participants. Some of these behavioral processes are; tried, see, learn, smiled, brighten, accept, watch, etc. The pronoun 'I' is used as behaver 20 times for the protagonist of the memoir. Other behavers include 'he, she, it, and you'. The writer has employed behavioral processes in the text to portray the physiological and psychological state of the participants. Although, behavioral processes are fewer in number as compared to material, mental and verbal processes but some of these processes depict the post-traumatic growth of the main character Tara. Some aspects like improved relations, personal strength, and new life paths and possibilities lead her to appreciate her life. Below are some of the instances of behavioral processes from the text in the form of tables.

Table 14.

I	tried to imagine	School	But	Couldn't
Behaver	Process: Behavioral	Range		

Table 15.

Women in floral prints	Smiled and clasped	My hand
Behaver	Process: behavioral	Beneficiary

Table 16.

I	Brightened
Behaver	Process: behavioral

Table 17.

The first time	I	Saw	King's College, Cambridge
Circumstance:	Behaver	Process: behavioral	Circumstance: place

Tara had accepted the help and support of others in her life. Throughout the novel, she is supported by those who know her talent and her strength which leads her to have an "improved relationship with others" which according to Tedeschi and Moore (2016) is one of the dimensions of post-traumatic growth. Tara's strength and capability are revealed when she starts thinking about school for instance in a clause where she tried to imagine school but she was unable to imagine it i.e. *I tried to imagine school but couldn't* (Westover, 2018, p.10). Tara's physical and psychological trauma makes her appreciate life more as according to Tedeschi change occurs after experiencing a major loss, or the threat of a major loss. Similarly, Tara's isolation, her experience of abuse at home and her strength let her appreciate her life which is depicted in clauses such as *The first time I saw King's College, Cambridge, I didn't think I was dreaming. I awoke one morning to find my picture plastered on BYU's home page. I was the third BYU student ever to win a Gates scholarship* (Westover, 2018, p. 271, 288). Hence, all these instances of behavioral processes reflect Tara's physical and emotional transformation in the memoir *Educated*.

Table 18. Transitivity Analysis of the novel *Educated*.

Process type	Frequency
Material	137
Verbal	63

Mental	43
Behavioral	41
Total no of processes	284

Conclusion

A detailed transitivity analysis of the extracted clauses of the memoir *Educated* by Tara Westover revealed that she has utilized almost all the transitivity processes except the relational and existential processes in the memoir. These processes collectively portray the sufferings, self-discovery, personal growth and resilience of Tara in the form of post-traumatic transformation. The analysis of the extracted clause indicates that the writer has employed material processes more than other transitivity processes. The material processes of Tara's journey from victim to empowered woman reflect a linguistic and psychological shift, supporting Tedeschi and Calhoun's framework of growth in the text, hence, fulfills the research objective. So, this structured and layered linguistic pattern of different transitivity processes demonstrates Tara's journey as not just a sequence of events but rather as a structured, multidimensional growth, reinforcing the memoir's deeper message of post-traumatic transformation. The existing research expands the understanding of examining and analyzing a text under systemic function grammar, particularly the experiential function of language by employing Halliday's transitivity analysis.

This study not only highlights how transitivity shifts in Westover's memoir linguistically encode post-traumatic transformation but also opens opportunities for future research. So a comparative research study of how transitivity choices regarding post-traumatic transformation differ across different cultural contexts can also be conducted in the future. It may involve different factors such as gender, society, religion, language and environment, etc. This study will shed light on how different cultures conceptualize and comprehend distress, trauma, resilience and growth.

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