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A Postmodern Reading of Don DeLillo's Short Stories

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is to study how different techniques are incorporated in the postmodern fiction to present the multiplicity of meaning and subjectivity of the reality. For this purpose, the researcher has selected American novelist and short story writer Donald Richard DeLillo's short stories "The Itch" and "Coming. Sun. Mon. Tues". The researcher has analyzed the selected works using the theoretical frameworks provided by Fredric Jameson, Linda Hutcheon and Henri Bergson. The theoretical insights of the selected theorists help understand the subjective reality of the postmodernism. Textual analysis has been used as a method to study the selected fictional work. Postmodernism is critical of certain foundational conventions of philosophy, specifically, the Enlightenment thinking, as it symbolizes the pursuit of reason and logic. On the other hand, it focuses on the personalization and subjectivity in the construction of truth and worldviews. The rejection of objective reality gives way to multiple realities and subjectivity. American fiction, in the second half of the twentieth century, has been influenced by postmodernism to a great extent. The analyzed short stories provide a good postmodern reading since they cover a range of features that are relatable in the postmodern world.

Keywords: multiplicity, postmodernism, subjectivity, depthlessness, fragmented reality

Introduction

While modernism reflected the anxiety, fear, directionless-ness and dread of early twentieth century man, postmodernism emerged as a movement that celebrated chaos and subjective truth. Postmodernism is a movement in arts, architecture and literature that denies the presence of objective reality and objective truth. The exact year and date of the beginning of postmodernism is difficult to be marked, but its birth is

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associated with French philosopher Jean Francois Lyotard's work *The Postmodern Condition: A Report of Knowledge* (1979).

American fiction, in the second half of the twentieth century, has been influenced by postmodernism to a great extent. John Barth is considered to have theorized the postmodern fiction through his essay "Literature of Exhaustion" (1967). In this essay, Barth dismisses realism as a faded tradition and defines his own work as "novels which imitate the form of the novel, by an author who imitates the role of the Author" (Barth, 1984, pp. 62-77). John Barth supports the break from traditional rules of writing fiction by justifying the lack of originality in the contemporary writings. According to him, all the techniques followed by the traditional writers have been consumed to the point of depletion. Barth praises Jorge Luis Borges for creating newness out of the earlier authorial styles through experimentation. After "Death of the Author" (1967) by Roland Barthes, this work of John Barth's further consolidates the severing of postmodernist fiction from the modernist writing conventions by allowing the authors a freedom for trying new ways.

About the Author

Donald Richard DeLillo (1936), known as Don DeLillo, is among the contemporary postmodern writers. He is an American novelist, playwright, essayist and short story writer. *Americana* (1993), *Underworld* (1999), *Zero K* (2016), and *White Noise* (2016) are amongst his notable fictional works. A collection of short stories, *The Angel Esmeralda: Nine Stories*, has been published in a chronological order between years 1979 to 2011. Some of DeLillo's stories have been published in *The New Yorker*. DeLillo's fictional works cover various postmodern themes including commodity fetishism, consumerism, post-humanism and underground conspiracies. In an interview to the *Chicago Tribune*, DeLillo described his work's inspiration as "I think my work is influenced by the fact that we're living in the dangerous times" (Nance, 2012).

Literature Review

The two terms 'modernism' and 'postmodernism' are frequently used in the contemporary world. Modernism can be defined as a philosophical, literary, cultural, and social movement that occurred as a

reaction against the conservative values of realism. It rejected the certainty of enlightened thinking and human prosperity that prevailed through most part of the nineteenth century. It was a major break from the Victorian tradition, aimed to address human isolation, anxiety and uncertainty caused by the World War I. There is a significant amount of literary scholarship available on postmodern studies and short fiction. The short story named, "The Itch", by Don DeLillo provides excellent postmodern critique. The story is about a man who is a middle-aged divorcee, it reflects multiple postmodern themes and is not like a traditional story. Postmodern concerns such as consumerism and commodity fetishism are a part of it. The story's protagonist stares at the building in front of his office but does not pay attention to the people living in that building, he only looks at the windows absentmindedly. He goes to the theatre with a girl who could be his girlfriend or just an acquaintance, but he appears to be more interested in the empty seats of cinema than actually being with her. The readers are introduced to the protagonist's friend, Joel, who keeps talking about poetry and strange 'voice' that he hears when he urinates. All these events have been jotted down in a non-linear order. DeLillo has broken the traditional boundaries of writing stories and has divided the story into unsystematic parts with no links with one another. The protagonist plans to go out with his friend and his girlfriend but ends up watching a football game on television, he does not skip the commercials even. Consumerism and commodity fetishism are infused into this short fiction so well that they constitute a major portion in the story. Fredric Jameson, in his essay "Postmodernism, Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" suggested that postmodernity has converted everything into a commodity and 'image' which has led humans to a new kind of flatness or 'depthlessness' (Newton, [1997](#), p. 272).

The protagonist of the story proves to be postmodern in this way, he is leading a dreary, 'depthless' life. When a colleague asks the protagonist if he would like to live forever, he replies that he will perhaps jump off the window one day. All these descriptions show that the man is living an exhausting life, and he does not know how to un-stuck himself. One repeatedly mentioned problem with the protagonist is that he has chronic itch. However, his literal itch can be analyzed as a metaphor for unfulfilled desire that constantly irritates his physical self. But he is unable to detect it or do anything about it.

“But nobody showed up, so he sat awhile looking at the wall. It was one of those Saturdays that felt like Sunday. He didn’t know how to explain this” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

The two starting sentences put readers into frenzy. DeLillo’s smart use of the words make it an excellent postmodernist work with multiplicity of meanings. Bergson’s idea of coexistence of time is hinged upon this story. Although Bergson was writing during Victorian age when science, logic and reason was at the peak, but he decided to break away from the tradition and criticized the scientific conception of time. Bergson’s theory of duration avers that all moments of time coexist. According to Paul Douglass, in a letter to William James written in 1908, Henri Bergson said that examining the notion of time has changed his ideas and claimed, “Scientific time does not endure” (Douglass, [2014](#)).

According to Caporaletti, the duration ‘*durée*’ or real time, for Bergson is a spherical dimension where past, present and future coexist and help shape each other.

Fallon (2014) describes duration as: Real duration is the dynamic temporality of one’s psychic experience that exists within the self in relation and in response to temporality in general... It is only in moments of real duration or immediate experience that the self of an individual experiences reality, yet this reality is not one of permanent or eternal forms, but one of immanent flow.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The design adopted to carry out the research is Qualitative.

Research Method

The research has been conducted through the textual analysis of the selected stories. This method of analysis focuses on the text, the context of the text and its effect on the readers/interpreters. Multiple meanings can be deduced from a piece of literature by different readers using the textual analysis method; this analysis method favors the researcher’s conclusions rather than what has already been deduced about it.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher has identified the postmodern techniques that are incorporated in the selected texts through the lens of postmodernism. Moreover, it has been explored that multiplicity of meaning and subjectivity of reality are demonstrated in the primary texts. The researcher has opted for textual analysis as a research method for analyzing the literature. The framework for the present study comprises of the theoretical insights from Fredric Jameson, Linda Hutcheon and Henri Bergson. The hybrid framework helps understand and analyze the texts on various levels. Jameson's essay "Postmodernism, Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" (1989) advocates that postmodernity has transformed everything into a commodity; he also proposes that commodity fetishism has led humans to a kind of depthlessness. While Linda Hutcheon in her essay, "Theorizing the Postmodern" (1997) talks about the blurred margins and boundaries of the postmodern world that are reflected in postmodern writings. She proposes that we can no longer draw a line between different genres, as they merge together. Similarly, Henri Bergson's insight gives a theoretical backing to this study as he focuses on the coexistence of future, past and present. If future, past and present coexist, then the sense of time also blurs. Henceforth, in this study, the researcher has highlighted the prospects of postmodernism in the aforementioned texts.

Textual Analysis

The short story called, "The Itch", by Don DeLillo is one of his latest works, published in The New Yorker in August 7&14, 2017 issue. The story provides an excellent postmodern critique. It opens with the connective 'but' as if it is a continuation of an ongoing story. DeLillo's protagonist, whose name is not revealed till the last line of the story, seems to be facing the same problem with the time. He is unable to differentiate between Saturday and Sunday, he cannot explain why he feels the way he feels. The subjectivity of his experience constitutes his reality which is different from the scientific time. The story is fragmented into parts with no apparent connections with one another. While the first part describes the protagonist's meaningless stares at the wall, the next action takes place in a shop where he tests the shoes before buying them. After that, the protagonist is in his office, staring at the front building blankly. Depthlessness is at the heart of the story and it

is reflected by the actions of the protagonist, whose actions carry no deep meaning and he seems to have no control over them. The narrator says:

“...nothing was visible inside the rows of windows. There were times when he could not stop looking” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

In the next part of the story his literal itch is mentioned for the first time. The protagonist itches his arms.

“Certain days it’s the left wrist. Upper arms at home in the evening. Thighs and shins most likely at night. When he’s out walking, it happens now and then, mostly forearms” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

In the lines mentioned above, the narrator gives the details of the protagonist’s itch. As discussed earlier, what has been described as a literal itch can be analyzed as a metaphor for desire(s). It is not just one part of his body that itches. Different body parts itch throughout the day. It signifies the unfulfilled human desires.. The protagonist appears to be longing intimacy and connectivity. His life lacks excitement and deep connection with other people. The narrator explains the man’s itch as:

“...data from the exterior, caused by some outlying substance, unanalyzable, the air in the room or on the street or in the atmosphere itself, a corruption of the planetary environment” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

These lines convey multiple meanings and cover postmodern themes of postwar world as well as post-humanism. The words ‘corruption of planetary environment’ reflect the corruption of governments and the world in general after the world wars. The description of itch as something ‘unanalyzable’ and ‘data from exterior’ subtly hint at the post-human intervention. The effects of the environment on humans which are beyond their control and the effects of modern technology on human lives have been represented. The multiplicity of meaning and absence of ‘objective’ reality lies in the description of the protagonist’s ‘itch’ which has not been explained in a definite manner.

More textual evidence to prove that the literal ‘itch’ is actually used as a metaphor for desire is supported by Joel’s character. Joel works in

the same office with the protagonist, wants to write poetry but he is unable to get his work published. The narrator tells:

“There were times, standing over the toilet bowl at home, when he heard what sounded like words as his urine hit the water in the bowl... Words. He heard the semblance of a tiny voice saying a word” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

Joel is so obsessed with writing poetry that he listens to words when he is urinating, he shares his experience with the protagonist and tells him that he is not ‘imagining’ this. This shows his state of unrest and desperation to fulfill his desire of writing or perhaps getting recognized as a poet.

Through Joel’s character, the narrator breaks free from the traditional forms of writing and mocks the so called ‘rational’ thinking. The rejection of grandnarrative of rationality, acceptance of multiple realities and mini-narratives have been projected through Joel’s dialogues. He says:

“Words and letters are free, outside reason and tradition. When was it ever the case,” Joel said, “that language could truly describe reality?” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

The lines above seem to be standing upon Jean Baudrillard’s concept of hyper-reality. It implies a shift from certainty to uncertainty, from order to chaos, from reality to hyper-reality. Douglass Kellner in his book *Jean Baudrillard from Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond* states that for Baudrillard the simulation and simulacra plays an important role in social life due to which the earlier borders of social theory melt together. The divisions between reality and fiction, subject and object, surface, and depth dissolve together into a “self-reproducing universe of simulacra controlled by simulation models and codes” (Kellner, [1990](#), p.77). Other than the implied hyper-reality, these lines are significantly postmodernist in nature because the idea hints at multiple realities and multiple truths instead of one objective truth. The narrator seems to be mocking the tradition for believing in objective reality and questions the very possibility of that. The narrator is mocking the enlightened belief of objective reality in favor of subjective truth and multiple realities.

The story proceeds in the same fragmented manner, a few dialogues, descriptions of the protagonist's surrounding with the constant mention of the 'itch' that does not go away. The protagonist sees several doctors, uses medications, and complains that it starts when he takes his clothes off. He goes to a new doctor and says:

“I take off my shirt or my pants and the itch begins. Or the itch is just there, comes and goes, night and day” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

The doctor prescribes some ointments, keeps listing names of different types of itch, and seems to be more interested in talking to the walls or some hidden recording devices than the patient. All these actions contribute to the mood of the story where nothing makes sense apparently and the protagonist remains in the state of a constant unrest. He visits another doctor who, after examining him, says:

“Do not let others scratch your itch. It will not succeed,” she said. “You yourself must scratch” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

Everything that the doctor says seems so superficial to him and has no long-lasting impact on his routine. His doctor's visits and attempts to connect with the girl called Ana are shallow and perfunctory with no depth and meaning. The people around him contribute to the general depthless-ness. Like this doctor who speaks into free space.

“He liked listening to her but she was speaking into free space” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

In one of the final scenes, the protagonist tries to count the steps while climbing the staircase, he loses count and decides to go back to start over. This is when he recalls buying shoes from a shop, which he had bought after careful examination. He does not even like the shoes and thinks why he bought them in the first place. Fredric Jameson's idea of commodity fetishism in his essay “Postmodern and Consumer Society” can be used to describe the protagonist's need to buy products that he does not even like. The need to buy and consume material goods shows the commodity fetishism of the protagonist, which is one of the major features of postmodernism. The following lines reflect commodity fetishism, protagonist's confusion and his skepticism about objective truth, thus remaining disordered about life.

“Was it too much trouble, too awkward, to tell the salesman that he didn’t want the shoes? He didn’t know the answer, but he was beginning to feel victimized, belatedly, by the salesman, the shoe store, and the shoes, and he stopped counting the steps” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

The protagonist remains in a state of prevailing confusion that does not lead him to any closure. Perhaps, ‘counting the steps’ also refers to his desire to bring order in his chaotic life. But that desire is transient because, in the end, he stops doing that and it signifies the celebration of chaos in the postmodern world. The depth has been replaced by the surface or multiple surfaces.

Till the end there are no signs of closure or one truth. Life is fragmented and so are the actions of the characters in the story.

“...she used the three middle fingers of one hand to brush lightly. A gesture of remembrance, anxious or soothing—he wasn’t sure” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

The protagonist’s observation about the people around him is also fragmented and does not lead towards a single direction. When the protagonist meets Ana in the beginning, the way Ana spells her name that intrigues his attention. The fragmentation of the name, the missing N, but towards the end of the story, her gestures confuse him. He is not sure what she means to convey with her body movements as mentioned in the lines above. Again, it shows the relativity of truth and presence of many surfaces in the story. It is only in the last line that the protagonist’s name is revealed.

“This is how near-sleep attenuates a person’s awareness. Everything else is gone. He is funneled into himself, no past or future, the living itch, man-shaped, Robert T. Waldron, thinking incoherently, a body in a bedsheet” (DeLillo, [2017](#)).

The ending, apparently seems to be joining the fragmented links but it is difficult to presume it to be an actual closure to Robert T. Waldron’s life or the story itself. He is in an empty space with no sense of time and space, no past or future defining his reality. He is just a body wrapped in a bedsheet.

Coming. Sun. Mon. Tues- Don DeLillo

The story, “Coming. Sun. Mon. Tues” is another archetypal postmodern story by Don DeLillo. Linda Hutcheon’s essay “Theorizing the Postmodern” provides an excellent pedestal to analyze this story’s form. The story’s title “Coming. Sun. Mon. Tues” in itself is unique and does not tell the readers anything about the story. The story has been written in one long paragraph unlike the fragmented sections observed in the earlier analyzed story “The Itch”. However, having no apparent fragmentation, does not make the story any less fragmented in nature. The writer has broken free from conventional rules of writing and character description. There are sudden shifts and breaks in the sentences. DeLillo has used short and abrupt sentences. Although, the story appears to be a love story, but in real, it is only a parody of a typical fancy love story in which a girl meets a boy, they share moments together and then get a happy ever after in a linear order.

Postmodern world rejects moral absolutism and believes in the multiplicity of meanings in fragmented form. Linda Hutcheon believes that the debate about the margins and boundaries of conventions is a result of “postmodern transgressing of previously accepted limits” (Newton, [1997](#)). According to Linda Hutcheon, in postmodernism, the boundaries of genres have been blurred. Line cannot to be drawn between different genres and they seem to be merging together.

The story under discussion distorts fairytale stories. Right from the beginning of the story, the third person narrator gives fragmented details about a girl and a boy, their names have not been mentioned in the story.

“It is Fifth Avenue in late afternoon in autumn and the shadows darken the street. The boy wears a heavy sweater and desert boots. He has long hair. The girl is pretty” (DeLillo, [1966](#)). The characters of the story have not been described like characters of fairytales which are usually developed from start till the end of the narrative. The narrator has just thrown the characters in the story with short abrupt sentences and surface details like boy’s hair or girl’s sweater. There is no mention of the background of these characters.

Along with the distortion of fairytale, the narrator seems to be lost in time and space. There is no sense of time and space throughout the mentioned events of the story. Bergson’s idea of coexistence of time is

hinged upon this story. The duration '*durée*' or real time, for Bergson is a spherical dimension where past, present and future coexist and help shape each other. The same happens in the story multiple times.

The narrator gives a surreal effect while describing the places casually. It becomes difficult to fixate on one meaning or a single reality. The narrator describes the sunset as:

“The sun is going down behind the Dakota Apartments or the London Hilton (DeLillo, [1966](#)).

The multiplicity of meanings has also been conveyed through the vague description of directions as well as the characters. While giving the surface details of the character, the narrator says:

“He chain-smokes and drinks a lot of wine. It is Greenwich Village or the West Side. It is either of those or it is Soho or it is Montmartre” (DeLillo, [1966](#)).

There is hardly any sense of time duration and direction. From the lines quoted above the reader cannot tell whether the character is in Greenwich Village or West Side, he could be in either of those or none of those, or in a totally different direction. There is no single reality describing the location of the character.

The whole story seems to be playing on a fast-forward mode with events switching in the blink of an eye.

In one scene, the boy and the girl are making faces in the mirror together and in the next moment the boy kisses the girl and she becomes pregnant. The idea of getting pregnant with a kiss seems absurd and unconvincing. Writer has used magical realism to break boundaries of traditional fiction. Therefore, mixed fact and fiction in such a way that it becomes almost impossible to separate reality from fiction. The short abrupt sentences with no paragraphs break the traditional rule of writing stories in well-developed paragraphs to maintain the flow of the events.

“Then the boy and girl go to a store in San Francisco or Toronto or Liverpool...Dessert is chocolate cake. Her mother wants to know why she's failing Civics and Arithmetic and where she's been the last three days and nights” (DeLillo, [1966](#)).

The mention of three different cities in three countries reflects that there is no sense of direction. Even in the contemporary world of technology and fast conveyance it is impossible to be in all three places at once. The mother's enquiry makes the stream of events even more unbelievable. In three days and nights the girl met a random boy, went to different places with him, got pregnant and got back to her house. The use of magical realism is quite evident in these lines.

In the final scenes of the story, the narrator says that the boy goes to a bar and gets arrested but no details have been provided about the reason of his arrest. His father bails him out of the jail. In the next scene, the girl packs her bags and leaves home.

“Then the girl comes in with her suitcase and they start to live together...They go to Coney Island or Brighton. They ride on the roller coaster and the carousel and they look at themselves in the distorted mirrors” (DeLillo, 1966). There is no sense of time and direction in the lines quoted above. It is not sure whether they go to Brighton or Coney Island. Moreover, there are no dialogues in the story. The story distorts characteristics of a typical tale, it has been written in present tense unlike stories that are written in past tense. Traditionally, a fairytale consists of clearly developed good and evil characters that are set in the past. It entails enchanted settings like castles, kingdoms and forests, clearly defined problem, climax and resolution, and, at the end, gives a moral lesson to the readers. But the story by DeLillo does not cover any of these characteristics of a fairytale, therefore it seems to be distorting and mocking the traditional fairytale stories. The readers do not get to know the names of the “hero and heroine”, the characters have not been described in the detail. Till the end of the story, the narrator tells bare minimum details about the physical appearances of the characters. Therefore, it can be said that DeLillo has merged the boundaries of different genres into one story, by breaking the traditional boundaries of writing through the use of postmodern writing techniques. The multiplicity of reality has been conveyed by the characters looking at themselves in ‘distorted mirrors’. Looking in ‘distorted mirrors’ shows the depthless-ness and presence of multiple realities and surfaces in postmodernism. Though, in the last line, the characters go home together but it is far from a conventional ending. Unlike traditional story

that ends with a proper conclusion to the unfolded events-, this postmodern story ends abruptly without any closure.

Conclusion

To sum up everything that has been stated so far, it is pertinent to reiterate that postmodernism is critical of certain foundational conventions of philosophy. Contemporary American fiction, influenced by postmodernism, demonstrates multiplicity of meanings and subjective reality. Postmodernism rejects objective reality and promotes relative truths by focusing on subjectivity and open-endedness. This rejection of objective reality has been identified in the selected primary texts. Moreover, the study has highlighted the presence of multiple surfaces, fragmented reality and blurred genres in the selected pieces of contemporary American fiction.

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Roasting Videos: A YouTube-based Vernacular Discourse

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Abstract

This research endeavors to investigate the impact of a novel genre, that is, roasting. It also aims to know how this YouTube discourse finds its way into the vernacular discourse in the Pakistani context. The researchers selected two highly subscribed Pakistani YouTube channels, that is, KhujLee Family and CBA-Arslan Naseer. Using the purposive sampling technique two videos from each channel were selected, which made a total of four videos selected as sample. The researchers meticulously observed the trending section of YouTube with the purpose to select far reaching roasting videos of the aforementioned channels. This phenomenological research employed the Interactive Alignment Model as its theoretical framework. The conclusions suggested that conversation designs are the outcomes of addressee feedback and penetrate the vernacular discourse (Chiarello, 2012; Clark 2012), casting a deep impact on its viewers particularly in terms of desensitization. The findings further explicated that desensitization has amplified because of the consumption and reciprocation of such content by the receivers, courtesy of the participatory culture of YouTube. This allows the viewers to not only enjoy roasting videos but also to imitate the abusive vocabulary used as punch line, mostly in Punjabi. The participation of viewers was observed through the comment section of the selected videos, advocating the consequent desensitization of the vernacular discourse. Subsequently, the study implies that the creation and dissemination of the roasting content can be achieved in a responsible manner by decreasing the use of curse words.

Keywords: CBA-Arslan Naseer channel, desensitization, Interactive Alignment Model, Khujlee Family channel, participatory culture, roasting videos, trending section, vernacular discourse, YouTube

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Introduction

Advancement in technology has brought changes in the realm of social media, especially YouTube, providing easy access and making its interface user friendly (Blazeski, Lowenthal, Wang, Teuben, Zhu, Gerech, Tomaselli, & Leslie Tung, 2019). Additionally, it is progressing rapidly because it offers the audience content akin to almost every arena and issue, accessed easily through videos' URLs (Gann, 2006). So, it is due to the type of interface which YouTube provides that users easily become engaged in the production and consumption of videos. There are three key features which actually made YouTube popular (Kafai, & Peppler, 2011). These are: a) video recommendations via the 'related videos' list, b) an email link set to enable video sharing and comments (and other social networking functionalities) and c) an embeddable video player (Gann, 2012).

These characteristics of YouTube enabled the users to indulge into a participatory culture defined by Jenkins (2006, p.7) as the one:

1. With relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement.
2. With strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others.
3. With some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices.
4. Where members believe that their contributions matter.
5. Where members feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created). Not every member must contribute, but all must believe that they are free to contribute when they are ready and that what they contribute will be appropriately valued.

This shared content created by the common people is also meant for them and it influences them in a significant way (Jenkins, 2006). This content aids the nourishment of a particular discourse termed as the 'vernacular discourse' by (Ono & Sloop, 1995). Vernacular discourse shares some common characteristics with the participatory culture. It is not just the historically published speeches, rather it "is also culture: the music, art, criticism, dance, and architecture of local communities" (Ono & Sloop, 1995). They further argued that as critics, we should not

focus only on the mainstream media. Rather, we should “look at discourse that resonates within and from historically oppressed communities” (Ono & Sloop, [1995](#)).

This discourse is articulated in the society through YouTube videos, created by the YouTube bloggers and vloggers and appraised by the viewers (Merchant, 2009). For a better understanding of these videos and also of the relationship between the viewers and the video makers, we need to explore the participatory cultures, features of the vernacular discourse, and the means of its articulation.

Participatory Culture

Jenkin ([2006](#)) highlighted some significant characteristics of the participatory culture. He defined it as a culture which supports creativity as well as sharing one’s creativity with others. This process of sharing helps the users cherish and nurture creativity (Molyneaux, O’Donnell, Gibson, & Singer, 2008). The above-mentioned author scrutinized this phenomenon in his study by exploring the role of the online available stories and their improvised versions in the education of the children. He advocated it as an influential medium, yet he expressed some reservations regarding the popular and participatory culture (Goldberg, 2006). He argued that “technology and economic change are conspiring to create a new cultural elite and a new cultural under class” (Jenkins, [2006](#), p.61).

Broadcast Yourself in Popular Culture

Burgess and Green ([2018](#)) provided a brief account of the development of YouTube since its beginning. In their study, they stated that YouTube is no more just a platform to share and watch videos, rather it provides an interface through which you can “broadcast yourself” (Williams, [2008](#)). It implies that it enables the users to experiment with their own creativity and use YouTube as a medium to show off their creation (Ellington, [2014](#)). They further added that a significant aspect of this broadcast is the public’s perception, “use of YouTube to distribute broadcast media content that captured public’s imagination” (Burgess & Green, [2018](#)).

YouTube-based Vernacular Discourse

Guo and Lee (2013) presented the synthesized model of analyzing the vernacular discourse. For that matter, it is essential to define what is vernacular discourse and how do we analyze it? According to Ono and Sloop (1995), vernacular discourse has the following two characteristics:

Cultural syncretism: Ono and Sloop (1995) argued that vernacular discourse not only exists as a counter hegemonic discourse but also as an affirmative discourse, articulating a sense of community that does not function solely as oppositional to the dominant ideology. Here, its main feature is ‘articulating a sense of community’ which is also a key feature of YouTube discourse (Guo & Lee, 2013).

Pastiche: Pastiche is the process of fixing a fracture, which brings different cultural fragments together to give them a concrete form. “Pastiche fractures culture in the process of appropriating it through imaginative reconstructing surgery” (Ono & Sloop, 1995). For example, the conversational vlogs that we have opted for the analysis are made as social critique. The vloggers claim to be *influencers* (Ohiagu, & Okorie, 2014).

They desensitize slang language, satirical comments, and abusive culture in the society. They do not only desensitize them, rather they reinforce them by using them in a natural and influencing way because “pastiche is an embodied practice that is ever-changing, active and constantly motivated by a concern for local conditions and social problems.” (Ono & Sloop, 1995).

Ono and Sloop (1995) further attempted to stratify the realm of vernacular discourse by providing the two dimensions of its analysis: a) analysis of the discourse of localized communities, they suggested that it should not be completely ignored b) The discourse of oppressed communities, which demands extra attention and which is engaging in everyday discussion, conversations at homes, restaurants, and at every corner (Ono & Sloop, 1995).

Guo and Lee (2013) called their synthesized model *hybrid vernacular discourse* through which they analyzed the discourse of Asian American YouTubers. For the current study, we are concerned with the first two steps of this model: a) identifying the discourse as

vernacular discourse b) analysing the content of the discourse which is always structured. For this purpose, videos for the analysis were collected randomly from YouTube's trending section where we looked for the videos created to criticize any given phenomenon. We came across two channels namely CBA-Comics by Arslan and Khujlee Vines in the trending section during our quest for videos. We selected five videos from CBA and seven videos from Khujlee Vines for the analysis of their content. To investigate the importance of addressee feedback, we selected 500 comments on these videos in which the audience either appreciated the content creators or imitated their content. We took screenshots of these comments and noted some key features of the video design in order to use them as evidence in our study.

Audience Design

Audience design is the structure of the conversation in which speakers prepare their talk keeping in view their addressees, "it is useful to look at the audience design as a form of expert performance in which speakers draw upon a large database of stored examples which they can consult and modify to suit their current needs" (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark [2012](#)). Speakers design their conversation using different strategies, the one which caters the best is the Interactive Alignment Model by (Pickering & Garrod, [2004](#); Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark [2012](#)). The key characteristics of this model include making logical connections with pre-existing knowledge, formation of language to develop such connections, referring to other conversations and talks and using them in the ongoing conversation to be more relatable (Pickering & Garrod, [2004](#)). It further gives way to another aspect of this design which is addressee feedback and which goes hand in hand with the conversation. It comprises the acceptance or rejection of the addressees of the content conversed to them. Scholars argued that addressee feedback actually provides the infrastructure for a conversation (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark [2012](#)).

Problem Statement

The participatory nature of YouTube has turned the spotlight on content creators with their unique styles, peculiar verbal and non-verbal gestures and distinctive ways of presentation. The competition of content creation has led the audience to witness the popularity of a

specific type of genre, which is trending more than the content of the mainstream media on YouTube. In this competition, content creators are utilizing every means to become popular among the audience without caring about the consequences. This phenomenon may summon some repercussions despite its popularity in the society.

To address these repercussions, the current study is looking forward to:

- Spot the essence of vernacular discourse in the content of the videos trending on YouTube in Pakistan.
- Pinpoint the distinguishing elements of the content and structure of the trending videos.
- Locate the influence of these videos on the viewers.

Analytical Framework

It is a phenomenological research in which the researchers attempted to explore the phenomenon of YouTube based vernacular discourse through the critical lens of Vernacular Discourse Analysis (VDA). VDA proposes that the form of discourse and the medium of its articulation should be looked upon critically (Guo & Lee, [2013](#)). So, the form and content of discourse were analyzed through the Interactive Alignment Model which suggests that conversation designs are the outcomes of addressee feedback (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark [2012](#)).

For the current analysis, following questions were asked:

- How is the subject matter of videos trending on YouTube structured in Pakistan?
- How the content of these YouTube videos is different from the content of the mainstream media?
- How do the viewers respond to these videos?

Data Collection

The videos used for the analysis were collected randomly from YouTube's trending section. We looked for the videos meant for criticism and in this regard, we came across two channels CBA-Comics by Arslan and Khujlee Vines. We selected five videos from CBA and seven videos from Khujlee Vines for the analysis of their content. To find out the importance of addressee feedback, we selected 500 comments on these videos in which the audience either appreciated the

content creators or imitated their content. We took screenshots of these comments and noted some key features of the video design in order to use them as evidence in our study.

Data Analysis

The selected videos from the channels, CBA-Arslan Naseer and KhujLee Vines, were meant for the analysis of their content, and the comments on the same videos are taken into consideration for analyzing the Addressee feedback as proposed by (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark, [2012](#)).

Keeping in view the argument that the discourse of these videos is vernacular discourse, two major characteristics of vernacular discourse should be recalled. Ono and Sloop ([1995](#)) asserted that vernacular discourse emerges in synchronization with cultural norms. Its aim is not to oppose or rebel against any existing discourse; rather, it becomes popular in the society because it is close to the hearts of the common people. It is highlighted by the viewers from within the society with whom the receptors of the discourse can relate. Similarly, content creators of the selected YouTube videos had the same socioeconomic status as that of their viewers. They highlighted the social issues which a common person faces on a daily basis. Their way of talking, their vocabulary and other intercultural references are familiar to the viewers. For example, the selected videos of CBA-Comics by Arslan, which are the reviews of the Pakistani TV commercials, criticize the reinforcement of patriarchal norms, the presentation of commodities as basic necessities of life and the decaying morals of the society. These are the dilemmas faced by a common person and the viewers take these reviews as a sort of catharsis because they address their opinions and thoughts. Such availability of the desired and relatable content which attends to the consideration of the viewers is what is termed as *Cultural Syncretism* by Ono and Sloop ([1995](#)). They further explicated another characteristic of the vernacular discourse named *Pastiche*. According to them, it is an effort to fix the fracture, although it ends up damaging the bone instead of fixing it. This is what we observe in the video titled “CBA review of BRITE TVC” posted on the channel on *September 17, 2017*. It has 16,347 views. It opens with the keynote that the people who have been following this channel since 2011 may know that the videos are meant to convey a message to the advertisers that Pakistani people are not as foolish as perceived by them. They understand the strategy of

the advertisement industry. In order to bring forth this aspect of these commercials, the creator of the video has used a lot of punch lines as his trademark and a lot of improvisation has been done on the request of the viewers of his videos. It is ironic that he criticizes the capitalist approach of the advertisers. Since, in doing so he uses the same strategy to grab more views. Similarly, the presenter on the other channel Khujlee Vines claims to be an ‘influencer’. He admits that he is addressing the audience as an ‘influencer’ in a video titled “Let’s talk about Ducky Sham War” posted on the channel on April 27, 2019. It has 1M views. In this video, he tries to convince the viewers that two famous YouTubers, who are indulged in a controversy and blame game with each other, should end this war because it is inappropriate for the upcoming content creators. The newcomers will follow the same pattern to earn more views which will consequently create more controversies. In doing so, he uses curse words for one of his colleagues and calls him names. In the same manner, he mimics and defames Sham Idrees, a contemporary content creator, who is actively indulged in this controversy. This is called *Pastiche*, instead of reforming the moral decadence they are actively reinforcing it by using it as a tool to attract their viewers. Since roasting videos have the two basic characteristics of vernacular discourse suggested by Ono and Sloop (1995), we can claim that this is the sort of discourse which is currently promoted by YouTube. The disclaimers of these channels are attached herewith for clarification:

Figure 1

Disclaimer by the Creator of Khujlee Family Channel



Figure 2

Disclaimer by the Creator of CBA Channel

Published on 5 Sep 2018

Hi guys, here is my latest TVC Review of Shan Masala TVC. All done in good humour I mean no disrespect to the creators of the TVC. It takes a lot of effort to produce creative content and I respect that. Moreover, I would never be able to create anything creative enough so I surely know my worth :)

Bushwick Tarantella by Kevin MacLeod is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/...>)
Source: <http://incompetech.com/music/royalty-...>
Artist: <http://incompetech.com/>

Category Comedy

Figure 3

The Content Creator Shows the Purpose of The Video in Each Video



Content Analysis

These videos share some common characteristics which distinguishes them from other types of vlogs. All the videos of both the channels are designed based on a particular structure. The Interactive

Alignment Model suggests that “participants in dialogue build up a series of routines based on what they have said and heard previously” (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark [2012](#)). According to the model, the speakers bind the thread of the ongoing conversation with the previous ones in order to be more logical and acceptable by the addressees. Similarly, in language use, they automatically use particular vocabulary items repeatedly to develop the course of their conversation (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark [2012](#)).

These are some of the aspects that can easily be detected in the design of these videos. Starting with language use, both the speakers use some curse words as their trademark. They use these words and phrases again and again to create the climax or to make the climax of their speech more intense. For example, the speaker of the Khujlee Family uses the phrase *Baou Rami Raja Ji Bhains Chor*, while displaying the pictures of the literal meaning of these words frequently in his content. This is his trademark and viewers appreciate it the most. Similarly, making hilarious sounds and making constipated faces is considered as the signature humour of CBA. Adopting these gestures in their each and every video in a new context with some improvisation is what makes it more creative. Viewers enjoy the unpredictability of the usage of these words, which adds more to the climax. For better understanding, some of the pictures taken from the ongoing videos are illustrated below:

Figure 4

Signature Features of The Creators as Analysed by The Content Analysis



Figure 5

Curse Words as The Signature Style of The Creator



Another key feature of these video designs is the repeated reference to the pre-existing video clips and internet memes. They edit the relevant pictures and videos in their ongoing commentary which makes it funnier and more attractive for the viewers. Sometimes, they make illustrations on based on their own commentary and then use these visuals to make it spicier. Some of the instances are as follows:

Figure 6

Obscenity and Swear Words as The Trademark of The Creator



Figure 7

Curse Words as The Trademark for Humour



Figure 9

Creators Make Illustration Based on Their Own Commentary



Figure 8

Creators Make Illustrations Based on Their Own Commentary



Addressee Feedback

These features of design trigger addressee feedback which is directly proportional to the Interactive Alignment Model as argued by (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark, [2012](#)). Addressee feedback is either the acceptance or rejection of the addressees for anything conversed to them. Theorists have argued that addressee feedback actually provides the infrastructure for conversation design and both conversation design and addressee feedback go hand in hand. This is what we observed in the videos and their comments. The viewers do not praise only the content or the creativity of the speakers; rather, they demand to see more alike videos. Similarly, they appreciate and imitate the innovative slang used by these speakers. On the other hand, both the speakers encourage their viewers to follow and subscribe to their respective channels and give their feedback by fulfilling their demands and suggestions. In one of the videos titled “Cola Next TVC” by CBA, the speaker confesses that he is making this video on the demand of the public in his comment box. We can have a glimpse of addressee feedback in the following comments on the videos sampled for the analysis. In these comments, appraisal and appreciation for the content and content creators, demand for more such content and imitation of the slangs is visible.

Figure 10

Addressee Feedback Reflecting Appreciation for The Content and Content Creators



RFS • 3 months ago

The most intellectual and decent guy. He has a perfect definition of humor. Every single video is amazing and especially the reactions he adds to the expressions. Far Far better than all the others. The only Family humor so far. Best wishes.

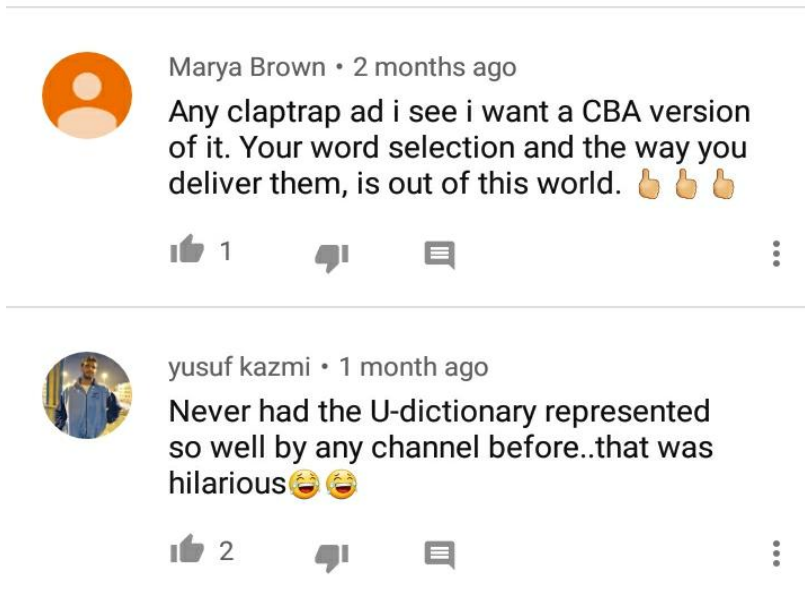


[VIEW 5 REPLIES](#)

The above-mentioned figure show that the design of the videos has deep impact on the viewers. The impact leads the viewers to talk about these videos and the content creator. They start to appreciate the intellectual ability. Through these comments they reveal that how much the liked these videos.

Figure 11

Comments Showing Addressee Feedback Reflecting Appreciation



The above- illustrated figure shows the interest of the views. These videos cast an impact on them which also leads them to and use special terms that created humour. Such as in figure no 11 the guy is appreciating the content creator for using U- dictionary in a humorous way.

Similarly figure 12 and 13 shows that the content of the video is designed based on a particular structure helpful in creating an effective conversation as suggested by the Interactive Alignment Model (Pickering & Garrod, [2004](#)). The success of the design structure is reflected by the appreciation received through addressee feedback as argued by (Chiarello, [2012](#); Clark, [2012](#)).

Figure 12

Comments Showing Addressee Feedback Reflecting the Demand for More

 SETH ROLLINS • 1 year ago
Samo bhai Plz make an awesamo speaks on WWE

 2   

 Creepster Music ✓ • 1 year ago
KAMLESH Paper peeya ga



 7   1 





[VIEW REPLY](#)












 Salman Mirza • 4 months ago
Motivation ke sath             real content.. superb         





Figure 13


Addressee Feedback Showing Encouraging Remarks for The Creator

 Shahira Amir • 2 months ago
That **qabz wali awaaz** you make in your videos is LIT! 

 2   

 Nyda Adeesh • 2 months ago
Haha   the way you say your lines is awesome   how many of you loved *check kar rai hai na aap*      

 1   

 Imran Mateen • 2 months ago
Chaaah gya hai. Love ur commentary mate. Keep it up!!!

Findings and Discussion

The videos that make up the data set are trending in Pakistan and are labelled as ‘roasting videos’ by their creators. We have argued that the content of these videos and their popularity indicate an emerging genre which is an improvised form of satire. The audience approve and demand this new version of a satirical one-man show in which the speaker is not present in front of the audience physically but is only a click away from them. The viewers do not only praise the speaker and enjoy the content; rather, they imitate the abusive vocabulary used as punch line by the speaker in their day-to-day life. It is an indication of the desensitization of such discourse which can be further explored in future studies. Another observation is that Punjabi is the highly employed language in these videos. It is used in order to create fun, satire and humor. Punjabi proverbs and curse words were used many times by both the speakers. We cannot ignore the fact that the speaker who runs the channel “Khujlee Vines” belongs to Sindh and is not a native Punjabi speaker. Still, he employs this language in his content to create fun and satire. This phenomenon, with particular reference to the Punjabi language and use of Punjabi curse words for roasting, can also be explored separately.

Conclusion

Vernacular discourse, as argued by Guo and Lee (2013), helps to build a new community with its own specifications. Similarly, we observed a strong bond between the viewers and the speakers of these videos, which indicates that a virtual community made up mostly of youth is being influenced by these videos. This influential content aids in the emergence of a discourse which is highly desensitized for slang language and which promotes the idea of stigmatizing someone’s language, culture, beliefs, and ideologies in the name of reformation. Moreover, it encourages its followers to slander someone for the sake of criticism, which is not the prescribed way of dealing with social issues in a society. The creators of this content have acquired the status of celebrities and their viewers and fans praise them and express their desire of becoming more like them. A new cultural elite and a new cultural underclass are arising due to technology and economic change. Therefore, content creators should be careful while disseminating their content.

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Article: **A Study on the impact of Netspeak on the writing skills of Generation X and Y**

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Impact of Netspeak on the Writing Skills of Generation X and Generation Y

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Abstract

This research focuses on the impact of netspeak on the formal writing skills of the users. It is labelled as the hub of slang and informal language content by many experts. The current analysis accounts for five objectives including the identification of the prime causative factors responsible for deviation in the use of the standard variety, the appliance of the impact of Netspeak on formal writing, the nature of its impact (positive or negative), the assessment of its impact with reference to age and on the basis of the kind of response netspeak receives from the living generations, determining its sustainability. The objectives are attained through a questionnaire, collecting responses from the individuals belonging to Generation X and Generation Y. This study proposes that the influence of mother tongue and code switching are the prime causative factors of netspeak. The research further showcases the impact of the electronic variety on the users' formal writing skills which can disturb their formal linguistic framework; however, the variety on its own has been indicated previously as a handy tool for the users. Focusing on the factor of age neutrality, the current study suggests that although Generation X is more inclined towards the use of the standard variety, yet it remains quite open-minded towards the existence and usage of the new variety on social media, stating it to be a "feature of the progressive world". The research reflects the enthralling nature of netspeak which has massively contributed to its popularity. It was inferred that neither the platform (the digital world) is losing its power nor the users are in the mood of giving up on it in the near future. It can be said that it's a budding variety for the people by the people, born to live, thus strengthening the sustainability argument.

Keywords: Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), Generation X, Generation Y, Language 1 (L1), Language 2 (L2), millennial, netspeak

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Introduction

Background

Technology in its progress is paralleling time. With every passing day, it is achieving a new milestone never witnessed before in history. The invention of electronic gadgets /along with the invention of the internet and thousands of social media applications has allowed technology to be a part of the everyday life of a common person through online education, marketing, online shopping, bookings, web entertainment industry, gaming and via chatting over a distance of thousands of miles. “Since its launch in 2004, Facebook has grown to 175 million active users by the year 2009. Furthermore, according to Facebook company info, the number of daily users that engaged in the sites’ services during December 2016 reached 1.23 billion on average, with 85.2% of activities taking place outside North America. Instagram services reached 700 million active users in April 2017 since starting its’ services in 2010, with 80% of those users being outside the U.S.A.” (Jimma, [2017](#)). Such a vast number of people interacting and interchanging information at a single platform calls for a single language which was set to be English, the global lingua franca. Just as the spread of English in the world has altered its structure leading to its new varieties, the English used over the internet has gone through a similar process over the years, caused by the users coming from different linguistic backgrounds. This has created a new variety of English known as the netspeak, which possesses quite distinctive features compared to the standard variety and remains particularly informal in its nature.

Careful analysis of different social media sites such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook shows a clear picture of the use of netspeak characterized by an amalgam of different linguistic contractions, reductions, acronyms, overstatement of punctuation, improper and abrupt capitalizations, emoticons, slangs and other such features. Starting from *Y’all* for you all, *ryt* for right, *B4* for before, *Np* for no problem, and *hahaha* to express laughter, the variety has turned out to be /rich. It was also observed that netspeak has no strings attached to it as nobody can claim it; therefore, every nation / region has given its own color to it, such as the use of Roman Urdu and Urdu slangs in netspeak

in the Pakistani context. Examples include *scene on hai, golibaz, and paindu*. Many other researchers support the idea that modification in terms of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary is inevitable when modern technology is integrated with language (Zinkhan et al., [2003](#); Stavfeldt, [2011](#)).

An important reason behind the various features of netspeak, found by the current researcher, was to achieve the flavor of real-time spoken discourse in written chats. The aim was to depict the features of spoken discourse in Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) such as tone, pitch, expressions and emotions in order to convey the right meaning. Netspeak is, therefore, “viewed as a novel medium, combining spoken, written and electronic properties” (Crystal, [2002](#)). The question whether CMC belongs to the written or the spoken category was put forth in the previous century. Ferrara, Brunner and Whittemore were among the first to discuss this issue. These authors called it “real-time interactive written discourse” (Jovanovic, [2013](#)). They were affiliated with the Human Interface Laboratory, Austin, Texas. They addressed this issue in 1991 in their research stating that “Netspeak is more than an aggregate of spoken and written features. It does things that neither of these other mediums do, and must accordingly be seen as a new species of communication” (Crystal, [2002](#)). This is why it is also labelled as the “electronic discourse” (Watt, [2010](#)).

Despite the ignition of a meaningful debate among the experts “there are also debates which mirror scholarly worry over the influence of Netspeak on students’ literacy” (O’Connor, [2005](#)) (Shaughnessy, [2008](#)). “Some have the understanding that the so-called ‘Internet English’ is a breakdown of the English language” (Thangaraj, [2015](#)).

Aims and Objectives

1. What are the main factors /responsible for the deviations in the use of the standard language leading to the emergence of netspeak?
2. How does netspeak affect the formal writing skills of the youth? Does it disturb their academic variety of English?
3. What is the sustainability of netspeak?
4. What is the ratio of the positive and negative impact of CMC on users? Can it be fully inclined towards one pole?

5. Netspeak is generally associated with the younger generation, it would be interesting to find whether this particular case of netspeak is age neutral or not?
6. Whether or not duration (years) impacts the amount of netspeak one uses while communicating in formal and informal environment?

Purpose / Significance

This research highlights the concerns regarding the evolution of netspeak and the risks it poses for the standard variety. It will help to reduce the ambiguity about the dominant impact (positive or negative) of CMC on the users. Moreover, it will help to understand whether netspeak has the power to become a globally recognized variety of English or is it just another kind of pidgin language which does not have a long life span or impact on the real life communication of the users.

Research Gap

Previous researches have addressed this topic based on a notion of netspeak being either a foe or a friend with its sustainability being the most important question. Many linguists have worked on it for the past 20 years; however, experts still are unable to generate a concrete statement about it. The debate is still going on and the current researcher is enthusiastic to resolve this issue.

Research Hypothesis

The researcher conducted the current research with the mindset that even though CMC and netspeak impacts the user's writing skills, yet they are more inclined towards being a friend and might be used to help the new generations in learning the English language.

Delimitation and Limitation

The delimitation of this research was the fact that the questionnaires were filled by two different age groups in order to find out whether the impact of netspeak is age neutral or not. The first group included users in the age range of 15-25 years (intermediate, undergraduate, and postgraduate students), while the second group included users of age 40 years and above. This helped in gathering results from two different generations. Moreover, for both generations only those individuals were

involved who maintain their personal accounts on different social media sites and are habitual of using social media daily. Furthermore, for Generation X only those individuals were preferred who were literate enough to have competency in the standard variety of English.

Some limitations were faced in the sub-dimension ‘finding age neutrality’ for this research. Elements of the generation gap can be observed in every society (no matter how liberal or literate it is). In the Pakistani society, it can be marked by the refinement of language, the fact that it is free from slangs or colloquialisms. We can also refer to it as the “digital generation gap”. It can therefore be inferred whether the senior citizens (Generation X) might be using netspeak or not, explaining the whole idea of this research to them was quite challenging.

Literature Review

Glossary

- I. Code switching: “Code switching is when speaker alternates between two or more languages (or dialects / varieties of a language) in one conversation” (Esen, [2010](#)).
- II. L1: It is the first language of any speaker adopted from their household. It can also be addressed as their native language or mother tongue.
- III. L2: It is the second language learnt by a speaker which is foreign to their surroundings.
- IV. Generation X: According to the Pew Research Center, this group of people have their birth years ranging from 1965–1980 (Dimock, [2019](#)). They comprise the age group of 39-54 years.
- V. Generation Y: According to the Pew Research Center, this group of people have their birth years ranging from 1981-1996 (Dimock, [2019](#)). They are also referred to as ‘millennials’ and they comprise the age group 23-38 years.

One cannot deny the fact that social media has altogether altered the way we use English language in public domain, for personal communication, and in the academic environment. It is considered as a platform that allows real-time conversation over vast distances. CMC was originally designed to be written but in order to maintain the speed of the spoken discourse the language is so molded that it saves time and

prompts productivity where no grammar / language Nazis have the right to police the people.

Initially, the language employed was just a kind of short-cut used by the non-native speakers to express themselves easily. However, it has grown out to be a trend, a symbol of modernism, and a colloquial version of Standard English.

Netspeak

This budding variety of English can be distinguished as having twelve main linguistic features actively practiced by the internet users.

- I. Contractions: This feature is characterized by the shortening of spellings through omitting one or more alphabets in a way that the omitted alphabet is replaced by an apostrophe, for example, *I've* = I have, *didn't* = did not.
- II. Linguistic reductions:
 - a) Linguistic reductions are made on the basis of the prominent phonetic features of the word, eliminating the less prominent ones in order to reduce word length, for example, *Thx* = thanks, *wknd* = weekend.
 - b) It is also achieved by utilizing only the first half of the word, for example, *uni* = university, *pics* = pictures, *vacay* = vacation.
 - c) Blended words are reductions made by blending two words together to form one word, for example, *dunno* = don't know, *kinda* = kind of.
- III. Numeric reductions: Alphabets are replaced by numbers by matching their phonetic occupancies, for example, *B4* = before, *w8* = weight.
- IV. Acronyms: It comprises the initials of a phrase, for example, *IDK* (I don't know), *BTW* (by the way).
- V. Special signs
 - a) *@* (at the rate of): It is used to refer to any place or platform to which something belongs. Originally, it was used within email addresses where it points out the application or social site represented by the given address, for example, ...*@gmail.com*, ...*@hotmail.com*. Transitionally, on different sites such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook, “*@*” is used to find or refer to any contact in the phone or in the friend list, for example,

- “@friends user name”. It is also used for “at” in sentences, for example, I’m @ school.
- b. # (hashtag): Hashtag is used with the keywords associated with the topic so that people can easily find information about it on social media. This feature is quite helpful for the publicity of ideas, content, and products and for conducting online trends or campaigns, for example, #womenempowerment.
- c. *: The ‘star’ is used to indicate that the word / text is in a corrected form which was mistyped before. which might be mistaken before, for example, *I feel exhaustid* → I feel exhausted*.
- VI. Spelling exaggerations: It refers to the increase in the number of alphabets (representing sounds in words) in accordance with the time span of word delivery. It also gives a hint of the mood behind it, for example, *ohhh myyyyyyyyyy gooooooodness* for Oh my Godness (uttered in the state of shock).
- VII. Interjections: It refers to the incorporation of a feeling or reaction in writing, for example, hahaha, ewww, ughh.
- VIII. Improper punctuations and capitalizations: The number of punctuations parallels the strength of emotion, be it shock, emphasis or pause, for example, *What????, rEaLLY??, Woaah.... Look at that height....*
- IX. Emojis and Emoticons: :-) (classic smile), :s (confused smile), 🤔 thinking face, ✌️ victory hand gesture.
- X. Picture posts: The inclusion of pictures in posts provides a convenient way for the transference of emotions / feelings without using many words. Mostly, pictures are used to depict famous gestures or expressions. Post writers reuse the picture and place it in a new scenario that goes well with the pictorial gesture. It is often termed as pictorial meme.



When the examiner almost catches you cheating, so you hit them with the



XI. Roman Urdu: Writing Urdu using English script. It also involves code switching from English to Urdu.



XII. Slang: It is the reflection of one's culture.

- Urdu slang: *golibaaz* (someone unreliable or not trustworthy), *jugaadh lagana* (a solution that violates the rules).
- English slangs: I'm dead (that was amusing), airhead (dumb person).

Rise of Deviation in the Standard Variety

Some experts consider netspeak to be a kind of "interlanguage" created through code switching between L1 and L2, also termed as the impact of the mother tongue.

Selinker's Interlanguage Theory

The argument can be better understood with the help of Selinker's interlanguage theory. "The theory of interlanguage depicts an emergence of a linguistic system developed by a second language learner who has not achieved full competence and proficiency in the target language. This is the stage whereby some major features of L1 are still being preserved and employed in the use of L2, thus distorting a learner's ability to naturally understand and employ the rules of the target language due to a great level of confusion and language overgeneralization. In other words, Interlanguage occurs when certain aspects of the target language do not match with a learner's existing language structure developed through his first language learning experience" (Azianura Hani Shaari, 2015).

William O’Grady’s and John Archibald’s Concept of Interlanguage

William O’Grady and John Archibald, in chapter eleven (Second Language Acquisition) of their book “Review of O’Grady et al., Contemporary Linguistics”, explained the concept using the following figure.

Figure 1

William O’Grady’s and John Archibald’s Concept of Interlanguage

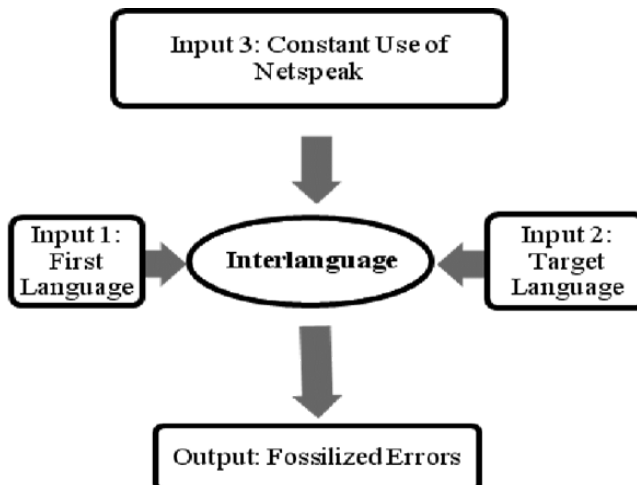


Netspeak Leading to the Fossilization of Errors

The impact of netspeak on the language of L2 learners generates another type of interlanguage. *Azianura Hani Shaari and Khaleel Bader Bataineh* in their research paper “Netspeak and a Breach of Formality: Informalization and Fossilization of Errors in Writing among ESL and EFL Learners” (Shaari, [2015](#)), illustrated the following figure:

Figure 2

Netspeak Leading to the Fossilization of Errors



Marta Baralo (1994) proposed in his study “Errors and fossilization”, as cited by Lic. Venecia Tejada Reyes, “fossilization is

the mechanism by which a speaker tends to keep in its interlanguage certain items, rules and linguistic subsystems of its mother tongue in relation to a given object language. If in the interlanguage used by the student errors appear that could not exist in the learning stage in which it is found and that, supposedly, should have been overcome previously, it can be characterized as fossilized errors” (Reyes, [2019](#)). Another explanation could be given as follows: “the relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into the competence of the second language of a person has been called fossilization” (Brown, [2000](#)).

It is evident that the greater circle indulged in social media activities is the outer circle (Kachru’s three circles of language use) comprising the users located in the developing world (Jimma, [2017](#)). They use English as a second language mostly in formal, academic, business and government domains. However, code switching between the first and second languages can be unconsciously mixed, thus contributing to the emergence of a new variety of English reflecting the features of the mother tongue. Singlish or Pakistani English are two such varieties of English. The emergence of Pakistani English has led to the inclusion of many Urdu words in the English language, while some words have been officially added into the English language dictionaries, for example, *loot, pashmina, thug, lathi charge, etc.*

Fairclough’s Idea of Informalization

The subsistence of netspeak was feared by Norman Fairclough. He suggested that the boundaries between language forms ideally reserved for intimate relationships / conversations and those reserved for more formal situations are becoming vague. The second half of the 20th century witnessed a significant rise in this trend which became intense in the 21st century. Fairclough’s idea of “informalization” predicted that “the shifts of speech towards writing may have had their heyday; contemporary cultural values place a high valuation on informality, and the predominant shift is towards speech-like forms in writing” (Fairclough, [1992](#)). He firmly believed that the upcoming technological era would amalgamate formal and informal features of languages which include “technical and non-technical vocabularies, markers of authority and familiarity, more typically written, and more typically spoken

syntactic forms” (Fairclough, [1992](#)). Some previous studies held a “casual attitude towards linguistic consistency” (Baron, [2000](#)) responsible for the fossilization of errors, that is, permanent inclusion of incorrect linguistics features in a person’s written and spoken discourse; eventually resulting into ‘informalization’ in both formal and informal writings.

Impact of Netspeak (Positive / Negative)

Another important /aspect of this research is to find out the positive or negative impact of netspeak on the users’ writing skills, which is an ongoing debate. According to most experts, the use of netspeak is preventing the youth from following formal language rules. Even if they are made to learn and follow the structural rules of a language, they might not be able to do so because of the addiction to netspeak; however, throughout the world, mixed opinions can be heard about it. According to the previous researches, some define netspeak as “the bastardization of language”, or “the lingua franca of the Internet”, or “the native language of netizens” (Jovanovic, [2013](#)). The study “How Does the Use of Modern Communication Technology Influence Language and Literacy Development? A Review” (Watt, [2010](#)) states that one of the reasons for the ambiguity found in this dimension is the existence of the “digital generation gap”, that is, the difference in the level of awareness and exposure to internet sites and their dissimilar use between parents and children. There is a need to find solid proofs to draw any particular conclusion. Should. If the results point towards a negative evolutionary impact of technology on children, then acknowledging this issue is essential in order to support parents in defending their children’s development. Otherwise, the government should take steps to provide this educational resource of communication technology to all.

Research Methodology

Research Type

This is a quantitative research.

Population

The target population for this research was divided into two groups. The first group comprised intermediate, undergraduate, and

postgraduate students who were 15-25 years of age. The second group comprised internet users who were aged 40 years or above. This grouping corresponds to the division of the target population into two generations, X and Y, albeit inversely. The researcher wanted to collect generic responses without any class barrier as the social media craze engulfs both the upper class and the middle class. Thus, the institutes that cater to a mixed / diverse population were selected. Student population was selected from the Kips College, GCU, Shalimar Medical College and Kinnaird College for Women. For the selection of the target population included in the second group, the researcher did not keep any strings attached. It could be the faculty of any educational institute, other professional/ retired citizens or even housewives, well aware of the Standard English and using social media. Thus, this group incorporated the faculty of GCU, Kinnaird, Shalimar Degree College, as well as the parents of the fellow KC-ites.

Research Tool

This research was carried out using a questionnaire that was designed to know whether netspeak impacts the user's formal writing skills or not. If yes, then what kind of impact it generates, positive or negative. Moreover, it was also intended to evaluate this impact in terms of its sustainability.

Sample Size

Sample size was 150 internet users including 100 users from the first group (Generation Y) and 50 users from the second group (Generation X).

Sampling Type

The research was conducted via random sampling.

Questionnaire

The designed questionnaire consists of twenty-five questions based on the following five aspects of this research.

1. Prime Causative Factors in the Development of Netspeak

- I. Do you use the purest form of your mother tongue? If no, to what extent usage of your mother tongue with its local slang is a

constraint giving rise to the impurity of language? *Very little, to a medium / considerable extent, very high.*

- II. To what extent code switching (switching between Urdu and English) exists in your spoken language? *Very little, to a medium / considerable extent, very high.*
- III. How easy is it for you to switch between netspeak (while using social sites) and the standard variety (for academic / formal writing)? *Very easy, moderately easy, difficult.*

2. Impact of Netspeak on the User's Writing Skills

- I. How much time do you spend on social sites on a daily basis? *2-3 hours, 4-5 hours, above.*
- II. Do you think that the use of netspeak has become a trend and is more than a need? *Yes, no.*
- III. Have you ever utilized the features of netspeak (informal and contracted language) while making class notes or assignments? *Unconsciously yes, consciously yes, no.*
- IV. How easy is it for you to switch between netspeak (while using social media sites) and the standard variety (for academic / formal writing)? *Very easy, moderately easy, difficult.*

3. The Nature of the Impact

- I. Do you purposely contract the words or use acronyms / short forms to save time? *Yes, no.*
- II. What is your reason of using netspeak? *Lack of knowledge of Standard English, to follow the trend, for your ease.*
- III. Do you think that the autocorrect feature and the speed of typing in written chats has affected your knowledge of spellings? *Positively yes, negatively yes, no.*
- IV. In what scenarios do you prefer to use the autocorrect feature? *Unaware of certain spellings, fast replies, do not use it.*
- V. Do you think that the excessive use of Roman English or Urdu slang in online comments / posts limits the readings to a narrow circle? *Yes, no.*
- VI. Imagine that you want to raise your voice to highlight an issue (for example, the Kashmir shutdown) on a worldwide scale, which form of language would you prefer? *Pure Standard English,*

Roman Urdu / English with Urdu slangs, English with spelling contractions / English slang.

- VII. Do you use the same type of language while writing a post and while commenting on a post? *Yes, no.*
- VIII. Do you think that netspeak helps in the better portrayal of emotions compared with the standard variety? *Yes, no.*

4. The Impact being Age-neutral

- I. At what age you started using social media sites? *Teenage, twenties, above.*
- II. What form of language do you prefer while using the internet? *Standard English, netspeak, Urdu (script).*
- III. Do you feel the need of the knowledge of the standard variety of English while using social sites? *Yes, no, to some extent.*
- IV. To what extent is your awareness of language modifications (spelling short forms, acronyms,) evident on the internet? *Very less, average, high.*
- V. Do you follow grammatical rules while writing on social sites? *Always, most of the time, never.*
- VI. Have you increased the use of netspeak over time while writing on social sites? *Yes, no.*
- VII. Do you think that your posts look more attractive due to the use of emoticons and contractions? *Yes, no.*
- VIII. Do you think that the use of netspeak should be discontinued? *Yes, no.*
- IX. If no, state your reason of using it.

5. Sustainability

On the basis of the analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire, the sustainability of netspeak is determined and discussed below.

Discussion

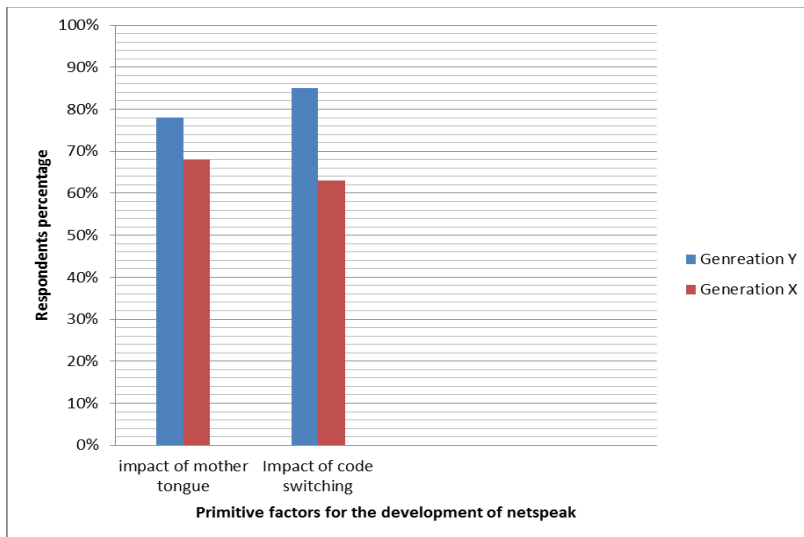
Prime Causative Factors in the Development of Netspeak

As discussed in literature review, the prime cause of the emergence of this new variety of English is the use of one's mother tongue, where the linguistic framework of L1 dominates and has a directive role in the formation of the linguistic framework of L2 within the mind (Selinker's

interlanguage theory). It can be said that the features and patterns of use of L1 tend to replicate themselves for L2 as well. The globalization of the world has led to the creation of varieties of every sort of language (be it English, Urdu, Hindi, etc.) in order to attain adequate competency for communication in that language by the non-native speakers living within the broader community. Moreover, the continuous interaction of the non-native speakers with the native speakers has accelerated the spread of these new varieties among them as well, leading to impurity in their use of mother tongue. For example, the people of Pakistan speak multiple regional languages while Urdu is the national language, when it gets adopted by the people belonging to different linguistic regions, their language makeup shows variance in terms of Urdu. Moreover, for it to be used by people having different literacy levels, its simpler / impure version has been adopted across the region. This is the reason why 78% and 68% of the respondents from the Y and X generations respectively used an impure version of their mother tongue.

Figure 3

Prime Causative Factors for the Development of Netspeak



Another causative factor is code switching, a linguistic practice quite common in bi/multilingual communities, for example, switching between Urdu and English or Urdu and any regional language (in the Pakistani context). It is so prevalent that it has now become a part of the

speakers linguistic repertoire. According to the data collected, 85% of Generation Y and 63% of Generation X respondents code switched to a minor yet considerable extent in their linguistic routine.

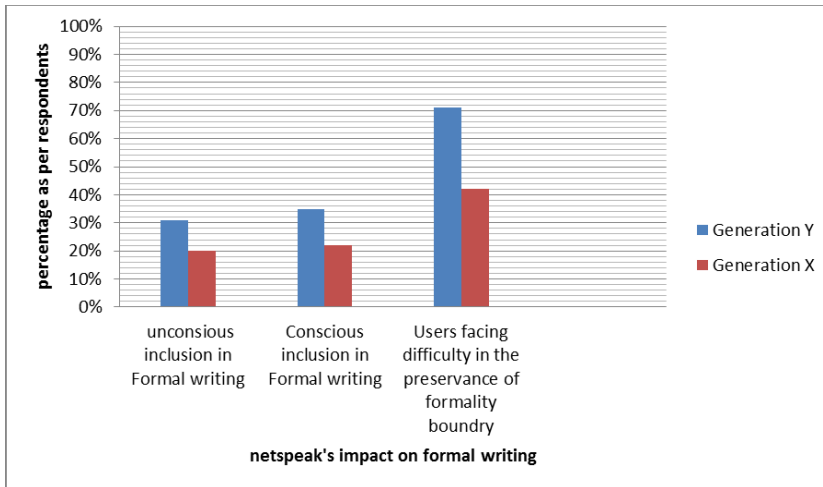
Replicating both of the above factors for L2 (English) gives rise to a certain sort of impurity / informality; whereas, the boundary between its pure and impure form is getting blurred due to constant switching. This line of argument can be proved through the collected data which shows that almost 71% of youth are struggling to maintain this boundary. Thus, it can be said that these two factors are the prime causes of deviation seen in the use of the standard variety of English while generating a new one simultaneously.

Impact of Netspeak on User's Writing Skills

With the rapid development of the electronic world, its membership circumference is increasing with every passing day contributing to the immense popularity of netspeak. Earlier, netspeak was described as the need of the hour for breaking the communication boundary, while aiding non-English speakers. Now, it has evolved to be a trend, as per 86% of Generation Y and 88% of Generation X respondents. Such popularity comes with the power that surely impacts the formal writing skills of the users. As per the survey, 54% millennials spend 4-5 hours and above on social media on a daily basis. It definitely implies a switch to the informal variety (netspeak) where formal writing roles are abandoned. Such an extensive and constant rate of exposure to netspeak surely leaves an impact on the mind of the users, making it difficult for them to switch back to the formal variety. This contributes to blurring the boundary between the formal and informal variety, making the features of the informal variety traverse to the formal environment. The survey conducted shows that 31% of Generation Y and 20% of Generation X respondents unconsciously included features of netspeak in their formal writing; whereas, its conscious incorporation by 35% of Generation Y and 22% of Generation X respondents was intended to save time or was done under the push of habit. Under such circumstances, 71% of youngsters and 42% of the senior population admitted to the difficulties faced in maintaining the boundary between the two varieties.

Figure 4

Impact of Netspeak on Formal Writing of Generation Y and Generation X



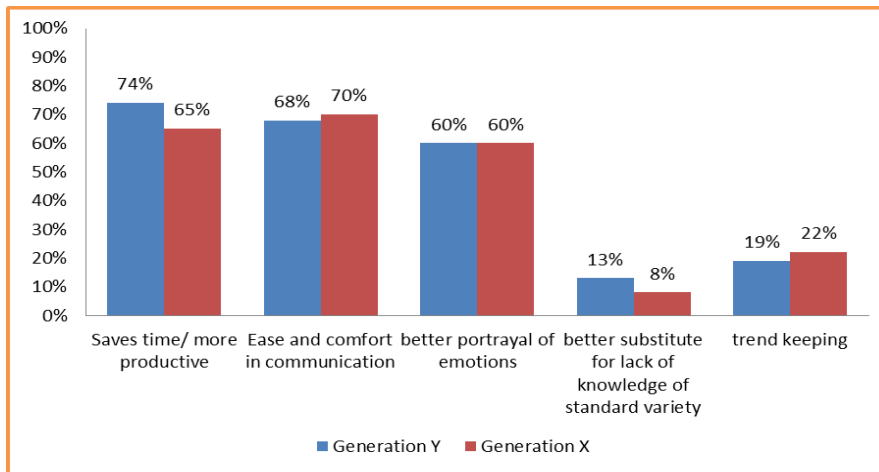
Nature of the Impact

The impact of electronic world and electronic variety on formal writing skills is a reality; however, in order to understand the nature of the impact the researchers need to ponder upon the reasons stated by the respondents for using netspeak. The progressive world has minimized the distance between human beings through high-speed technology, leaving no space for dawdling. This has made our lives more like a race where everyone wants to compete with time. Catering the need of the era, where electronic world provides a medium for global interaction, netspeak provides a chance to accelerate the conversational speed. This is the reason that 74% and 64% respondents of Generation Y and Generation X respectively accepted the fact that they contract words in order to save time and to have a quicker and more productive conversation. Another stated reason is the ease and comfort it provides during conversation (68% Y, 70% X). Other reasons include being more expressive and allowing better portrayal of emotions (60% Y, 60% X). Adding more to it, some respondents (13% Y, 8% X) preferred to describe netspeak as a need in the absence of the knowledge of the standard variety; furthermore, some were attracted towards it just to keep up with the modern trend (19% Y, 22% X). Overall, the reasons

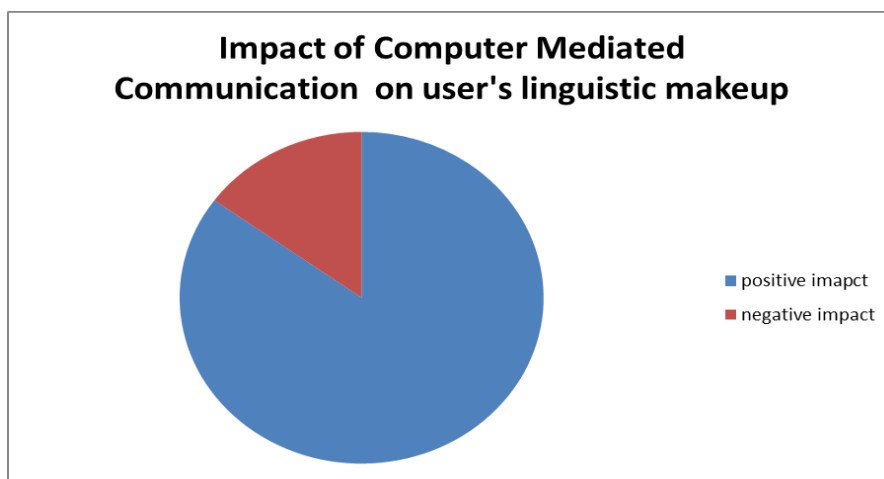
stated above depict the handiness of netspeak in catering the different needs of the users in order to smoothly utilize the inventions of the electronic world; thus, fulfilling the duty of an effective pidgin language. Despite the immense technological advantage, some previous researches have highlighted the concerns of experts and parents regarding the negative impact of this computer mediated environment on the linguistic makeup of children, restraining them from following formal language rules. Moreover, for them, its use is restricted to entertainment only and is not intended for educational purposes. Contrary to it, the survey showed that 80-90% of the respondents from both generations claimed that social media has contributed to their linguistic knowledge one way or the other. A thorough investigation of different social media sites made the current researcher come across different pages designed solely for language acquisition using some fun, non-traditional methods that cater every type of learner, such as *englishpix*, *BBC learning English*, *leaning.english.1*, etc. It is therefore said, “Technology offers new ways for practicing language and assessing performance” (Hockly, 2009). The modern era focuses intensely on different needs of the students and their preferred learning styles as per their psychological makeup. Classrooms therefore have also evolved to be more student-centered by incorporating different teaching methodologies using audiovisual aid, realia, interactive discussions, and group activities. This is not limited merely to language learning; in fact, these sites incorporate every sort of learning including different life skills, business techniques and ideas, and even provide an amazing way of gaining scientific knowledge. Thus, it would not be wrong to say that social media is the most fulfilling and distinctive institute for learning anything and everything. Moreover, electronic developers have not only given a writing platform but have also provided a helping hand to the users in the form of some features, such as the auto-correct feature which is a tool that assists the users’ in different ways to write. Half of the millennials and nearly half of Generation X respondents highlighted its positive impact on their writing, either in the form of generating fast replies (57% Y, 50% X) or by providing spelling awareness (24% Y, 24% X). As per Marconi Kamal, “communication is the best of all ways for teaching vocabulary and we can easily understand that through the communication of social media, students learn faster than paper-based learning” (Kamal, 2013).

Figure 5

Reasons for using Netspeak by Generation Y and Generation X



An important point highlighted in this research is the distinctiveness found in this new (budding) variety of English based on the region of its use and the mother tongue of its users. For example, netspeak that evolved in the native English speaking countries contains slang and proverbs representing their culture, whereas in case of non-native countries where English is spoken as a second or foreign language such as Pakistan, Urdu words, Roman Urdu, slang and proverbs belonging to its culture were evident. In this way, although the primary contractions and reductions of English vocabulary remain identical, other linguistic features may vary. This may result in restricting the readings on posts or on any other social writings, generating some sort of a linguistic boundary. This fact has been affirmed by 63% of Generation Y and 72% of Generation X respondents. This is the reason that the respondents of both generations preferred Standard English in scenarios such as highlighting any social issue across the globe in order to record readings on an extensive scale. Contrastively, populations within their corresponding circle sharing similar cultural practices and traditions, for example, neighboring countries of South Asia or Europe still prefer netspeak in terms of expression and effective communication.

Figure 6*Impact of CMC on the User's Linguistic Makeup***Impact being Age-neutral**

The sustainability factor and the evolution of netspeak towards a new variety greatly depends on its acceptance by the co-existing generations (Generation X and Y) of the current era. Moreover, whether or not netspeak makes a similar impact on the formal writing of Generation X remains an important point to ponder. Through the survey, the researchers observed that Generation X is rather more conscious of the kind of language they use in terms of its purity. This is the reason that 37% of the respondents representing Generation X completely refrained from code switching in a conversation. Instead, they selected the language of communication beforehand and tended to maintain it throughout the conversation; whereas of them code switched to a minor extent (in their spoken language) regretfully. The preference of Generation X is always the Standard English variety, as for them it is a serious and dignified version of language which is used for communication. This is the reason that 58% of the population representing Generation X felt the need of the standard variety while using social media; whereas, for 64% the standard variety was the preferred variety to write on social media sites. Moreover, 30%- 60% of them followed the proper grammatical pattern, as compared to 42% of millennials who never followed it. On the other hand, the awareness and

comprehension level of netspeak was quite comforting for about 66% of the population representing Generation X. Almost 60% of respondents belonging to this generation admitted an increase in the amount of the use of netspeak, mainly in the form of contracting words to save time and using emoticons which are absolutely loved by this generation. According to these respondents, netspeak is surely an easy escape for those who lack the knowledge of the standard variety and it allows better expression of emotions especially through the visual features it offers, such as emojis, emoticons or picture posts. About 88% of them considered it to be a trend, while 22% strived to adopt this trend in order to diminish the digital generation gap. From a wider perspective, Generation X was not found reluctant towards using the electronic world and its features and almost 86% of them claimed that social media has served to increase their knowledge more or less by using interesting (non-traditional) methodologies. Almost half of the population representing Generation X (46%) affirmed the use of the “auto-correct” feature in a positive way for generating fast replies and for figuring out unknown spellings. Stating it as the feature of “the progressive world”, half of the population belonging to Generation X negated the idea of the discontinuation of netspeak. A deeper analysis showed that this generation is quite open-minded towards the new variety; however, they have managed to keep both the varieties entirely separate, thus preventing netspeak to affect their formal writing skills. The collected data stated that 58% of the Generation X respondents never included the features of netspeak in their formal writing and for them it is fairly easy to segregate both the varieties. This can be understood from the fact that 95% of the population representing Generation X started using the internet and other social media sites after the age of 30 or 35. They have spent a considerable amount of time using the standard variety and even now their preference lies with it. Their knowledge of netspeak is confined to a comprehensible level where they try and guess the meaning of these contractions and reductions, but in terms of usage a prominent part of the population still prefers the standard variety.

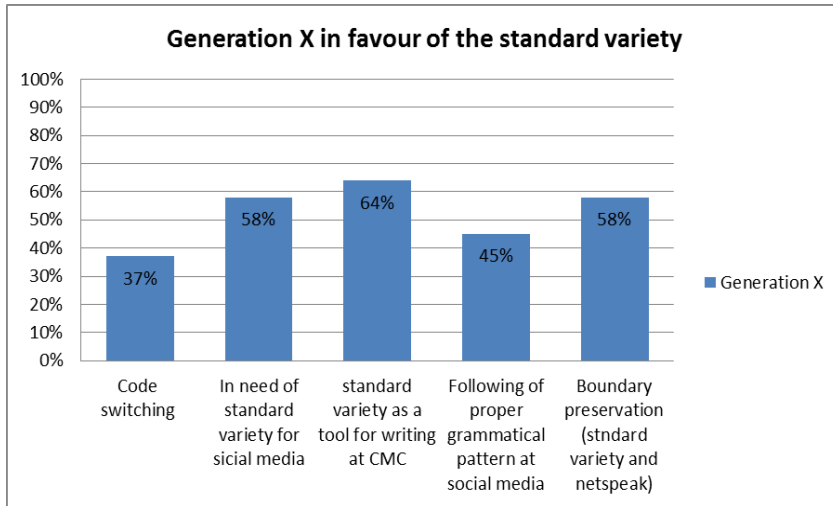
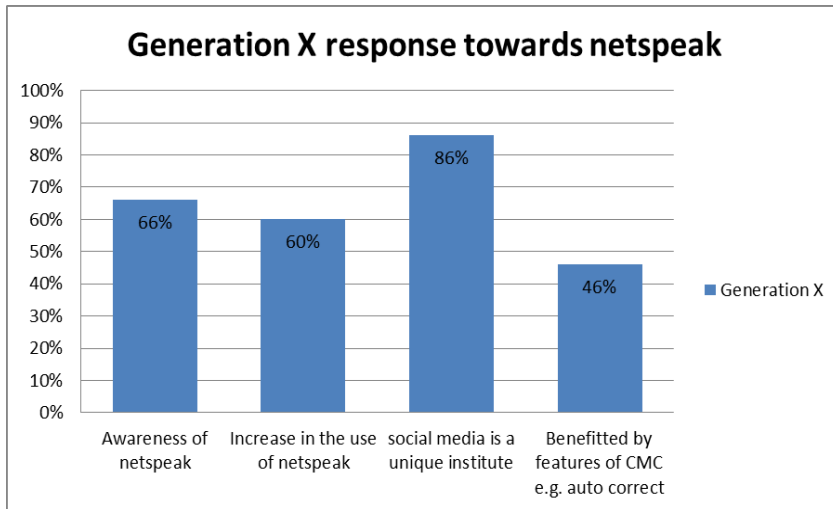
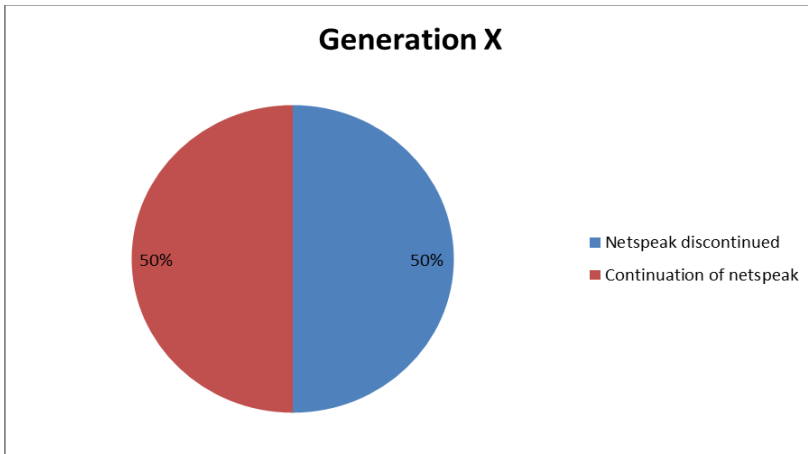
Figure 7*Response of Generation X towards the Standard Variety***Figure 8***Response of Generation X towards Netspeak*

Figure 9

The Perspective of Generation X Regarding the Discontinuation of Netspeak



Sustainability

From the above discussion, we can draw upon the sustainability scale of netspeak while stating that whether in the form of a trend, an easy tool for writing, a convenient reflector of emotions or a gadget used to save time, both generations have accepted the existence of netspeak despite varying in its usage. From enjoying a privileged status among the millennials to being labelled as a new tool of the progressive world by Generation X, netspeak has strengthened its roots.

Generically, a language dies when it loses its popularity or when its users and the platform of its use loses power; whereas, in this case, neither social media is losing power nor the social media users. In fact, 60% of the respondents from both generations claimed an increase in its use with time. This provides netspeak a higher rank at the scale of sustainability.

Conclusion

The current research showed that electronic world surely has its impact on people's lives in the form of its own linguistic "variety". It has never failed to excite and influence its users. Although it is not on the verge of completely overpowering the standard variety, yet it has gone a considerable way in this regard. In other words the digital world

and its variety has made an altogether separate route for itself surely strong enough to captivate people, making them blindly follow its lead. With technological advancement and digitalization of almost everything, netspeak has proved to be a much handy tool for browsing the virtual space (the social media) for different purposes. It would not be surprising anymore to see CMC being used for pedagogical purposes at some time in the future, that is, for learning languages or teaching skills. In terms of age neutrality, the senior generation is surely giving it a tough time by resisting its impact on their formal writing, but it is for sure that netspeak is a variety born to live whether it is liked or disliked.

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A Study of Endurance and Aspiration in Maya Angelou's Poems *Caged Bird* (1968) and *Still I Rise* (1978)

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Abstract

The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou (1994) manifests that Maya Angelou's personal consciousness and public awareness sharpened her poetic capabilities. She used art to communicate the pathos and joys of her evolving spirit. This research paper explores the elements of survival, that is, endurance and aspiration in her poetry. The only freedom she enjoyed was the freedom to write which was rooted in her mind and not curbed by societal forces. The rationale of this paper is to trace how personal struggle and the quest for self-sustaining dignity in Maya Angelou's poetry serves as an aspiration for America's black community. Her cerebral autobiographies manifest her struggle for survival in a hostile and racist social environment and her poetry reflects the same. The objective of this research is to locate the motifs of endurance and aspiration in two of her poems namely *Caged Bird* (1994) and *Still I Rise* (1994) from her anthology of *Complete Collected Poems* (1994). *Caged Bird* has become legendary due to the use of strong images, dichotomy and masked metaphors. Through these devices the poetess depicts her span of fragile development. As she grows physically and emotionally she discards her old mask and in *Still I Rise*, she presents her self-image with courage. The lyrical qualities of both poems provide soothing and healing power to the black community. In the light of the current analysis, this research paper concludes that the ultra fine resonance with repetition in Angelou's poetry generates strong emotions. At the same time, it becomes a mode of free expression and endurance for the poetess. Furthermore, the outcome of this research is that it traces the dynamic elements of aspiration in her poetry through which she gains a voice, a voice to address her pathos with a modulated tone and to introduce the tools for productive survival.

Keywords: feminism, power, racism, pathetic fallacy, resistance

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Introduction

Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Johnson on April 4, 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri. She grew up in St. Louis and Stamps, Arkansas. She has written well-known memoirs and poems. She never used a specified pattern for writing poetry. However she wrote in a dialect known as Black Secular, which is a form of expression related to common English and also used metaphors and imagery that correlate with the themes of slavery in her poems.

She wrote many volumes of poetry which include *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now* (1993), *And Still I Rise* (1987), *I Shall Not Be Moved* (1990), *Shaker Why Don't You Sing?* (1983), *Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well* (1975), and *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiie* (1971) which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. All of these above mentioned poems were published together in one volume of poetry in 1994 titled as *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou*. The current study is based on her two poems, that is, *Caged Bird* (1994) taken from the anthology *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou (1994)*, section name *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?* and *Still I Rise* (1994) also taken from the same anthology, section name *and Still I Rise, Part Three: And Still I Rise*.

They deal with the poetess' sense of survival and aspiration while confronting racism, sexism and class discrimination. Her poetry fits in the tradition of American poetry and Afro-American feminist poetry. She uses various literary devices to convey her message of freedom. She addresses the oppression that the black people faced during slavery. They were stripped off their fundamental rights and freedom.

The poetess restores her self-esteem through her lyrical expression which validates her existence. She conveys her message in a picturesque manner richen with images. Her developmental state is evident in the poem *The Caged Bird (1994)* whose title is borrowed from Paul Laurence's poem *Sympathy* (1899). This poem is based on blues-based model in which the verses are followed by constant rhyme like that of a song. On the other hand, Maya Angelou's revolutionary thoughts and state of mind is reflected in the poem *Still I Rise (1994)*. The repetition of certain authoritarian words in her poem actually reveals her bold spirit. She also challenges her enemies by introducing call-response

form in her poetry. The verse speaks about people putting her down for various reasons and her getting back up again.

The current paper utilizes a systematic, evaluative, explanatory, and qualitative research methodology to find out the important motifs of endurance and aspiration in Maya Angelou's poetry with the use of secondary material, that is, journals and articles for the support of the argument.

Literature Review

Black women are considered inferior in the white community. They are perceived as subjugated beings. This perception of black inferiority and white superiority is inherent in the language and culture of Americans. Maya Angelou uplifts her status to a certain level so that she may not be perceived as a useless entity. These false stereotypes persist and bring social inequalities. Her resistance brings in hope for a better future. An interview of Maya Angelou published in *The Black scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research* depicts the true meaning of endurance in the following words:

Endurance is one thing. I think endurance with output, endurance with productivity is the issue. If one has the fortune, good or bad, to stay alive one endures, but to continue to write books and get them out-that's the productivity and I think that is important to link with endurance (Angelou, [1977](#)).

Her poetry mildly attacks social inequalities; however, she expresses her survival instincts much more powerfully than any other black feminist. "Of the various topics treated in her poetry, the most frequent seem to be love, black men, black women, drugs, religion, and slavery" (Lupton, [2016](#)).

Her poetry celebrates the richness of black culture. It also highlights that survival is not mere existence, it is valuable and productive. Angelou has always paid heed to the productive survival of human beings. According to Lyman B. Hagen, "Angelou's poems are dramatic and lyrical. Her style is open, direct, unambiguous, and conversational. The diction is plain but sometimes the metaphors are quite striking" (Hagen, [1997](#)).

Angelou arises from her third space by the use of her voice. It is also evident in her memoir *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969) that she gradually learned the power of language with the help of Mrs. Bertha Flowers. Poetry helped her to overcome her emotional turmoil. As a postmodern poet, she incorporates a unique picturesque manner in her poems for the purpose of delight and learning.

Angelou's poetry depicts that there is a vital need of transformation. Her pathos and joys of life are manifested when she talks about her life and the way she changed herself. Her poem *Still I Rise* reveals the courage of her spirit. Her evolution gives her an assertive tone. This assertive tone reveals the determined nature of all black women. Furthermore, this lucid poem represents the voice of all black women who are enthusiastic to rise against the oppression of white men. The assertive tone in *Still I Rise* shows her pride and conformity which brings scornful looks and bitterness on the faces of the white people who perceive her behavior as threatening.

Furthermore, Angelou celebrates her black identity through her threatening tone in the poem. Hagen (1997) illustrates that Angelou writes about "the pride of blackness and African heritage" (p.118). She indirectly sets an example for the readers to express their own troubles in an intuitive way. On the other hand, she motivates many ordinary people through her passion of survival and endurance.

In spite of the negative and positive reviews, as an African American memoirist and poet, Maya Angelou distinguishes herself by infusing her art with consistent cultural consciousness. Following in the tradition like Hughes who creates a new African American identity, a proud sense of self in his poetry, Angelou speaks out the survival, development, and actualization of African American people confronted by the Anglo-American cultural hegemony with the best of words she can summon (Du, 2014).

Hence, Angelou rids herself of artificially imposed identity. In doing so, she is able to embrace her black and female self, thus freeing the caged bird she was once.

Fortitude and Valor

Angelou's collection (1994) reveals the personal and political life of Maya Angelou. It also depicts that the transition from childhood to adulthood was marked by many problematic situations. However, Angelou survived in critical situations and amid her survival, she learnt many things. She fought all difficulties to shine through the darkest of times. The phrase, "I've got oil wells / Pumping in my living room" (Angelou, 1994) harks back to the time when horrible rebellious warfare took place for oil. Governments sold it to the aristocrats and poor class remained deprived. The tussle over oil left the poor people hopeless but Maya Angelou remained firm and bold amidst these crises. She kept writing to motivate the black community so that they could forget their sorrows and live a hopeful life.

Like most African American writers, Angelou plays the role of the maker of black culture. To some extent, she helps produce among African Americans the desire to reinterpret their own culture as well as reshape their self-identity. Angelou assures that the black writers are in positions to inform, to form and to influence. (Du, 2014)

It also represents confidence and the sense of pride the poetess has in herself. Furthermore, in *Still I Rise* (1994) she compares herself with a 'black ocean' (Angelou, 1994). She uses this image of 'Black Ocean' to reveal the reality of her personal life. She has confronted the terror and fear and has become strong enough to endure all the problems.

The rhetorical quality of the poem shows the poet's agony towards 'you'. It is like Maya Angelou in *Still I Rise* (1994) is evoking her political voice, asking white oppressors if 'you' envy her (Angelou, 1994). This rhetorical quality induces the women of every era with the challenging spirit of Maya Angelou.

In *Caged Bird* (1994), the metaphor 'caged bird' describes Maya Angelou's fragile balance of life. Geographic displacement, Bailey's intrusion and parental separation in her life illustrates the constant cycle of victories and defeats. Yet, she is not entirely defeated because the 'caged bird' can sing the lyrical rhythm of freedom. Her experiences serve to boost her fragile self to a great extent. Afro-Americans suffered

slavery and the brutal treatment of whites and as blacks they were subjugated at every level.

While writing poetry, history and sorrow has filled Maya Angelou's heart with pain. Jeffrey Kluger, editor in *Time*, appreciated the courageous spirit of Maya Angelou in her article "*Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise*" because Maya Angelou asserted that "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." Time-Why Maya Angelou Matters More Than Ever (Time, 2017). Therefore, self-confidence and self-sustainability came to Maya Angelou through the experiences of life. Joanne M. Braxton, illustrated in *A Casebook on Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* that

In the eyes of predominantly white and male culture, women, and particularly black women, speak as 'others', which is to say that, at least as far as the awareness of the dominant group is concerned, the black women speaks from a position of marginality. And yet against, all odds, she comes to self-awareness and finds herself at the center of her own experience. (Maya, 1999).

Although the author lives in a tough age for black women, she is able to endure the problems of the age by her great confidence, resistance and aspiration. From her poetic verses, the modern reader can ascertain whatever the circumstances may come, there's always a hope and a desire. The poem *Caged Bird* also shows the courageous spirit of Maya Angelou. Though she compares herself with the caged bird, she has courage and dreams. These dreams are going to serve an important purpose in the future. Her learning in the cage will assist her in later life.

African Americans in this poem are compared to be "Caged Bird", while their repressed ethnic culture is symbolized by the "clipped wings." In fact, their culture and customs are more or less wiped out because these are in conflict with the dominant culture that is imposed on them. (Du, 2014)

The poetess at the end of the poem *Caged Bird* indicates that the 'caged bird' "stands on the grave of dreams" (Angelou, 1994). The bird in the poem refers to Maya Angelou herself who has so many dreams that have died because she was never inclined towards freedom. On the

other side, all her white counterparts were able to achieve their dreams. Therefore, racial discrimination, displacement and racial prejudice made up her prison and although she opened her mouth to sing, she felt that her song remained unheard in the wide world and was heard only by those nearest her cage. The mode she utilizes is significant, that is, her voice, she sings and elaborates her expression, articulation and her enthusiasm for liberty is unique for self-growth. It would lead to success deliberately. Joanne M. Braxton illustrated in *A Casebook on Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*,

Maya Angelou offers her readers the possibility that they might experience the fullness of their own lives and be baptized into an awareness of the mystery and wonder what it means to live and breathe and love and walk this earth of terrible and terrifying beauty. Here is a road map that cries out for each reader to reinvent herself-in short, [to] become her own mother. (Maya, [1999](#)).

Her voice is the only feature that can be utilized behind bars. She is ready to do everything for her survival. She never sacrifices her creative instinct and she dares to rise from suppressed status to an elevated one. Her works are a continuous source of hope and pride for every generation.

Protest and Zest for Survival

Although Maya Angelou has gained a prominent status for her autobiographies, she is also a proficient poet. She participates in the life of readers by sharing her life with them. Her experiences enlighten each individual who comes across her poetry. She uses the metaphor of 'caged bird' for herself because she has learned to liberate herself from an imposed identity towards a free identity. In the poem *Caged Bird* (1994), she uses an assertive tone to depict her self-image, self-acceptance and self-knowledge. She keeps on struggling under the mask of metaphors to discover her real self. She hides her fragile self under the label of 'caged bird' and carries on singing to overcome emotional harm.

She combines language and a specific structure to fabricate a creative and expressive work. *Caged Bird* is a lyrical and a short poem expressing personal thoughts and feelings. The severity of the first three

lines, in succeeding a rhyming scheme, depicts the imprisonment of the innocent bird.

This poem revolves around the theme of freedom and the continuation of survival. The poetess uses functional metaphors, imagery, and paradoxes to convey these themes. These literary devices in the poem make the reader feel thriving rage and injustice. “Bars of rage” (Angelou, 1994, p. 194) is a literary device, a metaphor that depicts the captivity of innocent slaves all throughout the history. She sets a contrast with ‘free bird’ (Angelou, [1994](#)).

The term ‘caged bird’ was taken from Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem *Sympathy*, published in *Lyrics of the Hearthside* in 1899. It presents an Afro-American woman who learns to cope with the racist attitudes and realities that existed in the segregated South. Angelou believed that singing through poetry sets a person free. The way the ‘caged bird’ opens his ‘throat to sing’. Angelou ([1994](#)) shows that the zest of survival is still present among those who are separated from the majority, that is, the ‘white people’. Whites are free; they are ready to dip their wings in ‘orange sun rays’ (Angelou, [1994](#)). At the same time, the ‘caged bird’ is also preparing to confront the reality and societal forces with courage and determination. The first thing the ‘caged bird’ has to utilize is his ‘voice’, so he dares to sing to stand outside the bars.

Through the phrase ‘his wings are crippled’ (Angelou, [1994](#)) and his ‘feet are tired’ Angelou ([1994](#)) gives a glimpse of the poetess’ own life. She was controlled by her family and brother Bailey. On the other side, the white majority never acknowledged her existence because she was poor, black and a woman. The act of singing acknowledges the presence of voice. For the ‘caged bird’, the song of ‘freedom’ elaborates valuable preparation and resistance under the hardships. Women are preparing themselves to get rid of entrapment and masked metaphors.

Still I Rise (1994) affirms her status as an accomplished woman because she has learned from her experiences and is ready to celebrate the richness of her own culture. The tone of the poem is triumphant which depicts how self-assured she has become. She is ready to challenge the people who attempted to keep her down. In this poem, she uses the phrase “I rise” Angelou ([1994](#)) repeatedly. This means that she will always rise no matter what obstacle comes in her way. She

emphasizes hope and confidence that is built up in her spirit. “Like the Protestant hymn and like the blues, Angelou’s poems often introduce a major clause that is repeated throughout the remaining stanzas” (Lupton, [2016](#)).

She uses the same phrase repeatedly throughout the poem. This means that no matter what happens she will always rise. She emphasizes how much hope and self-confidence she has eventually gained. The mood of the lucid poem *Still I Rise* (1994) sets a challenging atmosphere bringing in mild protest.

The word rise appears ten times in the poem and is a constant rhyme word. The accumulation of rising sounds creates an upward movement, a worldly resurrection. Both in her poetry and in her prose Angelou was captivated by the notion of rising, an idea that is implied in the UP-word of her 2002 autobiography, *A Song Flung Up*. Her concept of rising seems to echo the Old and New Testaments, the Baptist Hymnal, the Negro spiritual, and other sources. (Lupton, [2016](#)).

The words ‘cutting’, ‘shooting’, ‘killing’, and ‘hatefulness’ have been used by Maya Angelou to speak directly to her enemies. It shows how brutal ‘you’ were in treating ‘me’ and how beautifully ‘I’ endured it (Angelou, [1994](#)).

Power of Expression, Audacity, and Black Beauty

In the early 1960s, when black women in America were treated as mere objects, they suffered brutal racial discrimination at every level. But then, rebellious black women appeared on the horizon and one of those brave women was Maya Angelou with an impregnable determination and a well-fortified soul. She proceeded as a spokesperson of the black community and her works are considered not only as representative of the black culture but also as a defense of this culture.

She appreciates her bodily features in her poetry. Her hair is kinky and pure black, as she indirectly states about her hair in her poem *Caged Bird* (Angelou, 1994). She illustrates that her hair is nappy black and people symbolize her hair with black wool. After getting free from her cage, she recognizes the worth of being black. It is a symbol of her heritage. The same happened with Beneatha in the novel *A Raisin in the*

Sun (1959) written by Lorraine Hansberry. In the novel, she feels an inferiority complex when her hair is discussed (Hansberry, [1994](#)). Through Asagi, a native Negro, she learns about her African roots and heritage. Furthermore, Asagi illustrates the fact that kinky hair represents her originality. Maya Angelou learns the same lesson and she starts loving her own self. Ama Yawson in her article “*Maya Angelou and the gift of being born a black woman*” illustrates this fact in the following words:

If you have the privilege of being born a black woman, it is my belief, that it is a part of your divine mission to liberate yourself from all external and internalized oppression and thereby liberate the world. Mother Maya Angelou and the words of other writers like her, provide the key to that liberation. (Yawson, [2017](#)).

When Lady Michelle Obama, former president Bill Clinton and Oprah Winfrey were three of the biggest names to speak at a memorial service organized for honoring the late poet, author, and civil rights activist Maya Angelou. Obama gave a very personal tribute to Angelou, who died on May 28, 2014 at the age of 86 years. Michelle Obama elaborated that her poem *Phenomenal Woman* changed the way she saw herself. Following is an important chunk of Michelle Obama’s speech:

I was struck by how she celebrated black women’s beauty like no one had ever dared before. Our curves, our stride, our strength, our grace. Her words were clever and sassy; they were powerful and sexual and boastful. And in that one singular poem, Maya Angelou spoke to the essence of black women, but she also graced us with an anthem for all women—a call for all of us to embrace our God-given beauty. (Sklar, [2014](#)).

Obama offered revealing insights about how she and other black women sometimes define their beauty in the context of the larger societal standards. Likewise, Maya Angelou’s collection of poetry is a celebration of black beauty because the readers weeps, falls and becomes elated and rejoices with Maya as she guides the reader through the journey of her life.

Maya Angelou never feels ashamed of her vital body organs as depicted by the phrase in the poem *Still I Rise*. The phrase “I’ve got

diamonds / At the meeting of my thighs?" (Angelou, [1994](#)). She celebrates her sexuality and never feels ashamed of it. She feels sexy as a counterblow act towards the hatred of the white people. She dauntlessly acknowledges the worth of her body parts and directly tries to connect with the envious misogynist men judging her body. Her audacious attitude provides a point of productive genesis for the coming generations. Ama Yawson in her article "*Maya Angelou and the gift of being born a black woman*" illustrates it as follows:

And with her words as the soundtrack to our lives, we should walk through the world with our beautiful kinky-haired heads held high while smiling with our thick lips and sashaying with our black girl hips. We can then, in the words of NtozakeShange, come out, know ourselves, know our own voices and know our infinite beauty (Yawson, [2017](#)).

The poetess has honored her body with her words. She gives up herself entirely because she wants that her poetry should serve as a source of inspiration for every black girl. Ama Yawson in her article "*Maya Angelou and the gift of being born a black woman*" illustrates it in the following words:

As we embrace our beauty, we become living and breathing monuments to the fact that there are no formulas for beauty. As we own our magnificence, we demonstrate the magnificence and equality of all human beings. Moreover, as we achieve feats heretofore unimagined, we bear witness to the fact that we all "still rise. (Yawson, [2017](#)).

Her purpose of writing is to express her own vulnerable humanity through a series of agonizing autobiographies so that others would feel empowered and motivated to come forward and express the hardships they have gone through, rather than suppressing their feelings and emotions.

Conclusion

Maya Angelou, an iconic figure, is survived through music, dance, art, endurance, and literature. The major aspect of her personality was the fact that she fearlessly acknowledged the truth and forwarded it to the world. Endurance and aspiration gradually paved the path for her future gains. The struggle was accomplished through personal

interpretations of things and political participation into public affairs. As an Afro-American woman she elevated her status by means of literature, particularly poetry. The conquest of Maya Angelou lies in her patience and determination. The selected poems successfully explore the survival strategies used by her with the help of various ingredients such as pain, music, courage, and hope utilized as armor in life. Liberty and freedom of expression come through explorations and experimentations. If her spirit was locked up in a cage, she kept her fight going because at that time freedom demanded a responsibility from her. Self-restrained approach serves the best in the worst circumstances. This is the crux of Maya Angelou's poetry and she becomes a mark of gratification, that is, "I Rise". She specifically addresses black women that they should never surrender and fight to the last. These are the experiences that illuminate one's future life.

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Article: **Evaluation of Learning Outcomes: A Case Study of Secondary Level Compulsory English Textbooks of Punjab Board**

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Evaluation of Learning Outcomes: A Study of Secondary Level Compulsory English Textbooks of Punjab Board, Pakistan

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Abstract

This study examines the learning outcomes of selected English textbooks at the cognitive level. The aim of the present study is to explore the levels of criticality in the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) published by the Punjab Board, based on which their activities and exercises are designed. Learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) were analyzed following the Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM). Post-use evaluation of the learning outcome of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) has not been carried out yet. To fill this gap, selected English textbooks were evaluated in terms of their critical thinking skills based learning outcomes. The evaluated textbooks were selected through stratified sampling. A mixed-method approach including both qualitative and quantitative data analysis was used to make the findings more reliable and valid. Exploratory research design was adopted to explore the levels of criticality in compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). The totality of results showed that the ‘implementation’ level of CTEM was the most frequent among learning outcomes. The second most frequent level of criticality was ‘background knowledge’ and the third most frequent was ‘apprehension’. ‘Anatomization’ and ‘creativity’ levels of criticality appeared less frequently among the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks, while the ‘conceptualization’ level of CTEM was the least frequent. It was found that the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) were not designed to enhance critical evaluation and self-directed learning. The results are beneficial for textbook designers, textbook evaluators, examiners, paper setters, teachers, students, and teacher trainers. This study contributes to the development of the English language teaching system in public schools.

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Keywords: CTEM (Critical Thinking Evaluation Model), English textbooks, learning outcomes

Introduction

Textbooks are crucial for any sort of learning including language learning. Skowronski and Hinchman (2002) stated that textbooks are a major component in any kind of language program. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) said that the relevant textbooks are crucial for teaching and learning. Therefore, the learning outcomes of textbooks should be designed according to the needs of the students. Tomlinson (2011) stated that textbooks comprise an input for the learners through which they can practice. Textbooks play an important role in the teaching and learning process (Cunningsworth, 1995; Haycraft, 1998; Sheldon, 1988). Tyson (1997) stated that for inexperienced teachers and teachers who have no time to prepare lesson plans textbooks are a crucial tool; therefore, for prescribing a useful textbook evaluation is necessary. Learning outcomes provide a clear picture of the success of a particular course or program (Mahajan & Singh, 2017, p.66). Keeping in view the above mentioned points, this study strives to determine the levels of Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) based on which the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) have been designed. English textbooks taught from Grade 6 to Grade 10 were selected for analysis because these are the transitory levels of education whereby children move towards complex learning.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to explore the levels of criticality in the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). It has the following three objectives:

- a. To identify the levels of criticality in the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10).
- b. To explore the frequency distribution of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10).
- c. To highlight the most and least frequently used elements of 'CTEM' in compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10).

Statement of the Problem

Rea-Dickens and Germaine (1992) stated that evaluation is a process that highlights the appropriateness of the evaluated object. Effective learning is achieved with continuously developing textbooks and it needs continuous research. Many researches have been conducted to evaluate the textbooks' activities, exercises, questions, and learning objectives (Parsaei et al., 2017, Riazi & Mosalanejad 2010, Naseer et al., 2020, Mahmood et al., 2020., Fayyaz, 2019). Post-use evaluation of the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) has not been carried out yet in Pakistan. To fill this gap, the current research was conducted to highlight the levels of criticality (background knowledge, apprehension, conceptualization, implementation, anatomization, critical evaluation, creativity and self-directed learning) in the post-use learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). This study is useful for curriculum designers to set the learning outcomes of these textbooks appropriately and according to the needs of the rapidly developing era.

Significance of the Study

The present study will help syllabus designers to prepare more effective English textbooks in terms of their critical thinking skills based learning outcomes and the activities and exercises based on these outcomes. This research can also contribute in creating a balance between LOTS and HOTS-based learning outcomes of English textbooks.

Research Questions

1. *What is the frequency distribution of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10)?*
 - a. What is the frequency of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in Grade 6 English textbook?
 - b. What is the frequency of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in Grade 7 English textbook?
 - c. What is the frequency of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in Grade 8 English textbook?
 - d. What is the frequency of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in Grade 9 English textbook?

- e. What is the frequency of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes in Grade 10 English textbook?
2. *What are the elements of Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) used in determining the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10)?*
3. *To what extent the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) are based on CTEM?*

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

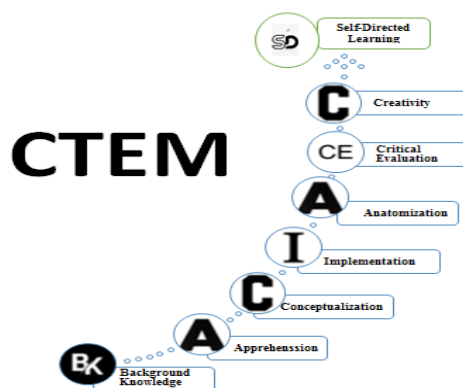
Criticality based learning outcomes of a syllabus are crucial in enabling the learners to make appropriate decisions, to solve real-life problems, to implement educational theories in real-life situations, and to promote the society. Fayyaz (2019, p 6-19) proposed a model namely the Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) for the evaluation of exercises, activities, learning outcomes, questions, and statements in textbooks for the development of curriculum, critical thinking skills based lesson plans, and so on. This model consists of the following eight levels of critical thinking skills:

- 1) Background Knowledge
- 2) Apprehension
- 3) Conceptualization
- 4) Implementation
- 5) Anatomization
- 6) Critical Evaluation
- 7) Creativity
- 8) Self-directed Learning / Independent Learning

This model is useful to identify the levels of critical thinking skills in learning outcomes, questions, activities, exercises, objectives of lesson plans, objectives and activities of course outlines, and so on. A modified vocabulary list of CTEM is helpful to highlight the elements of critical thinking skills for post-use, in-use and pre-use evaluation of textbooks. Visual representation of CTEM is given below.

Figure 1

CTEM (Critical Thinking Evaluation Model)



CTEM is a developed model based on which critical thinking skills based learning outcomes, activities, exercises, questions, and statements in textbooks can be designed.

Historical Background

The analysis of the learning objectives of ESP books designed for the students of dentistry, pharmacology, and medicine taught in IUMS using Bloom’s taxonomy showed that there is no balance between the application of critical thinking skills (Parsaei et al., [2017](#)). Riazi and Mosalanejad ([2010](#)) examined the learning objectives of three high school textbooks and one pre-university textbook by developing a coding scheme on the basis of Bloom’s taxonomy. The results indicated that in all grades lower-order critical thinking skills were more prevalent as compared to the higher-order critical thinking skills.

Olimat ([2015](#)) evaluated the questions in Action Pack English textbook of the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th grade using Bloom’s revised taxonomy. The results indicated that the level ‘background knowledge’ was found with a higher frequency in these textbooks. Application and synthesis level questions in the 10th grade English textbook were found to have a higher frequency than 7th, 8th and 9th grade textbooks.

Activities, exercises, questions, and leaning outcomes of a textbook play a crucial role in teaching and learning cognitive and critical thinking skills. Nakkam and Khamoja ([2020](#)) selected two Moroccan

ELT textbooks (Ticket to English 2 and Gateway to English 2) to analyze their reading comprehension questions using a checklist based on Bloom's taxonomy. The results indicated that 77% of the total questions in 'Ticket to English 2' were designed to assess the students' lower-order critical thinking skills and only 23% questions were designed to assess their higher-order critical thinking skills. Similarly, 84.12% of the total questions in 'Gateway to English 2' were based on the lower-order critical thinking skills and only 14.78% questions were designed to evaluate the higher-order critical thinking skills of students.

Naseer et al. (2020) evaluated the textbook of Pakistan Studies (produced by Punjab Textbook Board for Grade 9) using a checklist based on Bloom's revised taxonomy to check the text-based questions and tasks requiring critical thinking skills. Text-based questions were also analyzed by categorizing them according to the Socratic taxonomy. The results indicated that the textbook of Pakistan Studies was not conducive towards enhancing the critical thinking skills and merely one question required the use of higher-order critical thinking skills.

Mahmood et al. (2020) used Bloom's taxonomy to evaluate the exercises of 'Book I (English) of Federal Textbook Board and KPK Textbook Board' of matriculation. The results showed that the cognitive domain was not followed uniformly in the selected textbook. The findings also indicated that some of the questions were not according to the content of unit, although the sublevels of the cognitive domain were incorporated in 'Book I (English) of Federal Textbook Board and KPK Textbook Board'. However, they were not incorporated in a systematic way.

Fayyaz (2019) evaluated the exercises and activities of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) using CTEM to check the various levels (background knowledge, apprehension, conceptualization, application, anatomization, critical evaluation, creativity and self-directed learning / independent learning) of critical thinking skills. The findings revealed that the exercises and activities of these textbooks were not designed to create a balance between the use of lower-order and higher-order critical thinking skills. Self-directed learning / independent learning level was totally missing in the exercises and activities of the selected textbooks.

Textbooks are the main source of learning and teaching different skills, therefore, they should be designed keeping in view the learners' needs. Badawy et al. (2016) conducted a study to evaluate the levels of criticality in a higher education textbook. The researchers used the chapter wise objectives of the selected textbook as sample. They analyzed the objectives of the selected textbook by following the list of verbs set by the Quality Management of the Institute of Statistical Studies and Research (ISSR), Cairo University, Egypt. The findings of their study indicated that the learning objectives made with synonymous verbs occurred more frequently than the objectives with actual verbs.

The evolution of textbooks has become crucial for effective teaching and learning. Fatima et al. (2015) evaluated 'Step Ahead 2' and 'Step Ahead 3' textbooks used for Grade 7 and Grade 8 respectively in the Pakistani schools. A checklist based on McGrath's 2002 methodology was used to make the results more effective. The evaluation of selected textbooks was based on the level of authenticity, types of activities, variety of topics, the relationship of topic with the learner's interest, the material used to improve the learner's language, grammar, vocabulary, types of activities, and tasks. The results showed that four basic skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing) were not equally emphasized in the above textbooks. Cultural aspects were also not matched with the target culture. However, the occurrence of topics, themes, and tasks related to real-life situations were satisfactory in the given textbooks.

Textbook is an important medium of teaching and learning, so it must be valid and reliable in terms of its contents, themes, tasks, activities, and exercises. Rahmawati (2018) evaluated the textbook 'Primary English of a Second Language' using a checklist consisting of the features of a good English textbook. The above textbook was analyzed for its objectives, aims, teaching and learning procedures, activities, exercises, and lexical choices. The results revealed that the objectives of the selected English textbook matched the criteria of a good English textbook, while the exercises in the given textbook did not match the criteria of a good English textbook because group or pair work exercises were absent. Vocabulary or lexical aspects (no new vocabulary) were also different from the criteria of a good English textbook.

Research Method and Methodology

Method and Research Design

A mixed-method approach of data analysis was used. Qualitative data analysis was used to highlight the features or elements of CTEM while evaluating the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). Quantitative data analysis was used to find out the frequency of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes of the selected textbooks. Textual analysis was conducted to investigate whether the learning outcomes of selected English textbooks were designed to enhance the critical thinking skills of students or not.

Population and Sampling

Stratified sampling technique was adopted to analyze the learning outcomes of the compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) included in the sample for data analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

The process of data collection comprised the following steps:

- a) Collection of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) published by the Punjab Textbook Board.
- b) Conversion of the PDF files of compulsory English textbooks into MS Word files using an online converter.
- c) Clarification of all points of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) except the learning outcomes.
- d) Conversion of the MS Word files including the learning outcomes into text files to assess the frequency of criticality based learning outcomes through Antconc.

Instrumentation

Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) having eight levels including background knowledge, apprehension, conceptualization, implementation, anatomization, critical evaluation, creativity, and self-directed learning (see Appendix) was used to evaluate the post-use learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). Antconc 3.2.4W was used to find out the frequency of cognitive skills based learning outcomes. MS Excel was used to show the results through graphs and tables.

Data Analysis

Learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) were analyzed using CTEM. The results illustrate the frequency distribution of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes of these textbooks. It was found that the elements of CTEM were used to design their learning outcomes.

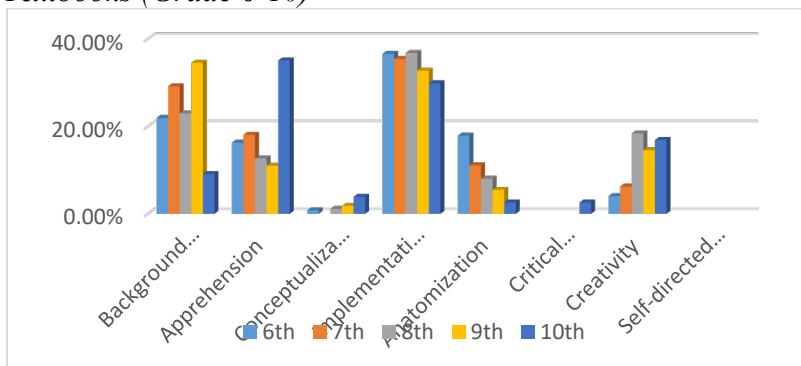
Frequency Distribution of Criticality Based Learning Outcomes

Critical thinking skills based learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) were examined and it was found that the frequency of the different levels of critical thinking skills varied for each textbook. The figure below presents the percentage of the different levels of cognitive skills used in these textbooks.

Grade 6 English textbook entailed a total of 123 learning outcomes. Of the total learning outcomes, 36.58% were at the ‘implementation’ level of criticality. This level appeared with the highest frequency. Learning outcomes at the level of ‘background knowledge’ were 21.95% of the total, their percentage was 17.88% at the ‘anatomization’ level, 16.26% at the ‘apprehension’ level, 4.06% at the ‘creativity’ level, and only 0.81% learning outcomes were designed to enhance the conceptual ability of the learners of 6th grade. Two levels of critical thinking, that is, ‘critical evaluation’ and ‘independent learning or self-directed learning’ were totally missing in the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbook of Grade 6.

Figure 2

Presentation of Criticality Based Levels in Compulsory English Textbooks (Grade 6-10)



Of the total learning outcomes of Grade 7 compulsory English textbook, 35.41% were at the ‘implementation’ level of CTEM, 29.16% were at the level of ‘background knowledge’, 18.05% were at the ‘apprehension’ level, 11.11% were at the ‘anatomization’ level and learning outcomes aimed to develop the creative ability of learners were only 6.25%. The ‘implementation’ level was the most frequent while the ‘creativity’ level was the least frequent. ‘Critical evaluation’ and ‘independent learning or self-directed learning’ levels were absent in the learning outcomes of Grade 7 English textbook.

Of the total learning outcomes of Grade 8 compulsory English textbook, 36.78% were at the ‘implementation’ level, 22.98% were at the level of ‘background knowledge’ and only 18.39% were intended to enhance the creative ability of learners. Moreover, 12.64% were at the ‘apprehension’ level, 8.04% were at the ‘anatomization’ level and only 1.14% of the total learning outcomes were about the concepts of the topics. ‘Critical evaluation’ and ‘independent learning’ or ‘self-directed learning’ levels were absent in the learning outcomes of Grade 8 English textbook. The ‘implementation’ level was the most frequent and the ‘conceptualization’ level was the least frequent level in the learning outcomes of the above textbook.

Among the total learning outcomes of Grade 9 compulsory English textbook, the most frequent level was ‘background knowledge’ with 34.54% of learning outcomes and the least frequent level was ‘conceptualization’ with only 1.81% of the total learning outcomes. Learning outcomes at the ‘implementation’ level were 32.72%, while 14.54% were at the ‘creativity’ level, 10.99% were at the ‘apprehension’ level, and 5.45% were at the ‘analysis’ level. The analysis of Grade 9 compulsory English textbook yielded different results from 6th, 7th, and 8th grade English textbooks.

The analysis of Grade 10 compulsory English textbook showed that learning outcomes at the ‘apprehension’ level appeared with the highest percentage of 35.06%, as compared to the other levels of CTEM. Learning outcomes at the ‘implementation’ level of critical thinking skills were 29.87%, while 16.88% were at the ‘creativity’ level, 9.09% were at the ‘background knowledge’ level and 3.89% were at the ‘conceptualization’ level. Moreover, learning outcomes at each one of

the ‘anatomization’ and ‘critical evaluation’ levels were also 3.89%, while ‘independent learning’ or ‘self-directed learning’ levels were completely absent in the learning outcomes of 10th grade compulsory English textbook. The results showed that the most frequent level was ‘apprehension’ and the least frequent levels were ‘anatomization’ and ‘conceptualization’.

The results showed that the ‘implementation’ level of CTEM was dominant in the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). The second most prominent level was ‘background knowledge’ and the third most prominent level was ‘apprehension’. The level ‘creativity’ appeared less frequently in the learning outcomes of all textbooks as compared to the above levels, while the levels ‘anatomization’ and ‘conceptualization’ were the least prominent levels. The level ‘critical evaluation’ was present only in the 10th grade English textbook with the minimum frequency. ‘Independent learning’ or ‘self-directed learning’ levels were totally missing from the learning outcomes of the selected textbooks.

Elements of Criticality Used in Compulsory English Textbooks (Grade 6-10)

The elements used to enhance or check the ability to put theory into practice were mostly used in compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10). Elements of ‘background knowledge’ level were used with the second highest frequency in the learning outcomes of these textbooks. The analysis of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade compulsory English textbooks presented almost similar results. On the other hand, 9th and 10th grade compulsory English textbooks manifested the same pattern in terms of criticality. The results indicated that different elements or action verbs of CTEM were used in the various textbooks. The table below presents the list of elements used in these textbooks.

The table shows that the selected textbooks varied significantly from each other in terms of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes. Grade 7 compulsory English textbook had the minimum number of the elements of criticality in its learning outcomes, while Grade 6 compulsory English textbook had more learning outcomes with criticality based elements as compared to any other compulsory English textbook. Some of the elements were found to be similar in various

textbooks such as ‘recognize, identity, write, answer, illustrate, differentiate, make, analyze, demonstrate, and answer’. Moreover, 24 elements of criticality were used in the Grade 6 compulsory English textbook, 16 elements of criticality were used in the Grade 7 compulsory English textbook, 21 elements of criticality were used in the Grade 8 compulsory English textbook, 18 elements of criticality were used in the Grade 9 compulsory English textbook, and 23 elements of criticality were used in the Grade 10 compulsory English textbook.

Table 1

List of elements used in various compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10)

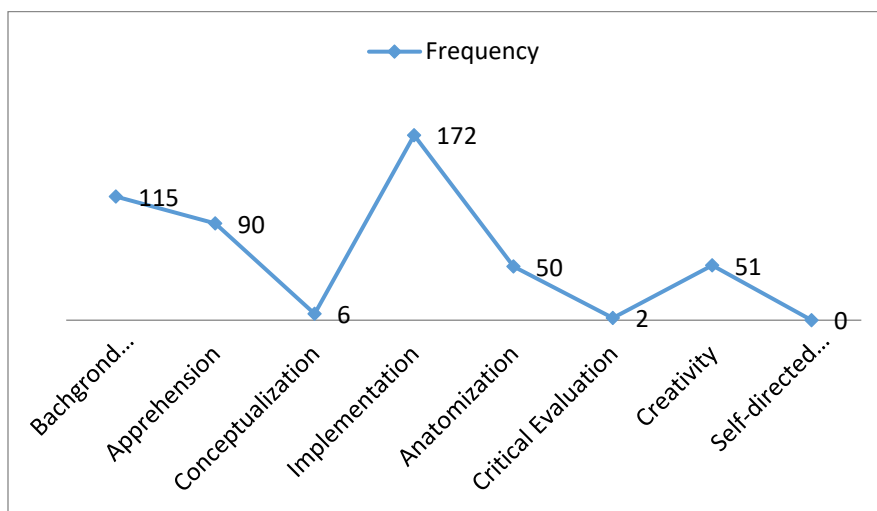
6	7	8	9	10
Recognize	Recognize	Recognize	Recognize	Recognize
Identify	Identify	Identify	Identify	Identify
Show	Write	Recite	Describe	State
Write	Answer	Describe	Read	Fill
Answer	Illustrate	read	Paraphrase	Illustrate
Illustrate	Express	Retell	Demonstrate	Summarize
Express	Summarize	Express	Respond	Explain
Summarize	Demonstrate	Choose	Interpret	Paraphrase
Compare	Discuss	Demonstrate	Relate	Demonstrate
Demonstrate	Locate	Respond	Develop	Determine
Distinguish	Apply	Deduce	Utilize	Locate
Locate	Find	Develop	Practice	Deduce
Interpret	Use	Utilize	Use	Change
Relate	Support	Change	Analyze	Practice
Apply	Analyze	Use	Organize	Use
Develop	Plan	Transfer	Plan	Produce
Use	Develop	Analyze	Construct	Support
Support		Infer	Organize	Analyze
Analyze		Propose	Write	Differentiate
Classify		Differentiate	Evaluate	
Examine		Make		Support
Differentiate	Write		Make	
Plan				Synthesize
Make				Write
Write				

Representation of CTEM in the Learning Outcomes of Compulsory English Textbooks (Grade 6-10)

The overall analysis of the selected textbooks highlighted the ‘implementation’ level of CTEM as the most frequent in their learning outcomes. The ‘background knowledge’ level was ranked as the second most frequent level and the third most frequent level was ‘apprehension’. ‘Anatomization’ and ‘creativity’ levels of CTEM were found to be less frequent as compared to the above levels. The least frequent levels of CTEM were ‘conceptualization’ and ‘critical evaluation’ in all textbooks. The figure below shows the total results of the critical thinking skills based learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10).

Figure 3

Representation of CTEM levels in compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10)



Total results depicting the distribution of the levels of critical thinking skills in the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) showed that the ‘implementation’ level of CTEM was the most frequent with 172 learning outcomes. The level ‘background knowledge’ appeared with a frequency of 115 learning outcomes, while the ‘apprehension’ level appeared 90 times in the learning outcomes of the selected textbooks. The frequency of learning

outcomes at the ‘creativity’ level was 51 and their frequency at the ‘anatomization’ level was 50, respectively. The ‘conceptualization’ level appeared with a frequency of 6 learning outcomes and the level ‘critical evaluation’ appeared only in the Grade 10 compulsory English textbook.

Discussion

Richards (2014) stated that post-use evaluation provides information which helps to decide whether the evaluated object or book is useful or not. Based on the evaluation, some changes are made in the evaluated object or book because curriculum, syllabus, and textbooks need to be revised and updated in order to fulfill the requirements of the rapidly developing science, technology, and trends across the world. These changes result not only in the revision of the contents of the textbooks but also of their presentation (Mahmood, 2009, p.158). The present study examined the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) to highlight the levels of criticality in them because the process of teaching and learning relies heavily on these outcomes. Tikhonova and Kudinova (2015) stated that sophisticated thinking is a balance between well-developed lower-order and higher-order thinking skills. However, the findings of the current study showed that the ‘implementation’ level of cognitive skills was most prominent in the learning outcomes of the selected textbooks, which shows that lower-order thinking skills based learning outcomes were the focus of syllabus designers. Fayyaz (2019) introduced eight levels of critical thinking skills within the Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) for the step by step development of the cognitive skills of learners through textbooks. Syllabus designers must focus to set the learning outcomes by following the features of each level of critical thinking skills. However, this research found that the ‘self-directed learning’ level of CTEM was totally missing from the learning outcomes of compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10).

Conclusion

The findings of the given research showed that the compulsory English textbooks (Grade 6-10) need to be improved with respect to criticality-based learning outcomes in order to enhance the critical thinking skills of the learners. It was found that different compulsory

English textbooks encompassed different levels of criticality-based skills. Moreover, it was also found that the selected textbooks were not designed for the most part to promote higher-order critical thinking skills. Based on the above findings, it is concluded here that syllabus designers must be trained to set higher-order critical thinking skills based learning outcomes for designing English textbooks in order to promote higher-order critical thinking skills of the learners through these textbooks.

Recommendations

For the development of textbooks and to facilitate the process of teaching, learning, and assessment, post-use evaluation of the learning outcomes of course outlines, lesson plans, textbooks, and examination questions should be carried out to explore the levels of criticality. CTEM is useful for the pre-use, in-use and post-use evaluation of textbooks, syllabus, curriculum, examination papers, and other teaching and learning tasks in order to evaluate their criticality.

Implications of the Study

The current study is useful for syllabus designers to develop the selected textbooks further for teaching and learning criticality through them.

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Appendix

Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) was introduced in the thesis of Master of Philosophy in Linguistics titled “Evaluation of Exercises and Activities of English Textbooks at Secondary Level”. The thesis was written in Riphah International University Faisalabad. This model is used to evaluate the exercises, learning outcomes, and activities of textbooks. A description of Critical Thinking Evaluation Model (CTEM) including the description and imperative verbs of each one of its levels is given below.

Level 1: Background Knowledge

Gaining information about a particular object is the fundamental level of critical thinking skills based learning outcomes. This level of critical thinking skills involves command, grip, education, proficiency, schooling, skill, accomplishment, enlightenment, and philosophy regarding a topic. Command on this level is crucial to move to the next level. Following is a list of imperative verbs to set and evaluate exercises, activities, objectives, questions, lesson plans, course outlines, and examination papers.

define	identify	recall	describe	order	outline
read	list	list the name	recite	show	reproduce
point	answer	recognize	memorize	underline	state
cite	write	circle	label	remember	record
repeat	match	quote			

Level 2: Apprehension

Apprehension is the next level and it aims to acquire information or knowledge about a particular subject. This level requires understanding, perception, realization, cognition, and discernment about the subject area and its nature. Imperative verbs used to assess the apprehension skills of students are as follows.

Reorder	express	explain	compare	demonstrate	indicate
Tell	convert	illustrate	summarize	paraphrase	rephrase
discuss	locate	review	defend	translate	contrast
extend	estimate	distinguish	report	interpret	retell

restate generalize choose determine respond select

Level 3: Conceptualization

Under this level of critical thinking skills, learners invent new ideas using their command over background knowledge and apprehension (the two previous levels). Concepts are vital to recreate, assemble, and rethink about something. Verbs which present the conceptual ability of students are listed below.

recreate reason provoke represent think resolve
over
assemble precaution consider relate gather passionate
deduce compare

Level 4: Implementation

At this level of critical thinking skills, students become capable of applying knowledge, apprehension and concepts to sort out real-life problems and make their daily life activities more effective. At this level, students are able to use educational approaches, principles, theories, and procedures to deal with daily life activities and exercises. 'Implementation' level is evaluated using the following list of verbs.

apply divide Change find use solve
generalize develop act out select complete utilize
calculate schedule Rewrite add practice manipulate
show sketch Support transfer verify prove
operate employ

Level 5: Anatomization

Knowledge, understanding, concept and implementation enable students to examine, analyze, break down, interpret, integrate, and draw conclusions about a subject. Verbs which show the ability of anatomization are enlisted below.

analyze breakdown categorize classify conclude deduce
discriminate diagram distinguish examine infer inspect
investigate order survey modify compose verify
hypothesize separate propose act out formulate value

blend unite relate connect differentiate plan
 generalize organize subdivide initiate detect

Level 6: Critical Evaluation

Critical evaluation is helpful to judge, decide, argue, assess, and criticize by following a specific criterion. Following are the codes or verbs used to evaluate the ‘critical evaluation’ level of critical thinking skills.

appraise debate judge choose standardize measure
 prioritize support attach contrast test select
 rate criticize

Level 7: Creativity

Creativity enables students to create, originate, and integrate something new by utilizing background knowledge, apprehension, conceptualization, implementation, anatomization, and critical evaluation of the subject. Verbs which are useful to examine the creativity in a statement are listed below.

create construct manage reorganize systematize plan
 combine collect compose invent arrange design
 originate develop synthesize make relate device
 formulate organize modify predict reconstruct propose
 rearrange

Level 8: Independent Learning / Self-directed Learning

By mastering all the above levels students become self-directed learners. At this stage, students inquire about the particular subject on their own. ‘Independent learning’ or ‘self-directed learning’ is analyzed using the following verbs.

analyze transfer self- monitor self- take self-assess
 knowledge regulate responsibility
 Reflect predict set goals research generalize formulate
 performance knowledge
 Inquire frame develop a identify create a plan construct
 questions learning plan needs knowledge
 describe
 how to



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Exocentric Compounds in English and Punjabi: A Morpho-Semantic Analysis of NN Formations

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Abstract

The paper provides new insight into the analysis of exocentric compounds in English and Punjabi by introducing a new step-by-step mechanism devised with the help of cognitive and cultural linguistics. The main purpose of the study is to show that exocentric compounds are very productive in the Indo-European languages. The current study claims that every exocentric compound is metaphoric in nature. Every constituent in an exocentric compound carries several interpretations based on specific metonymic relations and cultural knowledge. The meaning of one constituent aids and activates the interpretation of another constituent. In this paper¹, only four examples of NN compounds are discussed in detail. Although the study is not a comparative analysis in actual sense, however, the formations of such compounds in English are also analyzed to show the applicability of the mechanism in other languages as well. The results revealed that the above mechanism is equally applicable in both the languages and supports the metaphoric interpretation in exocentric compounds. The study also nullifies the claims about the non-productivity and unpredictability of the exocentric compounds.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, exocentric compounds, English, Punjabi

Introduction

Compounding, a word formation device, is found in all the world languages. It is a process where two words are combined together to form new words. It not only helps in increasing the lexicons of a language, but also provides new lexical devices that help in expressing

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¹The paper is a part of Jamshaid's PhD dissertation.

the novel ideas. Compounding is a comparatively free process that involves a large set of open-class lexical items enriched with specific meanings. The indivisibility and specific sequential order of the constituents is the main strength of compounds. Although it is a very productive phenomenon in the languages of the world, there is a big difference in the syntactic and semantic formations due to the cultural and language differences. Primarily because of the difference in languages and cultures there are various definitions and classifications of compounds. Although it is noted that it is not easy to have a perfect definition of compounds (Montermini, [2010](#)). The question about the number of constituents in a compound has interested many linguists. Compounds are formed with two words (Selkirk, 1982). Nevertheless, existing definitions note that compound is a word formed with the combination of two or more words (Fabb, [1998](#)).

Like the differences in the definitional properties of compounds, there is no satisfactory classification of compounds as well. Due to language differences and the scholar's view point, they are classified into various categories and subcategories. Bloomfield ([1933](#)) consequently resolved this issue by classifying compounds into endocentric and exocentric. His distinction is based on presence and absence of head. The compounds that are the hyponyms of their heads are endocentric (e.g., *blackbird* and *door-knob*) and the compounds that do not have a semantic head are exocentric (e.g., *gadabout* and *turnkey*).

In the main linguistic research field, the endocentric compounds always received a special attention. The scholars (Bloomfield, [1933](#); Downing, [1977](#); Lees, [1968](#)) pay special focus on endocentric compounds. On the other hand, the exocentric compounds always remained a marginalized category due to their unpredictable meaning and non-headed structure. These compounds pose a real challenge for the researchers due to their unpredictable and idiosyncratic meaning. Another reason for ignoring these formations is the so-called myth that these compounds lack productivity patterns in the languages of the world. Bauer ([2008](#)) captures the lack of productivity of exocentric compounds in English and other languages of the world. He opines that in very few languages these compounds are productive and hence the most frequent types. This is the reason that there are very few initial theoretical and typological studies of exocentric compounds.

Contrary to the claims made above, New Indo-Aryan languages especially Punjabi-a New Indo-Aryan language, on the basis of collected data, exhibits the productivity of the compounds. Unfortunately, the Indo-Aryan languages could not get the attention of the researchers. In Punjabi the only available work is that of Akhtar (1992). He classifies compounds in more than 25 structural patterns and is noted for his ingenious efforts and devotion towards Punjabi compounds in general. All types of compounds such as endocentric, exocentric, copulative, reduplicative etc. are included in the work. The study talks about the structural patterns, but no focus is paid towards the metaphoric interpretation of the compounds. Keeping in view the scenario, the present researcher, therefore, thought it befitting to endeavor to study the phenomenon in question.

The point for the discussion is whether the exocentric compounds are less productive and their meaning is unpredictable? This is the major question the study is interested to answer. Furthermore, the study is interested to show that every exocentric compound has a metaphoric meaning, based on some metonymic relations and cultural knowledge. In every exocentric compound, every constituent has several hidden interpretations and one of those becomes activated with the meaning of the second constituent added to it. This feature of these formations, gives birth to another question that how the compound arrives from a literal meaning at a metaphoric interpretation? Is there some specific mechanism working behind the metaphoric interpretation? If yes, then what is that? These are the questions that provide the basis for this research.

Purpose of the Study

In light of the above scenario, the main focus of the research is to look into the process of exocentric compound formation in Punjabi. The study aims to shed some light on the role played by the metonymic relations based on some cultural knowledge obtained through metonymic relations in arriving at the metaphoric meaning. The study presents a new theoretical framework,–helpful in bridging the gap of lexical meaning and their metaphorical extension. It is hoped that the theoretical framework would not only be helpful in arriving at the metaphoric meaning in exocentric compounds, but also be helpful in providing valuable information in coining new exocentric compounds,

compiling dictionaries, developing electronic lexical databases for machine translation, lexical processing and information retrieval.

As discussed above, English has received a lot of research attention, while the NIA languages are the neglected ones. The study with the help of data in Punjabi wants to disprove these claims (Bauer, [2008](#)). Although the study gives no comparison in the features of exocentric compounds in Punjabi and English, it however looks at the extent; the mechanism is applicable in the two languages?

The study claims that every exocentric compound has metaphoric interpretation based on some metonymic relations and cultural knowledge, so it is important to have a brief look at these topics.

Language and Culture

Language and culture are inextricably knitted together. The cultural models and values are the main source of linguistic activities. All the linguistic and discourse events used by the speech community are surrounded by culture. In the linguistic structure, the pervasive and significant reflection of culture is obviously reflected (Langacker, [1999](#)). According to Langacker ([2002](#)), the usage of any linguistic event is in fact the reflection of contextual understanding. The user is well aware of the event's interactive forces along with the social interaction embedded in a culture (P. 14). Lakoff ([1989](#)) states that all the experimental domain's structurally complexed categories are culture-specific and based on the personal or group experiences, which are actually part of an individual or group cognition. Therefore, it is better to talk something on cognition and language.

Cognition and Language

Taylor ([2002](#)) states that around the late 1970's after receiving inputs from various disciplines, cognitive linguistics emerged as a linguistic theory. This approach is interested in language and how the language knowledge is acquired. It also aims at finding out ~~that~~ how the natural languages contribute to our worldly knowledge (Taylor, [2002](#)). Cognition means the identification of meaning and its conceptualization. For the adequate understanding of natural languages, cognitive linguistics proves to be the best approach (Langacker, [2000b](#)).

All the emotive experiences, all types of mental experiences, novel and established conceptions along with immediate sensory and emotive experiences fall under the umbrella of conceptualization. The linguistic meaning is a mental activity embedded in the socio-culturally grounded human-minds (Langacker, [2002](#); p. 26). According to cognitive linguistics, conceptualization exhibits structure and organization, which can be justified by the means of wide applicability to diverse sets of data, grounding in well-established cognitive phenomena, predictions concerning distribution and well-informed motivation from cross-linguistic distribution and intuitive naturalness (*ibid.*). The native speakers of every language use various metaphors/metonymies in their daily conversation to arrive at the meaning of newly coined words. The next section is a brief description of these.

Metaphor

Lakoff & Johnson ([1980](#)) state, ‘in cognitive linguistics, the devices that allow us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another are known as metaphors’ (p. 117). There is a unidirectional relation between the domains, as one domain is conceived in terms of another (Lakoff, [1993](#)). In metaphors, two distinct concepts are brought into view by mapping one upon another. There are two types of domains in metaphors; source and target. The source is more concrete and the target is more abstract (Lakoff, [1993](#); Kövecses, [2000](#)). The main purpose of mapping is a better understanding of the abstract concept in the concrete (Lakoff & Johnson, [1980](#); Lakoff, [1993](#); Kövecses, [2000](#)).

Metonymy

In metonymy, there is a single conceptual domain and the mapping occurs in the same domain not across the domain (Lakoff & Turner, [1989](#), Kövecses, [2000](#)). Metonymy provides an access to a conceptual domain through a part of the same domain (or vice versa) or to a part of a conceptual domain through another part within the same domain (Kövecses, [2000](#)). Metonymy is a ‘stand-for’ relation (i.e., a part stands for the whole or a part stands for another part) within a single domain (Kövecses, [2000](#)).

Metonymies are an important tool to enrich languages. They enable people to know about the world around them. There are different ways in which people think about their daily life. It is a process through which

one thing is conceptualized by means of its relation or some association to something other. These are very helpful in structuring our thoughts, feelings, desires and emotions. While using a language, various abstract concepts; thoughts, attitudes, and actions are understood with the help of this device. As far as the conceptualization of the entity is concerned it can be realized via some semantic relations such as part for whole, whole for part, place for institution, contain for container, agent for activity, object for activity, instrument for activity etc. All these metonymies are based on the cultural conceptualizations as well as the shared and personal experiences of the speech community.

In an exocentric compound this culturally shared metonymic knowledge plays a key role. These formations are always culturally based and the experience based of the speech community. Every speech community has some universal and some specific conceptualizations, for example *heart* as a container full of all sorts of feelings is a universally conceptualized metonymy and leg as an object to perform the activity of rejecting something is culture specific.

In the meaning making process metonymy plays an extensive role. The body parts for example can better explain. Some body parts change their meaning from their conventional understanding towards an action or a function. This all happens due to the underlying shift from a concrete to an abstract concept. Although the body parts are the concrete objects, they help to move towards an abstract concept, due to the typical functions associated with them.

English and Punjabi have exocentric compounds. The data in English is very limited, whereas as per the data collected in Punjabi exhibits the productivity of exocentric compounds. The compounds in these languages have their unique formations as presented in the next section.

English Exocentric Compounds

Bauer (1983) in his earlier work noted that in English, the exocentric compounds are found in a very small number. However, these exocentric compounds are of the *bahuvrihi* types (someone has X attribute, where X is a compound) like *red skin*, *bull head* and *kill joy* etc. The compounds are known as exocentric, where the semantic head is not expressed. These are also sometimes named as *bahuvrihi*

compounds (p. 30). The term *bahuvrihi* is derived from Sanskrit where it means *bahu* means ‘much’ and *rihi* means ‘rice’. Thus, the term *bahuvrihi* means ‘having much rice’. Panini first time used the term *bahuvrihi* for exocentric compounds (Bauer, 2008). In English, compounds are formed without any case markers. Different parts of speech (N, Adj and V) are conjoined to form compound.

Punjabi Exocentric Compounds

The process of compound formation in English—is referred for understanding the complex phenomenon of Punjabi compounds. In Punjabi, the exocentric compounds are very productive as compared to Indo-Germanic languages. Some copulative compounds also carry the metaphoric meaning, for e.g., *sijjā:-o- səfeɪɖ/siah-o-safeed* ‘black and white’. If the compound is taken as colours then it is copulative, but in the metaphoric sense it may be used as ‘owner of everything’. These types of compounds are not very productive. As the main focus of the present study is exocentric compounds, so no attention is paid towards the other types. Various other morphological formations of Exocentric Compounds are discussed below:

Punjabi exocentric compounds do not contain infix that expresses any grammatical function. The compounds are formed with the combination of lexical items from different semantic fields such as body parts, animals, birds, colours etc. The NV formations, *həʔh kərna hatth kerna* ‘to deceive’, formed with body parts as one of the constituents, are the most productive, but there are also examples of NN *giddəɾ mehmani/giddar mehmani* ‘useless effort’, AN *gənda pani/ganddapani* ‘wine’, AA *ləmma tʃoɾa/lammachoraa* ‘unlimited’, VV *həNsɳa kʰædɳa/hasnaakhednaa* ‘to be happy’, PP *əndəɾ baar/andarbaar* ‘everywhere’, VN *ɔddi xəbər/uddikhabar* ‘rumor’ and Num. N *iik tɪdʰdʌ/iktidh* ‘siblings’ combinations. Like in endocentric compounds, constituents do not undergo structural changes. The presence of large number of data reflects that Punjabi exhibits the productivity of exocentric compounds and nullifies Bauer’s (2008) claim.

In Punjabi the exocentric compounds are formed by combining constituents taken from different semantic domains such as animals, body parts, food items, clothing items etc. As, the focus of the paper is

only on NN formations, so a few examples of NN's are illustrated in the Table 1 below to show a variety of NN formations.

Table 1*Punjabi NN Exocentric Compounds*

S#	Constituent 1	Constituent 2	Compound	Metaphoric Meaning
1.	<i>peid</i> 'sheep'	<i>chaal</i> 'walk'	<i>peid chaal</i> 'sheep walk'	'mob mentality'
2.	<i>bandar</i> 'monkey'	<i>phoraa</i> 'wound'	<i>bandar phoraa</i> 'monkey wound'	'a wound that never heals'
3.	<i>kaan</i> 'crow'	<i>pari</i> 'fairy'	<i>kaan pari</i> 'crow fairy'	'very ugly woman'
4.	<i>paaper</i> 'cracker'	<i>kunn</i> 'ear'	<i>paaper kunn</i> 'cracker ear'	'very thin ears'
5.	<i>roar</i> 'stone'	<i>mathiae</i> 'sweet'	<i>rora mathiae</i> 'stone sweet'	'a typical type of sweet, very hard of looks like a stone'
6.	<i>moti</i> 'beads'	<i>jhara</i> 'fall'	<i>moti jhara</i> 'beads fall'	'measles'
7.	<i>saji</i> 'right'	<i>banh</i> 'arm'	<i>saji banh</i> 'right arm'	'a very close friend'
8.	<i>paknhari</i> 'petal'	<i>bull</i> 'lips'	<i>paknhari bull</i> 'petal lips'	'very delicate lips'
9.	<i>jheel</i> 'lake'	<i>akhaan</i> 'eyes'	<i>jheel akhaan</i> 'lake eyes'	'very deep eyes'
10	<i>agg</i> 'fire'	<i>lao</i> 'burner'	<i>agg lao</i> 'fire burner'	'a person who creates problems for others'

Theoretical Conceptual Frame Work

As it is discussed in the introduction that the study by adopting a data driven approach is interested in presenting some theoretical framework to bring into light how the meaning in exocentric compound arrives at

the metaphoric interpretation. So, it is compulsory to have a look on the step-by-step mechanism that works behind the metaphoric interpretation of compounds.

1. Cultural Conceptualization
2. Morphological Formation of the Compound
3. Literal Meaning/s
4. Metonymic Relations
5. Cultural Knowledge
6. Metaphoric Interpretation

Cultural Conceptualization

Language as a speech device helps the speakers not only in constructing and reconstituting their experiences, but it also helps in the usage of cultural conceptualizations such as rituals, religion, traditions, emotions/feelings etc. (Sharifian, [2003](#), [2011a](#)). Cultural conceptualizations are the ways adopted for conceptualizing the experiences via culture. These emerge through the negotiation and renegotiation of experiences between the members of a speech community (Sharifian, [2007](#), p. 34). These conceptualizations help in the meaning making process. Various important processes such as schematization and categorization, metaphors and conceptual blends are embraced by them. (Evans, [2004](#); Sharifian, [2003](#), p. 188).

Furthermore, the close interaction between the members of a social group gives birth to these conceptualizations and helps them to think in a similar way. Sharifian ([2003](#)) states that different units and levels of language for e.g., speech acts, idioms, metaphors, discourse markers, etc. come under the umbrella term of cultural conceptualizations (p. 198). In the formation of every exocentric compound the cultural conceptualization plays a fundamental role. These conceptualizations are based on the personal or shared experiences of the speech community and differ from each other due to cultural and language differences, for in Punjabi culture *owl* is conceptualized as a symbol of stupidity, whereas in the western culture it is conceptualized as a symbol of wisdom. This conceptualization infused in the lexical items helps in the morphological formations.

Morphological Formation of Compound

Compounding being a language universal phenomenon is found in almost all the languages of the world. Every compound is the combination of two or more constituents (Fabb, [1998](#)). The constituents are different parts of speech such as noun, adjective and verb etc. According to Libben ([2006](#)), at both lexical and semantic level, the representations of constituents are entangled with the compound they belong to. Every constituent carries some grammatical features such as gender and number marking. The grammatical features not only help in the selection of the constituents but also help in compound formation and arriving at the semantics of the compound. When a compound is formed it carries some meanings; literal (denotative) and the connotative (metaphoric) meaning. The next is discussion focuses on the literal meaning.

Literal Meaning

Literal meaning is the original meaning of a word, the denotative meaning. For example, the compound *tʃittā xun/chitta khuun* ‘a selfish person’ can be literally interpreted as ‘a selfish person’. The literal meaning plays a fundamental role in the endocentric compounds where the compound is interpreted literally. In exocentric compounds, no attention is paid towards the literal meaning as the compounds provide a metaphoric meaning. In every exocentric compound there are metonymies working on the constituents to help in conjoining the constituents. For arriving at the metaphoric interpretation, it is compulsory to look at the metonymic relations working on the constituents and the compound and its meaning.

Metonymic Relations:

The metonymies play an important role in enriching a language and enabling people to enhance their knowledge about the world. Metonymies are the devices for conceptualizing one thing by means of its relation to something else. It is a cognitive process through which the things are understood via some semantic relations for e.g., part for whole, contain for container etc., (Langacker, [1991](#)). In exocentric compounds formation metonymies play an important role as these provide an insight for the relations between constituents. Metonymies also pave the way in establishing a link between a compound and its

metaphoric interpretation. These metonymies are always based on the cultural knowledge of the speech community. The next step sheds light on cultural knowledge.

Cultural Knowledge

The beliefs, rules, norms, values, symbols, constructions of reality, and worldviews all, are the cultural knowledge. This knowledge is shared via folktales, songs, rituals, traditions etc. In the exocentric compounds, this cultural knowledge proves to be a step in arriving at the metaphoric meaning. Finally, the metaphoric interpretation needs to be looked at.

Metaphoric Interpretation

Metaphors are conceptual trends linked with the thoughts, actions and behavioral attitudes (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Barcelona (2000) defines metaphors as a cognitive mechanism where one thing stands for something else. In exocentric compounds the meaning is always interpreted metaphorically. This metaphoric meaning is based on the cultural knowledge and the metonymic relations, where one of the traits of the constituent is profiled and is co-combined with another constituent to make a new compound with a new meaning. People living in a speech community share same cultural knowledge which helps them in arriving at the metaphoric interpretation of novel constructions.

Delimitations

So, in this work, from the data collected for thesis, only four examples of NN exocentric compounds, two from English and two from Punjabi are selected for the analysis.

Methodology

Data Collection

The work data is collected from different Punjabi dictionaries, literature books and intuitive knowledge of the researcher.

Sampling

The examples for the analysis are taken from NN compounds only. From both the languages; English and Punjabi only four (2+2), the most popular exocentric compounds are selected for the analysis.

It is already made clear in the introduction that the study is not a comparative analysis in the true sense. The purpose to analyze the English examples is just to show the validity of the framework for languages from different families.

Data Analysis

Punjabi NN Compounds

Example 1

ḥer/sher ‘lion’ + *dīl/dil* ‘heart’ = ‘lion heart’ ‘a brave person’

Looking at the above compound *sher dil* ‘lion heart’ and the metaphoric meaning ‘a brave person’, there seems no logical link as the metaphoric meaning is unpredictable from the meaning of the constituents. Yet, for a Punjabi native speaker it is very easy to arrive at the metaphoric meaning. But the question is as to how it is possible? It is very easy to arrive at the meaning, ‘a brave person’ if we understand the step-by-step mechanism working behind the compound formation and its meaning. In this regard the very step is cultural conceptualization.

Culturally, a brave and a daring person are metaphorically called *sher dil* ‘lion heart’. This metaphoric interpretation is not predictable from the meaning of the constituents. Phym and Baayen (2015) in the process of compounding the constituents play a fundamental role, as every constituent carries some specific morphological features; the second step.

Morphologically, two singular, masculine nouns *sher* and *dil* are combined to form the compound. Both the constituents belong to two different domains; animal and body part. Lion works as morphological modifier and heart is a morphological head. Thus, both the constituents are combined together and the compound *sher dil* is formed. The compound gets some meaning which needs to be looked at, that is the third step.

The compound in its literal sense seems endocentric as it gives the denotative meaning ‘heart of a lion’. This meaning is not accurate as the compound is an exocentric one with the metaphoric (connotative) meaning ‘a brave person’. To arrive at this meaning, it is compulsory to look at the metonymies operating on it; the fourth step.

Lion metonymically refers to a person who literally carries the feelings of bravery in his heart. Nevertheless, neither the person nor his bravery is directly specified. So, to arrive at the metaphoric meaning it is compulsory to look at the relations; first one attribute + container is between the constituents and the second one, attribute for attribute between the compound and the metaphoric meaning. As per the first relation the first constituent *sher* 'lion' carries some specific behavioral attributes. Lion here works as a profile determinant as one of his attributes, *bravery* is profiled. The second constituent *dil* works as a container that carries all sorts of feelings such as bravery, cowardice etc. On the other hand, a brave person also carries the same attributes of bravery in his heart. So, on the similarity in the attribute (bravery) the compound *sher dil* is formed and metonymic relation is attribute + attribute. Here comes the question how these metonymic relations are accessed? The answer to this lies in the fifth step, the cultural knowledge.

Lion is universally acknowledged as a brave animal and the king of the jungle. He is not afraid of anything. In Punjabi culture the lion carries the same identity. This identity is based on the culturally fabricated fables and narratives based on the personal or shared experiences about the bravery of the animal. *dil* 'heart' is also universally and culturally famous as a seat of feelings, emotions and desires (Sharifian, 2011). A question may be asked from the speech community about the selection of these constituents. According to Ryder (1994), in the formation of new compounds, the already existing compound pattern influences the structure of a new coinage. This is known as the constraining effect of the language. Culturally, the concept of bravery is associated with *sher* 'lion' and *dil* 'heart' is acknowledged as a seat of all the feelings. Still the question is how does the compound get a metaphoric interpretation? So, let's move towards the metaphoric interpretation, the final step.

In the compound *sher dil* the meaning gets a shift from a concrete reading towards a metaphoric interpretation of 'a brave person'. There is a metaphorical link from *sher dil* to 'a brave person', and there is a conventional attribute/attribute-metonymy linking 'lion' to 'person'. The native speaker on the basis of background knowledge develops some associations between the existing words and coins new words with new

metaphoric interpretation. In this formation, the animal that is used as an agent tells the attributive qualities of a human-being. Thus, it concludes that cultural background knowledge and the similarity of characteristics helps to arrive at the metaphoric interpretation.

Example 2

kɔ:tʰeɪ/*kothae* ‘roofs’ + təpɳĩ/*tapni* ‘climber’= ‘one who climbs the roofs’ ‘vagabond’

In Punjabi culture, a woman who does not stay at home and moves from one house to another is conceptualized as a ‘vagabond’. The compound *kothae tapni* is used for such a woman. Apparently, there seems no logical link between the compound and its conceptualization, but compound carries some logic behind it. For arriving at the logic, the second step the morphological formation of the compound needs to be looked at.

Morphologically, two constituents from two different domains; a place and a human-being are combined together to form the compound. *kothae* ‘roofs’ is a singular masculine noun used in oblique/locative form. The second constituent *tapni* ‘climber’ is a singular, feminine noun. Although in Punjabi /-ni:/ is used as an adjectival marker, but in this formation, it is used as a gender marker. The constituent is derived from a verb *tap* ‘climb’, but with an addition of /-ni:/ it becomes a noun. The first constituent is a morphological modifier and the second is a morphological head. This combination gives some literal meaning to the compound. The next step sheds light on the literal meaning.

The compound *kothae tapni* in literal sense seems endocentric with the meaning. This is the denotative meaning based on the individual meaning of the constituents. This meaning is not true as the compound is exocentric and carries the meaning of ‘a vagabond’. This meaning is unpredictable from the meaning of the constituents and the interpreted meaning. Apparently, there seems no sense in conjoining the constituents, but there is some logic that resides in the metonymic relations between the constituents and the compound and the metaphoric meaning. So, let’s move towards the metaphoric meaning.

The compound *kothae tapni* carries the metonymic relation of location + actor and attribute + attribute. The constituent *kothae* presents the location and *tapni* denotes the actor. The actor has some specific

attributes such as not staying at home and moving around aimlessly. On the other hand, a vagabond also carries the same attributes. One of the attributes; of the actor; moving around aimlessly is profiled and compared with the attributes of a vagabond with the metonymic relation of attribute for attribute to form the compound *kothae tapni*. The cultural knowledge plays its role in arriving at the metonymic relations the next step.

In villages, most of the houses are made of mud and their *kothae* ‘roofs’ are interconnected. No boundary walls are there and it is very easy to move from one roof to another. The woman who moves from one roof to another roof aimlessly is called *tapni*. Here a question takes place about the selection of the constituents why these are selected leaving aside *kandhaan tapni* ‘wall climber’. In fact, conjoined constituents are selected on some logical grounds. In Punjabi language a *ghar* ‘house’ is also understood as *kotha*, but in the language there is no compound like *ghar tapni*, so *kothae* is used. On the other hand, *tapni* is used to tell the activities of the lady; to roam about; on the basis of this knowledge the compound is formed. Now the main point to be discussed is how the native speaker finally arrives at the metaphoric interpretation; the final step.

The compound *kothae tapni* is a spatio/physical activity. This physical activity shifts towards a metaphoric interpretation ‘vagabond’, an abstract concept. This shift is based on the culturally shared knowledge of the speech community about the constituents and the metonymic relations between them.

English NN Compounds

Example 1

puppy + *love* = ‘puppy love’

‘the love of a very young and immature person’

Puppy (a small dog) is universally as well as culturally conceptualized as a very loving animal. In English culture, the love of a puppy is metaphorically used for the love of a very young and immature person. The compound *puppy love* is used in the specific terms. Looking at the compound there seems no logical link in the conjoined constituents and the metaphoric interpretation. For getting the logic it is

compulsory to look at the second step the morphological formation of the compound.

The compound *puppy love* is the combination of two free constituents, taken from two different domains; animal and feelings. Puppy is a singular masculine noun and holds the status of a morphological modifier, whereas love is a feeling and works as a morphological head. Looking at the constituents the combination seems very illogical, but still it gives some meaning, which needs to be discussed. It is the third step.

The compound in the literal sense gives two meanings; 1) love for puppies or 2) love the way, a puppy does. This meaning is perceived from the individual meaning of the constituents according to denotative knowledge. On the basis of the above given meanings the compound is endocentric, but it is an exocentric one as well, so no meaning is accurate. For arriving at the exocentric interpretation, the compound needs to be looked at within the metonymic relations; the next step.

In the compound *puppy love*, there is a metonymic relation of attribute + attribute. *Puppy*, an animal has some attributes; loving, faithful, affectionate etc. on the other hand a young, immature lover also behaves in the same manner. The attribute of the puppy being affectionate is profiled for the compound formation. This profiled attribute is compared with the same attribute of the person and the compound *puppy love* is formed. But the issue regarding how to arrive at the metaphoric interpretation is still there. To resolve this issue, cultural knowledge needs to be approached.

In many cultures the folk understanding of the things can be universal as well as cultural (Lafoff & Turner, [1989](#); Kövecses, [2000](#)). The dog carries both; the universal and cultural understanding of being faithful and loving animal. It is very loyal to his master and moves around his master to show his affection. It is kept to guard the houses. Here the question is why a *dog* is selected and other animals such as *rabbit*, *horse* etc. are not selected. This selection of the animal is entirely based on the behavioural attitude of the animal and its affection with the human-beings. On the other hand, it is also culturally acknowledged that dogs never hate anyone, so a constituent meaning hate that could be an option is not used. Thus, the selection of both the constituents is very logical.

Animals have always been the part of stories and there are various fables² about the loyalty of the dogs.

The final step is how the metaphoric interpretation is finally arrived at. As per the sixth step the formed compound moves from a literal meaning towards a metaphoric interpretation due to the metonymic relations and the culturally shared knowledge.

English NN Compounds

Example 2

stag + party = ‘a party where the stags gather’
‘a party only for men’

A party where only males gather is culturally conceptualized as *stag party*. This is the metaphoric interpretation of the compound. Logically, there seems no remotest link between the meaning the constituents provide and its metaphoric interpretation. The compound is a combination of two words having some morphological features; the knowledge about these features might be helpful in guessing the logic of the combination.

In the compound *stag party* two constituents are combined together. The first constituent is a singular, masculine noun and works as morphological modifier while the second constituent is a singular noun that works as morphological head. With the combination of both the constituents some meaning is generated, so let’s move to look at that.

The compound in its literal sense seems to be an endocentric and can be interpreted as a party where the stags are invited or a party arranged by the stags. These meanings are not correct as the compound is exocentric and its meaning is ‘a party where only the male can go’. Both the constituents belong to two different domains; an animal and an activity (celebration), so it seems very illogical to combine them. But there are some metonymic relations that provide the space for this combination. So, let’s look at them.

In the compound *stag party*, there is metonymic relation of actor + location. In this formation *stag* works as an actor and *party* presents the location. Besides this relation, another relation of attribute for attribute

²The hunter and a hound

between the compound and its metaphoric interpretation is discussed as well. The stag has some attributes such as gathering at the mating season, fighting for the female, moving around the jungle, enjoying a free life etc. The attribute gathering at the mating season is profiled for the compound *stag party*. On the other hand, the sexuality of men is compared with the stag and the compound is formed. In every culture every word carries its unique meaning as per the culturally shared knowledge of the speech community. So, let's move to the next step; cultural knowledge to get closer to the metaphoric interpretation.

It is culturally shared that the stags live alone and only gather during the mating season and have fight for the female. The selection of the constituents gives birth to a question why the animal *stag* is selected and other animals such as lion, elephant are not selected. The answer is that stags are social stereotypes evoked to categorize social groups. Furthermore, this selection might be due to linguistic conventions. The last step is metaphoric interpretation.

One of the motivating factors in the formation and the metaphoric interpretation of the compound *stag party* is more likely the result of the folk understanding that the speech community has for the behavior of the animal along with the conventions of usage. In English, men are conceptualized as dogs, horses, stags or other animals and are metaphorically called as men are animals (Benczes, [2006](#)).

Discussion

The data analysis exhibits that in Punjabi the nouns are formed with some affixation as is the case with the example *kothae tapni*. In Punjabi, the oblique form and the gender marking is very common even in the NN compounds. On the other hand, in English this characteristic lacks. Every exocentric compound is metaphoric in nature and every constituent has some specific conceptualization in the specific culture. Apparently, looking at the compounds, there seems no remotest link between the meaning of the constituents and the metaphoric meaning. But the combination becomes logical as certain metonymies based on cultural conceptualization help not only in the formation of the compound but also arriving at the meaning. The metonymic relations and cultural knowledge help the compound to shift from a literal meaning towards a metaphoric interpretation as given in example *sher*

dil 'a brave person' and *puppy love*. An interesting thing to be noted is that in the examples discussed in the data analysis every formation denotes a person.

The data in both the languages is analyzed with the help of proposed step-by-step mechanism to solve the puzzle that how exocentric compounds arrive at metaphoric interpretation from a literal meaning. The newly devised mechanism is applied on Punjabi and English data and it concludes that by following the proposed step-by-step mechanism, it remains no mystery that how an exocentric compound arrives at metaphoric interpretation. As the mechanism is applied on two languages belonging to two different families, equally applicable, so it is hoped that it would be equally applicable to the other languages of the world.

Conclusion

Exocentric compounds always remain a marginalized category in the research field due to their idiosyncratic meaning and non-productive patterns. The study with the help of data in Punjabi- a New Indo-Aryan language claims that these compounds are not only very productive but their meaning is predictable by following a step-by-step mechanism. The main focus of the study is to devise a new mechanism helpful in arriving at the metaphoric interpretation of these formations not only in the Indo-Aryan languages, but also in the other languages of the world as well.

In the present paper with the help of cognitive linguistic and cultural linguistic, a new step-by-step mechanism is devised to show that how the native speakers arrive at the metaphoric interpretations of novel compounds. The analysis showed that in exocentric compounds two words are combined together on the basis of similarity in the already existing concept or using its particular characteristics. In finding out the similarities the cultural knowledge plays a fundamental role and helps the native speaker to arrive at the metaphoric interpretation of the new coinage. The study also refutes the claims made that exocentric compounds are unanalyzable and nonproductive in their formation.

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