

## **Traces of American English in Pakistani English: A Comparative Multi-dimensional Study of Press Editorials**

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### **Abstract**

*This study explores the linguistic variation of periodized data of Pakistani press editorials in comparison with American press editorials. Most of the previous research studies conducted on Pakistani English, in general, and press editorial, in particular, compare Pakistani English with British English. No study compares Pakistani press editorials from a period to American press editorials. To trace the influence of American English on Pakistani English, this study explores the phases of Pakistani press editorials that resemble or differ from American press editorials. Biber's (1988) multi-dimensional modal was used as a theoretical framework for this study. It exploited a diachronic corpus of Pakistani press editorials which was divided into three temporally distanced phases: 1947-1951, 1971-1975, and 2012- 2016. The Biber tagger was employed to annotate grammatical features. To draw a comparison, Nini's (2015) MAT results of the American (Brown) corpus were utilized. The regression method was used for the computation of factor scores and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to draw a comparison between the diachronic data of Pakistani press editorials and American press editorials. The findings indicate that phase 3 of Pakistani press editorials is the closest to American press editorials in producing informational and explicit discourse. Phase 1 of Pakistani press editorials and American press editorials are quite close in non-narrative and abstract style in their discourse production. Moreover, phase 2 of Pakistani press editorials and American press editorials with a small difference in mean scores produce overt expression of persuasion.*

**Keywords:** American English, Corpus Linguistics, Multi-Dimensional Analysis, Pakistani English, Register Analysis

### **Introduction**

The history of the English language in the Indian subcontinent dates back to the sixteenth century when the British first arrived there and the language became a tool of imperial expansion. English, which was initially introduced to some South Asian countries through British colonization, spread rapidly as the language of British leadership during the Industrial Revolution (Tharoor, 2018). However, it always co-existed with other regional languages in the subcontinent before and after independence and was shaped and reshaped during the process of indigenization. Various factors, including local languages, cultures, religions, etc., contribute to the localization/indigenization of British English introduced in this part of the world.

Later, the English language which served as a tool of imperial expansion transformed into a more sophisticated tool of neo-colonialism and started transforming an already established English-based subculture in the subcontinent. It was American economic superiority and political leadership during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which put the spread of English on steroid. Finally, the massive spread of English in the twentieth century can be attributed to the technological revolution which brought America into prominence in terms of an increasing number of English-users in the world and making English a language of international news agencies, media, entertainment, computer, internet, and multinational companies. British long-standing interest in teaching English has been replaced with the teaching of American English through American publishers and institutions. American English is being taught more and more because of American global success in business and technology. This success also leads British English speakers to embrace many Americanisms, even in England (Debaron, 2011). American English appeared as a separate variety.

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Kretzschmar (2000) rightly asserts that now it impacts many other languages and varieties of English as it helps transmit the values of American culture – its literature, motion pictures, and television programs – around the globe. There is a need to explore how far this attraction has affected the Pakistani variety of English.

This study attempts to explore to what extent another variety of English – American English – influenced Pakistani English. It explores linguistic variation between Pakistani press editorials from different phases of time and American press editorials using Biber's Multi-dimensional analysis. It compares the specialized Corpus of Pakistani English Newspaper Editorials (CorPENE) with the results of editorials of Nini's (2015) study. Nini used Multi-dimensional Analysis Tagger (MAT) on British (LOB) corpus and American (Brown) corpus to compare the results of MAT with those of Biber's (1988) study. To draw a comparison between the diachronic data of Pakistani press editorials and American press editorials, this study used Nini's (2015) MAT results of the American (Brown) corpus. The diachronic corpus of Pakistani press editorials was divided into three temporally distanced phases: 1947-1951, 1971-1975, and 2012- 2016. To trace the influence of American English on Pakistani English, /this study explores which phase resembles or differs from American press editorials during the last seven decades.

### **Literature Review**

With the emergence of Indigenised varieties of English, several researchers became interested in these Englishes. Some studied these varieties based on individual linguistic features, some conducted corpus-based studies and others studied it from the perspective of co-occurring linguistic features. As far as studies on individual linguistic features are concerned, Anwar and Talaat (2011) were the first to analyze Pakistani English based on individual linguistic features. Their study analyzed Pakistani print media in comparison with British print media. It finds out the distinctive syntactic and linguistic features of the journalistic register of Pakistani print media in comparison with British print media. Likewise, Muhabat et al., (2015) conducted a study on Pakistani print media in comparison with British print media. The focus of the study was to explore the difference in the use of hyphenated lexemes in both media. Moreover, Mahmood (2009) by using LOB, FLOB, Frown, Brown, BOE, and BNC as reference corpora, conducted a corpus-based study on Pakistani written English (PWE) in which he studied hyphenated compound and modifying adjectives, highlighting the linguistic aspects that made Pakistani English a distinct variety from British and American English.

Biber (1988) introduced a more comprehensive approach called Multi-dimensional analysis to study register variations. The multi-dimensional approach is unique as it not only deals with a large, computerized corpus, it also adds multivariate statistical techniques that help in studying the linguistic features across text varieties. Further, it interprets the linguistic variations based on the co-occurrence of linguistic features.

Several researchers studied various registers of Pakistani English including registers of media using a Multi-dimensional modal. For instance, Shakir's (2013) study is a pioneering work in Pakistani press media that uses a Multi-dimensional modal. He investigated linguistic variation in the advertisement register and drew both external and internal comparisons of Pakistani print media ads. Afterward, the study of Alvi et al., (2016) is a contribution in this vain. They conducted a synchronic study on Pakistani press editorials in comparison with British press editorials. In Pakistan, researchers like Shakir and Deuber (2019), Asghar et al., (2018), Shakir and Deuber (2018), Ahmad and Ali (2017), Ahmad and Mahmood (2015), and Shakir and Afsar (2012) also studied Pakistani English using Biber's (1988, 2006) Multi-dimensional models.

Burt and Bauer (1996) conducted a diachronic study on media language from 1900-1985. The data of editorials was taken from the newspaper, *The Times*. The focus of the study was to explore the difference in the use of three grammatical features: comparative and superlative marking, concord with collective nouns, relative clauses, and adjectives through the period. Likewise, Westin and Geisler (2002) conducted a diachronic study by dividing 20<sup>th</sup>-century newspapers into three distinct periods: Phase 1. 1900-1920, Phase 2. 1930-1950, Phase 3. 1960-1993. Using Biber's (1988) multi-dimensional modal, the study shows that with time, British editorials became less narrative and more argumentative. Likewise, Ali and Sheeraz (2018) conducted a diachronic study on the Pakistani press to explore linguistic variations among three phases. They also explored internal variations among the sub-categories of editorials.

The prime focus of most of the research conducted on Pakistani English, in general, and press editorial, in particular, is its comparison with British English. There is also a need to compare registers of Pakistani variety of English with American English which emerged as an alternative global variety of English.

### Research Questions

1. To what extent is the register of Pakistani English press editorials influenced by American press editorials?
2. Which phase of Pakistani press editorials since the independence of Pakistan does resemble or differ from American press editorials?

### Methodology

The study uses a quantitative approach for statistical analysis and a functional approach for determining the communicative function of Pakistani editorials (PE) and American editorials (AE). Biber's (1988) modal was used as a theoretical framework for this study. Biber's Multi-dimensional modal focused on the co-occurrence of linguistic features instead of individual linguistic feature for register analysis. For the compilation of diachronic corpus, three temporally distanced phases: 1947-1951, 1971-1975, and 2011-2016) were selected. Each of the three periods consisted of five years. As far as the first and the second phases are concerned, only *Dawn* (for the first phase) and *Dawn* and *Business Recorder* (for the second phase) were available. However, for the third phase, *The News* and *The Nation* were added to *Dawn* and *Business Recorder*. 40 text files were taken from each phase. The corpus of Pakistani press editorials consists of 120 text files of approximately 153450 words. The text files were of varying length approximately from 700-1200 words. So, following Biber's (1988) criterion, all the text files were normalized to a text length of 1000 words.

The data was tagged by using Biber's tagger (1988). Through the regression method, the dimensions score was calculated. The sets of co-occurring linguistic features in all five dimensions were already established by Biber (1988). He introduced five textual dimensions: Involved vs. Informational discourse, Narrative vs. non-narrative concerns, Explicit vs. Situation dependent discourse, overt expression of Argumentation/persuasion, and Impersonal (Abstract) vs. Non-impersonal (Non-abstract) style.

Moreover, Biber (1988) identified 67 linguistic features and he categorized linguistic features in 16 grammatical categories, viz, (A) tense and aspect markers, (B) place and time adverbial, (C) pronouns and pro-verbs, (D) questions, (E) nominal forms, (F) passives, (G) stative forms, (H) subordination features, (I) prepositional phrases, adjectives, and adverbs, (J) lexical specificity, (K) lexical classes, (L) models, (M) specialized verb classes, (N) reduced forms and dispreferred structures, (O) coordination, and (P) negation (Biber, 1988, p. 72).

The last step of the study was analyzing variance (ANOVA) to find out the statistically significant linguistic variations between the three phases of PE and AE. The results of American press editorials were taken from Nini's (2015) study.

### Analysis and Discussion

This section of the paper presents quantitative analysis and functional interpretation of three phases of PE in comparison with AE across textual dimensions introduced by Biber (1988). Biber named dimension 1 as Involved vs. Informational discourse. Among other features, the presence of nouns, verbs, discourse particles, hedges, wh-clauses, and emphatics on positive polarity indicates a high presence of involved discourse. While, linguistic features like nouns, prepositions, and attributive adjectives on negative polarity indicate the dense presence of information discourse in a text.

Table 1. MD analysis of Pakistani editorials compared to American editorials on D1

	D1		
Press editorials-American	-10.71		
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Press editorials-Pakistan	-18.93	-15.66	-13.59
Difference	-8.22	-4.95	-2.88

Table 1 shows that all three phases of PE, as well as AE, produce informational discourse. However, phase 1 (-18.93) of PE produces the highest informational discourse and in contrast, AE (-10.71) produces the lowest informational discourse. So far as phase 2 (-15.66) of PE is concerned, it produces slightly less informational discourse than phase 1. When PEs from all the three phases are compared to AEs, phase 3 with a mean score (-13.59), has been found quite close to AEs in producing

informational discourse on dimension 1. The difference between PEs from phase 3 and AEs is -2.88. However, there is a large difference (-8.22) between the mean scores of PEs from phase 1 and AEs.

In the following example, taken from phase 1 of a Pakistani newspaper, *Dawn*, the bold words are the examples of linguistic features which are primary markers for producing informational discourse in a text.

**Khawaja Nazimuddin**, Premier of **East Bengal**, predicted a **gloomy future in** a report on the **food conditions in India next year** unless survival conditions are restored **in East Punjab**. **In** an interview this **morning**, **Khawaja Nazimuddin** said that the **world food** position was not reassuring. The failure of **crops in America** draught in **Germany** and unsettled conditions **in the East** considerably aggravated the over-all **food** production and **India** would again face another **year of food crisis**. (ED.P1.DN)

In the above-given example, nouns like *Khawaja Nazimuddin*, *Bengal*, *future*, *India*, *year*, *Punjab*, *morning*, *world*, *food*, *crops*, *America*, *Germany* and *East*; preposition like, *in* and attributive adjective like *East Bengal*, *gloomy future*, *next year*, *East Punjab*, *world food*, *unsettled conditions*, and *food crisis* are the examples of linguistic features that together perform a function of producing informational discourse. The dense presence of these linguistic features in PE from phase 1 indicates the presence of highly informational discourse.

Dimension 2 is named Narrative vs. non-narrative concerns. Among other linguistic features, the high presence of past tense verb and third-person pronoun indicate that the text is narrative. Even though there were no negative features in Biber's (1988) study that produces non-narrative discourse, the results of this study show the presence of negative linguistic features. Present tense verbs, the pronoun *it*, *that* deletion, and place adverbial are the linguistic features that produce non-narrative discourse.

Table 2. MD analysis of Pakistani editorials compared to American editorials on D2

	<b>D2</b>		
<b>Press editorials-American</b>	-0.59		
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<b>Press editorials-Pakistan</b>	-0.49	-1.38	-1.11
<b>Difference</b>	-0.1	-0.79	-0.52

Table 2 illustrates that all three phases of PE and AE show non-narrative concerns. PE from phase 2, with a mean score (-1.38), is the most non-narrative. Phase 3 with a mean score (-1.11) is slightly less non-narrative than phase 2. The difference between PE from phase 1 and AE is -0.1. However, a marked difference (-0.79) has been observed between PE from phase 2 and AE.

The following example is taken from phase 2 of a Pakistani newspaper, *Business Recorder*. The bold words in the excerpt are examples of the linguistic features that produce non-narrative discourse.

The developed nations of the world **constituting** less than a third of the human population, **produce** and **consume** more than two-thirds of the world's goods. Their output **is increasing** more rapidly than their population. Just reverse **is** the case with the developing countries. There **is** no way to increase output to meet rising **demands** without new processes and new forms of organization. In other words, there **is** no alternative for us but to import the technology necessary to the **building** of an indigenous, diversified, self-sustaining industrial economy. (ED.P2.BR)

Dimension 3 is labeled as Explicit vs. Situation dependent discourse. Linguistic features like nominalization, wh-pronoun-relative clause-object position, wh-pronoun-relative clauses-subject position, pied-piping, coordinating conjunction-phrasal connector, and singular noun-nominalization produce explicit discourse. On negative polarity, linguistic features like adverbs of time and adverbs of place produce situation-dependent discourse.

Table 3. MD analysis of Pakistani editorials compared to American editorials on D3

	<b>D3</b>		
<b>Press editorials-American</b>	4.5		
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<b>Press editorials-Pakistan</b>	7.10	6.07	5.38
<b>Difference</b>	2.6	1.57	0.88

Table 3 shows that all three phases of PE along with AE produce explicit discourse. A comparison between PE from all the three phases and AE shows that AEs, with a mean score (4.5), produce the lowest explicit discourse. Phase 1, with a mean score (7.10), produces the highest explicit discourse. Phase 2 (6.07) is slightly less explicit than phase 1. Phase 3 with a mean score (5.38) is quite close to AE with a difference of (0.88). However, there is a considerable difference between the mean scores of phase 1 and AE i.e., (2.6).

Table 3 shows that phase 1 produces the most explicit discourse. The following excerpt is taken from phase 1 of a Pakistani newspaper, *Dawn*.

The **disturbances which suddenly broke out in Quetta** on the night of August 21 were, **happily**, brought under complete control within a short time and now normal conditions prevail. It is **greatly** to be regretted that most **alarming** reports should have been given wide **publicity** by our Hindu contemporaries both as regards the number of **casualties** and the nature of the outbreak. It is now known the loss of life did not exceed 100 and there was no wholesale exodus of the **minority population**. (ED.P1.DN)

Among other linguistic features, nominalization and wh clauses are the features that produce explicit discourse. In the above example, the words in bold are examples of explicit discourse.

Biber (1988) named dimension 4 as Overt expression of argumentation/ persuasion. In Biber's results, there were no linguistic features with positive loading. Linguistic features like an infinitive verb, modal of prediction, suasive verb, subordinating conjunction-conditional, modal of necessity, and adverb within auxiliary make a text explicit.

Table 4. *MD analysis of Pakistani editorials compared to American editorials on D4*

	<b>D4</b>		
<b>Press editorials-American</b>	1.39		
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<b>Press editorials-Pakistan</b>	-0.63	1.09	0.07
<b>Difference</b>	2.02	0.3	1.32

Table 4 illustrates that AE and PE from phases 2 and 3 produce overt expressions of persuasion. In contrast, PE from phase 1 is non-argumentative in its discourse production. Unlike other dimensions, AE with a mean score (1.39) on this dimension produces the most argumentative discourse. Phase 2, with a mean score (1.09), is slightly less argumentative than AE. Phase 3, with a mean score (0.07), is the least argumentative. Phase 1, with a mean score (-0.63), shows non-argumentative discourse. The results show a gradual rise and then fall in argumentative discourse production of Pakistani press editorials. On this dimension, PE from phase 2 has been found quite close to AE with a difference of (0.3). The difference between PE from phase 1 and AE (2.02) is the highest.

The following excerpt, taken from phase 2 of a Pakistani newspaper, *Business Recorder*, is an example of argumentative discourse.

Government **should explore** the subcontracting possibilities not only through UNIDO but on their own also. True, we **should not wholly depend** upon it because it cannot be a replacement for full industrialization. Still, **we should condemn** it **if we positively** and honestly believe in democracy, fair play, and supremacy of law. This is so because violence breeds more violence and **if this process** is not checked a vicious circle starts having no end in sight. (ED. P2.BR)

In the above-given example, modal of necessity (*should explore, should not wholly depend, we should condemn*) and subordinating conjunction-conditional (*if we positively* and *if this process*), are the example of linguistic features which together produce overt expression of argumentation/ persuasion in a discourse.

Dimension 5 is the opposition between Impersonal/Abstract and Non-impersonal/ Non-abstract style. Linguistic features like adverbial-conjuncts, agentless passive verb, passive verb+ by, passive post-nominal modifier, and subordinating conjunction produce an abstract style of discourse on positive polarity.

Table 5 illustrates that AE and PE from all three phases have an abstract style of reporting. AE with a mean score of (0.63) is the least abstract. On the other hand, phase 3, with a mean score of (3.29), has been found to produce highly abstract discourse. Phase 2 (3.20) and phase 1 (3.18) also produce abstract discourse, however, the difference between them in producing abstract discourse is

slight. Overall, the three phases have a significant difference in their mean scores from AE. However, phase 1 is relatively less different from AE with a difference of (2.55) as compared to the other phases.

Table 5. MD analysis of Pakistani editorials compared to American editorials on D5

	D5		
Press editorials-American	0.63		
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Press editorials-Pakistan	3.18	3.20	3.29
Difference	2.55	2.57	2.66

In the following example, taken from phase 3 of a Pakistani newspaper, *The News*, the bold words are the linguistic features that perform a function of producing an abstract style in the text.

It would be fruitful for all parties, **especially** in the coming election, **whether** aspiring to return to the office, **or** to retain it, to measure themselves by this message. Parties also need to see **if** their leaders have the same wisdom, honesty, **and** clarity **that** the Quaid had. Those **who** aspire to the Quaid's legacy by having a party of the same name should also keep in mind the efforts he made for party unity, **and** how he answered the call of Allama Iqbal to head a unified League just before the final **and** decisive phase of the Pakistan Movement. (ED.P3.TN)

Among other linguistic features, passive clauses and conjuncts are the linguistic features that highlight the presence of abstract discourse. In the above example, the dense presence of conjuncts likes *especially*, *whether*, *or*, *and*, *that* and *who* are the examples of abstract discourse.

### Conclusion

This study compared PE from three distinct phases with AE. On D1, both countries produce informational discourse. Phase 1 is most distinct from AE in producing informational discourse. Phase 1 of PE is highly informational, however, AE produces the least informational discourse. Phase 3 is quite close to AE in producing informational discourse. On D2, both the countries produce non-narrative discourse. In phase 1, PE produces the least non-narrative discourse. Phase 2 has been found the most non-narrative. AEs produce slightly more non-narrative discourse than phase 1. On D3, both countries produce explicit discourse. Like D1, again on this dimension, phase 1 has the highest mean scores and AE has the least mean score. In other words, phase 1 is the most explicit, and AE has been found to produce the least explicit discourse. However, phase 3 is quite close to AE in producing explicit discourse. On D4, AE and PE from phases 2 and 3 produce overt expression of argumentation. On the other hand, phase 1 is non-argumentative in its discourse production. AE produces the most argumentative discourse. Phase 2 is slightly less argumentative than AE. Phase 3 is the least argumentative. On D5, PE and AE show the abstract style of information in their editorial writing. However, there is a marked difference between the mean scores of PE and AE. In comparison with other phases, phase 1 is relatively less different from AE. Overall the results show that phase 3 is quite close to AE on D1 and D3 and phase 1 is close to AE on D2 and D5. Phase 2 has been found the closest to AE on D4.

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