

A Diachronic Study of Political Press Reportage in Pakistani Print Media: A Multidimensional Analysis

Muhammad Abubakar¹, Dr. Javed Ali Kalhoro², Dr. Shahzad Qaisar³

Abstract:

This diachronic study examines the political press reportage in Pakistani print media over a decade (2009-2019), applying Douglas Biber's multidimensional (MD) analysis model to uncover the distinct characteristics of Pakistani English, a non-native variety shaped by cultural, social, and postcolonial influences. The research aims to establish the independent identity of Pakistani English through an in-depth linguistic comparison with British English, focusing on the political journalism register.

The study draws on a comprehensive corpus of 4810 political news articles from six leading newspapers, three from Pakistan and three from the UK. Data collection entailed a meticulous process of selecting texts to ensure a representative sample of political reportage, capturing variations across different years and sources. The analysis focuses on five textual dimensions identified by Biber, examining co-occurring linguistic features and their evolution over time.

Key findings reveal that Pakistani political press reportage exhibits significant linguistic variations compared to British press reportage. The Pakistani texts show a higher degree of informational content, especially in the earlier years of the ¹study, aligning with the needs of a less educated audience. However, this trend demonstrates a decline in later years, suggesting an improvement in readership standards and a shift towards more sophisticated reporting. Conversely, British newspapers maintain a relatively stable level of informational content, reflecting a more educated audience and consistent reporting standards.

¹ Riphah International University Faisalabad. abubakar50854@gmail.com

² Assistant Professor, Department of Pakistan Studies, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad. drjavedali@numl.edu.pk (Corresponding Author) <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8860-2131>

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Pakistan Studies, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad. shahzadqaiser@numl.edu.pk

The study also highlights the impact of external factors, such as cross-cultural interactions, and internal factors, like audience literacy levels and socio-political contexts, on the linguistic features of Pakistani political press reportage. These influences contribute to the dynamic and adaptive nature of Pakistani English, underscoring its divergence from British English.

This research makes a significant contribution to the field of World Englishes by providing empirical evidence of the distinctiveness of Pakistani English through the lens of political press reportage. The findings underscore the importance of register variation studies in understanding the multifaceted nature of language evolution across different cultural contexts. The study calls for further exploration of other registers within Pakistani English to fully capture its unique characteristics and ongoing development as a distinct variety of English.

Keywords: English Language, Media, Content Analysis, Pakistan, Political Communication

Introduction

Pakistani English, being a non-native variety, has its distinct registers which exhibit variation at different levels of language. Certain cultural and linguistic factors along with the postcolonial scenario have given birth to new varieties of English. The English language in Pakistan has adopted different kinds of words, structures, and expressions from the native languages. It exhibits many characteristics of its norm than that of British English and these distinctive features signify the independent trend of Pakistani English. Moreover, the overall education system in Pakistan place imperative role in stimulating different approaches among the young minds. (Kalhoro, 2022). From the variationists' perspective, the concerns of previous studies have been to establish the identity of Pakistani English as an independent non-native variety with distinct registers based on individual linguistic features (Abbas, 1998; Saleemi, 1993; Rahman, 1990; Talaat, 2002; Mahboob & Ahmar, 2004; Rasheed, 2009; Mahmood, A., 2009; Mahmood, R., 2009). With the concept of language variation, the analysis of the linguistic patterns across registers has gained vital importance for the description of varieties of English. Register variation is widely considered to be intrinsic to all cultures. Ferguson (1983) emphasized the fact that "register variation in which language structure varies following the occasions of use, is all-pervasive in human language" (p. 154). Registers are defined by situational characteristics of language and therefore, termed as situationally defined varieties. Registers differ from social dialects because they serve different purposes, topics, and situations. They naturally differ in content as well as in form. Speakers do not typically say the same thing in conversation as in lectures, reports, academic papers, and complimentary messages. Thus, variation across registers includes different linguistic features, rather than semantically neutral variants of a single feature. Hymes (1984) argues that the analysis of register variation i.e., 'Verbal repertoire', in his terms, should become the major focus of research within linguistics: "The abilities of individuals and the composite abilities of communities cannot be understood except by making

Verbal repertoire, not language, the central scientific notion” (p. 44). Other linguists have also stressed the importance of register variation studies. Ure (1982) highlighted the importance of register variation by saying that “Each language community has its system of registers, corresponding to the range of activities in which its members normally engage” (p. 05). The present study has also explored linguistic variation in a sub-register of Pakistani English.

Since 1980, the theory of register analysis has undergone a shift after the identification of the MD approach by Biber in the 1988 study and it is certainly an understandable fact that before 1980, such MD analysis was not feasible as noted by Biber (2004). Certain cross-cultural factors and the time-lapse of thirty-one years since Biber’s 1988 study have necessitated the new register explorations in Pakistani English. The study of press reportage in Biber’s 1988 study faces external validity threats in the non-native background of Pakistani English. Moreover, the sub-categories of press reportage identified in Biber’s 1988 study are found different from the existing categories recognized in the current study of the press reportage in Pakistani print media and therefore, it necessitates the exploration of the political press reportage register of Pakistani English which has been claimed by the previous studies to have its norms. Therefore, the current study explores the internal as well as external variation in the political press reportage register of Pakistani print media diachronically.

Literature Review

The English language appreciates the status of a noteworthy universal language. The majority of the logical and instructive data is granted in the English language everywhere throughout the world. It is the main language of universal business and the travel industry. It is the main language of mainstream culture and its publicizing. Certain verifiable and land variables have their impact during the language change and the English language has additionally experienced this marvel: "Language change is a customary component of all the living dialects of the world and English isn't a special case" (Aitcheson, 1981, p. 4).

Trudgil (1991) being the pioneer in this field, contemplated the variety in the English language and took a shot at the various dialects of England. He featured the way that a specific piece of concern occupied from the phonological, lexical and chronicled level towards the syntactic level which got less consideration from all dialectologists. He likewise clarified that the English language had gone under change: "The further you travel, the more various lingos will be found and the reason is that English, similar to every other language, is changing and the change begins from a particular territory and spreads to neighbouring territories" (Trudgil, 1991, p. 7). It was seen that Standard British English was the name of a dialect and not a language. He clarified that 'standard English' was the name of a variety which was portrayed by a specific arrangement of linguistic and lexical structures. He asserted it was simply a social vernacular which contrasted with different dialects of English as far as its more noteworthy notoriety.

The term 'World Englishes' was thoroughly clarified by Kachru and Smith (2008) who worked on it. They propounded the genuine thought of pluricentricity behind the term 'world Englishes' and the varieties, present all around the world with formal varieties: "Englishes symbolize the utilitarian and formal variety in the language, and its global cultural assimilation. The language presently has a place with the individuals who use it as their first language and to the individuals who use it as an extra language" (Bolton, 2006, p. 241).

The 'World Englishes' show sure variety at different levels in its every noun variety. The main Diaspora of English contained the United Kingdom, Scotland and Ireland. Interestingly, in Irish and Welsh dialects, a variety was found at the phonological level. Whereas, Scottish English, additionally, watched morphological and syntactic variety in its utilization. It was also seen that the Irish language utilized monophthongs and the Welsh language favoured diphthongs. Various deviations of the past participle and past type of action words had likewise been utilized in different choices e.g., finishing at-it, - d, - t. Nativization alludes to a procedure wherein the native dialects influenced an excessive amount of the new varieties of English and included numerous new patterns. The proximity of the English language for more than 200 years in the area has prompted the nativization of the language, which is clear in a few nearby varieties of English, all nouns considered alluded to as South Asian English. In India, advancements can be seen in the names of nouns, for example, "roti, finger chips, full-boiled and half-boiled egg, 'hard-' and 'soft-boiled eggs". Innovative compounds are exemplified by "driver-cum-salesman, to airlift, to charge sheet, to turn turtle, etc." Some morphemes like "+ wala: e.g., police wala" are found quite prevalent (Baumgardner, 1993, p. 46).

In Pakistan, the English language has built up its status and has turned into a 'Most widely used language'. It has demonstrated a noteworthy 'communication language' and crossed over the nation with the entire world. The English language isn't just being utilized for authority purposes but is additionally being advantageously utilized in Islamic law and Sharia. Platt et al. (1984) set forward appropriately the four fundamental criteria to pronounce any variety as new English. To start with, he featured that New English is to be favoured as a subject in the instructive establishments. New English ought to be educated as the method of direction over all other native dialects. Second, New English was probably created as a non-native variety of pidgin or Creole. Third, New English must perform different nation inside capacities and ought to be utilized in various divisions of that nation for example official correspondence, lawful and so forth. It ought to play out the capacity of a 'Most widely used language'. Fourth, it ought to be restricted in articulation pitch structure and purpose. English in Pakistan meets all four criteria and takes the title of New English. The English language came in the sublandmass when the English required the workplace staff for their work; along these lines, they began the educating of the English language in the nineteenth century. At present, the English Language is taught in the Pakistani instructive field as an obligatory subject up to graduation. English-medium instructive foundations are liked and a large portion of the schedule of the considerable number of subjects is set in the English language.

There has been just one study led on publicizing register in Pakistani print media by Shakir (2013), which utilized a multidimensional approach and concentrated the linguistic variety dependent on inner and outside correlations. This analysis was spearheading in its tendency which laid weight on the way that different registers of Pakistani English ought to likewise be investigated to feature the linguistic variety and phonetic character of Pakistani English as a non-native variety. This study dismissed previously directed looks into promoting because of their dependence on the recurrence of individual phonetic features and being founded on unrepresentative information. Drawing on information from 137 magazines and 37 papers, his study work researched how far Pakistani print notices changed concerning source and item classification on five literary measurements propounded by Biber (1988) just as on new three printed measurements distinguished in the analysis. His exploration works likewise demonstrated that Pakistani print commercials indicated huge change as per source and item classification while the group of audience was found to assume a huge role too.

His exploration work has additionally examined that the language of print commercials in Pakistani media took after composed discourse as opposed to the language of up close and personal discussions. The present analysis additionally investigates another register for example press reportage register of Pakistani print media on Biber's 1988 just as news literary measurements distinguished in the present study.

Past analyses, as a rule, have centred upon the individual linguistic features of press reportage on various degrees of language. On the linguistic level, the individual features of papers have been investigated by various specialists. The individual features like the utilization of the noun expression of name juxtapositions in the language of the paper were investigated by Ryden (1975) and Bell (1982). The clear-cut contrasts in the recurrence of the examples in the various papers were recognized and the linguistic arrangement of elucidating appositive "political noun", "sports noun", or 'other noun' (Ryden, 1975, p. 16) was clarified.

The present research qualifies for utilising a multidimensional approach for the register analysis of political press reportage in Pakistani print media following the multidimensional model introduced by Douglas Biber (1988) in his fundamental work *Variation crosswise over Speech and Writing*. A multidimensional study was created to show the conspicuous phonetic co-occurring features in a language in an observational way. The essential research objective of the approach is to center upon the linguistic study of writings and content sorts and it undermines the analysis of individual linguistic features.

The vast majority of past studies led on various sorts have utilized this kind of MD analysis. Atkinson (1992) considered the therapeutic research composing. Dim (2011) investigated the linguistic features of registers distributed in scholarly diaries, considering the differed acknowledge of research articles in generally different controls. Connor-Linton (1988) led a multidimensional relative analysis of four composed messages about atomic arms quandary utilizing 1988 Old measurements. Westin and Geisler (2002) investigated the diachronic analysis of British Press Editorials of the twentieth century utilizing an old multidimensional study. However, no analysis has been directed so far on the press reportage in Pakistani media utilizing Biber's 1988 multidimensional study.

To sum up, the present study ignores the past analysis of Pakistani press reportage for numerous reasons: First, the past analysis led on press reportage register did not build up any unique reason corpora dependent on the sub-classes of news register; second, it didn't pursue the required multidimensional study of multidimensional model and it just centred around the individual linguistic features and along these lines, this past analysis on Pakistani press reportage face legitimacy dangers. Along these lines, the present study researches the press reportage in Pakistani print media dependent on multidimensional analysis which is the most appropriate approach for contemplating press reportage language in correlation with different registers. The present study investigates the inward variety among various papers just as among political press reportage in Pakistani and British print media. The present analysis likewise contrasts its discoveries and the consequences of British press reportage analyzed in Biber's 1988 study.

Methodology:

Anwar & Talaat (2011) studied the individual linguistic features of Pakistani journalistic English but did not build a special purpose corpus based upon sub-categories of press reportage in Pakistani print media. After the investigation of political news reportage in the six leading newspapers in Pakistani

and British print media, the political category of Pakistani and British press reportage has been presented in the current study. It is also a notable fact that Pakistani and British print media allocate proper pages to political categories in newspapers and this category is apparent in Pakistani and British print media.

The data acquisition was the first step in the data collection process. So, all of the information about the number of newspapers being published was collected from online available articles. At that point, the analyst looked for counsel employing email from Prof. Douglas Biber, Arizona University, the USA who proposed the researcher to gather the leading papers of Pakistani and British Print media based on wide circulation.

During the data collection process, it was also kept in view to take consecutive readings of each newspaper from 2009 to 2019 so that the linguistic characteristics used in political category by every newspaper may not be missed and the total representation of political category of each newspaper may become the part of Pakistani News Corpus (PNC) as well as British News Corpus (BNC). The collected corpus comprising 4810 texts of the political category of the six leading newspapers was reviewed for any formatting errors.

The following table discusses the details of data collection:

Sr. No.	Description	Sample of Texts
1	Total no. of articles	4810
2	Total Pakistani news articles	2600
3	Total British news articles	2210
4	Total no. of Pakistani newspapers	03
5	Total no. of British newspapers	03

The current study includes one type of MD analysis of press reportage, one of which includes Biber's 1988 factor solution which is termed the 1988 MD analysis of press Reportage. Biber et al. (1998) investigated new genres in different corpora taking into account the previously established textual dimensions and thus, established the reliability of the 1988 factor solution by conducting independent analysis and confirmatory analysis. Therefore, the present study on Pakistani political press reportage has compared its results with the results of Biber's 1988 MD study of press reportage to locate the identity of the Pakistani press reportage register in comparison with British English. Thus, the comparison with the 1988 MD analysis will investigate the claim that Pakistani news English has its independent non-native existence in comparison with the British press reportage.

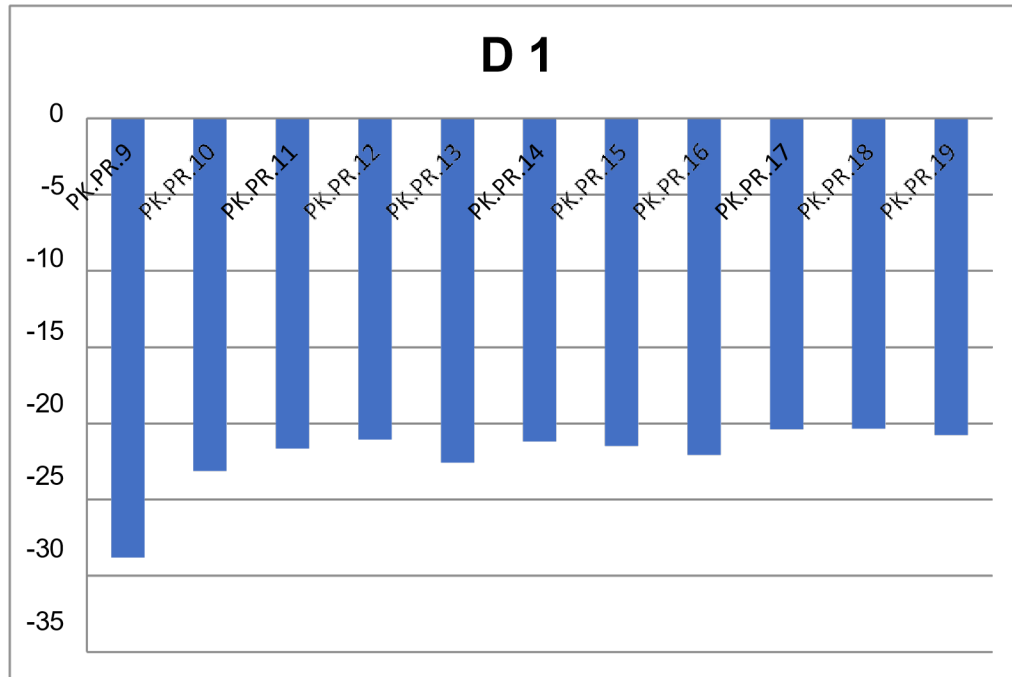
The data analysis in the current study includes four basic steps: tagging for different linguistic features of press reportage, taking raw counts of linguistic features, turning the raw counts into normalized frequencies, calculation of dimensions' scores and MD analysis of dimensions of Press Reportage.

The present research passed through three basic phases: data collection, data analysis and interpretation of results. In the first phase of data acquisition, the six leading newspapers of Pakistani and British print media were selected on a wide circulation basis. These leading newspapers were part of the process of developing the political category of press reportage in Pakistani and British print media. Then, 50 texts per political category of Pakistani press reportage were planned to be collected for Pakistani News Corpus (PNC) and from British News Corpus (BNC). The texts were re-checked for spelling mistakes, tense anomalies and syntactic patterns of the sentences in the corpus at large. PNC and BNC consist of 4810 texts including the political category of press reportage in Pakistani print media.

Results and Discussion:

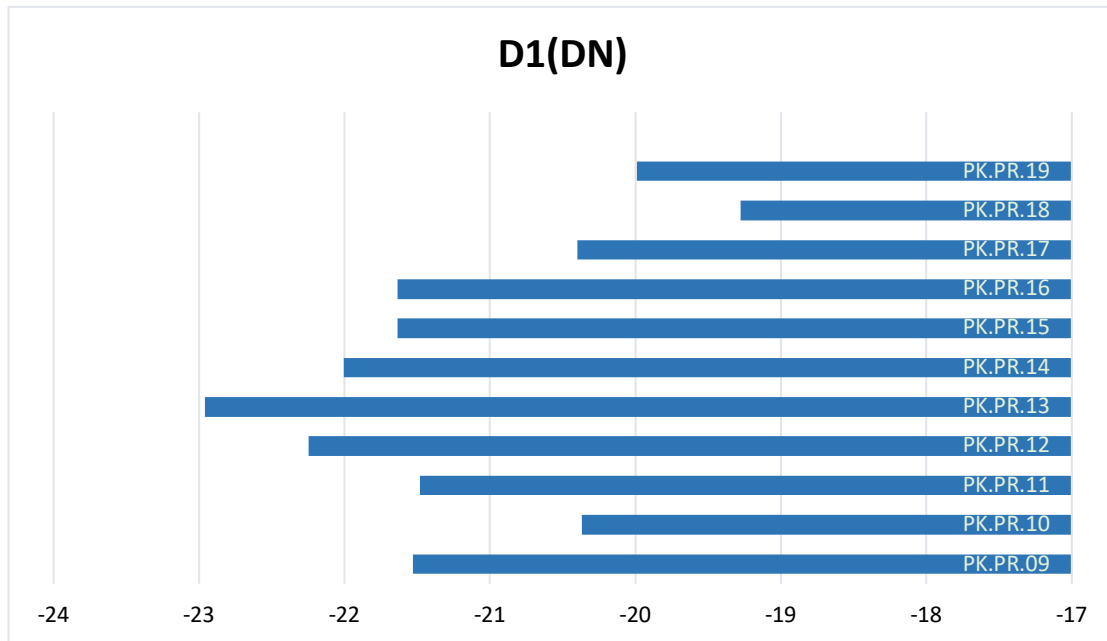
The present chapter discusses two main results. First of all, the present chapter discusses the analysis of composite Pakistani and British newspapers taken for the examination. Three Pakistani and three British newspapers have been analyzed on Biber's five textual dimensions to analyze the co-occurring linguistic features. After the discussion of mean scores found in each dimension, the co-occurring linguistic features have been analyzed based on their dimension scores to see the linguistic variation undergone throughout ten years i.e., from 2009 to 2019 in Pakistani and British political print press reportage. Then the results have been also compared to see in which year these features were frequently used and in which years they were not used in abundance. Secondly, each Pakistani newspaper has been compared to each British newspaper on five textual dimensions to see the variations in co-occurring linguistic features and also based on informational features to see which newspaper is using these features abundantly and which is frugal in using these linguistic features. So, this chapter has two parts first it analyses both registered newspapers compositely and then carries out their separate analysis based on Biber's five literary dimensions to see the variation throughout the years in the use of co-occurring and significant linguistic features to establish the individual identity of registers and also to understand the ideological stance of the newspapers at large.

The first part of this chapter has discussed the analysis of composite Pakistani and British newspapers taken for the examination. Three Pakistani and three British newspapers have been analyzed on Biber's five textual dimensions to analyze the co-occurring linguistic features. After the discussion of mean scores found in each dimension, the co-occurring linguistic features have been analyzed based on their dimension scores to see the linguistic variation undergone throughout ten years i.e., from 2009 to 2019 in Pakistani and British political print press reportage. Then the results have been also compared to see in which year these features were frequently used and in which years they were not used in abundance.

Figure. 1 Pakistani and British Composite Newspapers Analysis

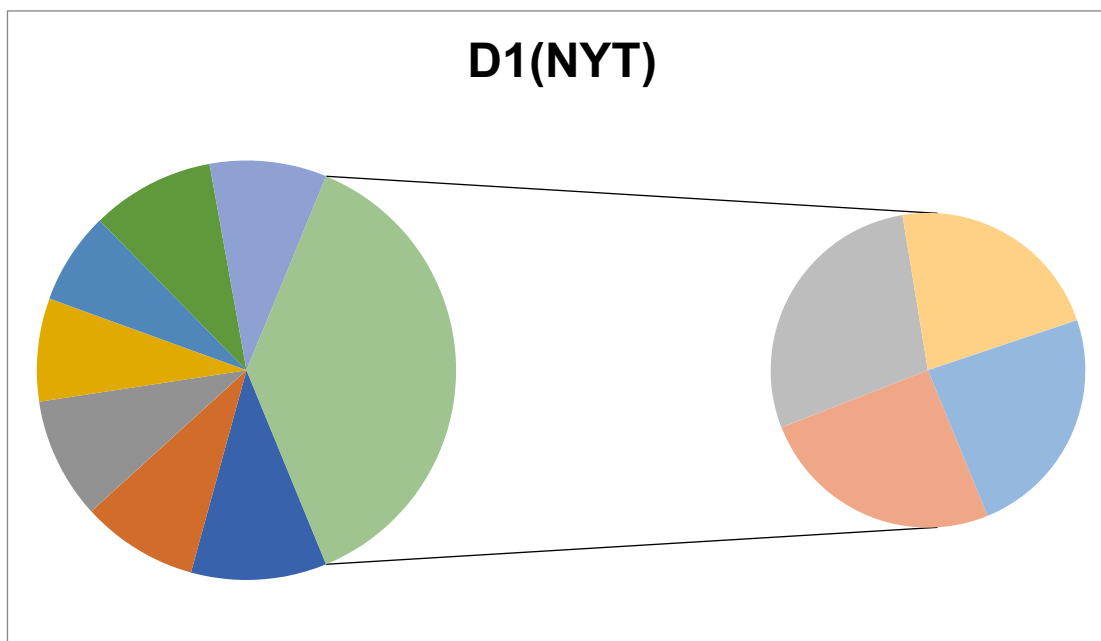
Two **major** alliances of lawyer groups **backed** by **different political** parties **faced** each **other** in the elections **for** which polling stations **were set up at** the Peshawar High Court, Mardan, Kohat, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Takht Bhai, and Swabi. (DAWN April 28, 2019)

Now, the second part of this chapter has discussed the analysis of one Pakistani newspaper with one British newspaper to carry out the variation among linguistic features throughout the years 2009 to 2019 to see the statistically significant and co-occurring linguistic features to prove the individual identity of both registers and also the ideology of the certain newspaper. Each Pakistani newspaper has been compared to each British newspaper on five textual dimensions to see the variations in co-occurring linguistic features and also based on informational features to see which newspaper is using these features abundantly and which is frugal in using these linguistic features. So, this part of the chapter carries out their separate analysis based on Biber's five literary dimensions to see the variation throughout the years in the use of co-occurring and significant linguistic features to establish the individual identity of registers and also to understand the ideological stance of the newspapers at large.

Figure 2 Dawn (Pak) Versus Daily Mail (Bri)

The figure above given from the Pakistani newspaper “Dawn” shows the contrast of Pakistani political press reporting diachronically ranging from 2009 to 2019 on D1. The above-mentioned graph clearly shows that Pakistani political press reporting was more informational in the year 2009 with a mean value of -21.5 which indicates that it is highly informational. However, this value of Pakistani political press reportage decreased in the year 2012 which shows progress in the standards of readership. However, in Pakistani political press reportage, it decreased in the year 2018 to a maximum value of -19.2 as analyzed at the start keeping in view the demand of readership. A continuous variation is observed in these scores throughout the years ranging from 2009 to 2019. However, in the year 2019, it decreased to a value of - 19.9 which shows progress in the standard of readers. The very instructive nature of Pakistani Political press announcing clearly demonstrates the established truth of a post-pioneer situation and multifaceted variation factors that have started to creep at interim the registers of each sort of English. The variations in each register are ordinarily observed keeping noticeable the crowd requests of each register as Pakistani medium register are a misuse of extra instructive phonetic choices because of the less taught group of spectators along these lines pleasing to the needs of masses. The variations are frequently observed by looking at the frequencies of educational phonetic choices of Pakistani press detailing during the time starting from 2009 to 2019.

“ISLAMABAD, June 10: Army authorities and **resigned junior charged** officials, who guarantee to **have endured** because of Malik Riaz. (June 10, 2012 DAWN)

Figure.3 The Nation (Pak) Versus Daily Telegraph (Bri)

The figure above given from the British newspaper “Daily Telegraph” shows the comparison of British political press reportage diachronically ranging from 2009 to 2019 on D1. The above-mentioned graph clearly shows that British political press reportage was more informational in the year 2009 with a mean value of -17.7 which indicates that it is highly informational. However, this value of British political press reportage decreased in the year 2013 to -12.1 which shows progress in the standards of readership. In British, it experienced a fall in the year 2012 to -13.2 and again became steady in the year 2016 with a mean value of -16.7 but a continuous variation is observed in these scores throughout the years ranging from 2009 to 2019. The less informational nature of British political press reportage is due to more educated readers as English is their native language.

Conclusion:

This diachronic study of political press reportage in Pakistani print media from 2009 to 2019, analyzed through Biber's multidimensional model, reveals significant insights into the evolution of Pakistani English as a distinct non-native variety. The findings underscore the linguistic variations that differentiate Pakistani English from British English, particularly in the context of political journalism.

Pakistani English has developed unique registers influenced by cultural, social, and postcolonial factors. This study confirms that Pakistani English exhibits significant deviations from British English, marked by unique linguistic features and structures. The analysis identified a dynamic progression in the use of linguistic features within Pakistani political press reportage. Over the ten years, fluctuations in the informational content were observed, reflecting changing readership

standards and audience demands. Pakistani political press reportage has shown a higher degree of informational content, particularly in the earlier years of the study, aligning with the needs of a less educated audience. This trend, however, demonstrated a decline in later years, indicating an improvement in readership standards and a more nuanced approach to political reporting.

The comparative analysis with British press reportage highlighted the distinctive characteristics of Pakistani English. British newspapers, catering to a more educated audience, maintained a relatively consistent level of informational content throughout the years. This consistency contrasts with the more variable nature of Pakistani press reportage, further emphasizing the adaptive and evolving nature of Pakistani English in response to socio-cultural demands. The study also reveals the influence of external and internal factors on the linguistic features of Pakistani political press reportage. External factors such as cross-cultural interactions and internal factors like audience literacy levels and socio-political context play a crucial role in shaping the linguistic landscape of Pakistani English.

Overall, this research establishes the independent identity of Pakistani English, demonstrating its divergence from British English through the lens of political press reportage. The findings contribute to the broader understanding of World Englishes, highlighting the importance of register variation studies in capturing the dynamic and multifaceted nature of language evolution in different cultural contexts. The study underscores the need for further exploration of other registers within Pakistani English to fully comprehend its unique characteristics and development as a distinct variety of English.

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