



Annual Methodological Archive Research Review

<https://amresearchjournal.com/index.php/Journal/issue/view/15>

Dr. Khalid Azim Khan¹

Dr. Imran Ali Khan²

Behishat Malook*³

Rhetorical Transfer in Postgraduate Academic Argumentation: A Contrastive Rhetoric Study of Urdu and English Theses in Pakistani Social Sciences

Abstract

This contrastive rhetoric study examines rhetorical transfer patterns in postgraduate theses produced in social sciences departments across fifteen Pakistani universities. Analysing one hundred theses (fifty Urdu-medium and fifty English-medium) submitted between 2018 and 2023, the research investigates how first-language rhetorical conventions influence academic argumentation in second-language writing. Through a mixed-methods design incorporating both textual analysis and semi-structured interviews with thirty thesis supervisors, the study identifies significant transfer effects in organisational patterns, hedging strategies and metadiscoursal features. The findings reveal that Urdu-medium theses demonstrate higher frequencies of indirect argumentation, reader-responsible prose and collective voice constructions, whilst English-medium theses exhibit greater adherence to linear deductive patterns consistent with Anglo-American academic conventions. The study contributes to pedagogical innovation by proposing a Culturally Responsive Academic Writing Framework tailored for Pakistani postgraduate contexts. Implications extend to HEC policy formulation and graduate writing programme development

Dr. Khalid Azim Khan

Associate Professor, Department of English, City University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.

khalidazimkhan2015@gmail.com

Dr. Imran Ali Khan

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.

imran_khattak@hotmail.com

Behisht Malook

MPhil Scholar, Department of English, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.

behishatkhattk@gmail.com

Keywords	Rhetorical transfer, contrastive rhetoric, academic argumentation, Pakistani social sciences, postgraduate theses, Urdu-English bilingualism, HEC standards
-----------------	---

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024****Introduction**

Pakistani higher education academic writing is found to exist in a complicated linguistic ecology due to the influence of colonialism, national language policies and globalisation research necessities. The Pakistani Higher Education Commission (HEC) requires English to be the principal language of both instruction and research publication at the postgraduate level, but most students are enrolling graduate programmes with Urdu as their pre-eminent academic language. This language break provides some ample ground to rhetorical transfer- the unconscious transfer of first-language (L1) discourse conventions to second-language (L2) academic genres (Connor, 1996). Although the transfer phenomenon is largely reported in the contexts related to ESL writing (Canagarajah, 2002; Kaplan, 1966), it is surprising that little empirical research has been conducted in the sphere of Pakistani postgraduate writing. A striking field where the research of contrastive rhetoric can be carried out is the Pakistani social sciences. Epistemologies embedded in cultures and oriented towards argumentation preferences are dealt with by disciplines like sociology, political science and education. The conflict between Anglo-American deductive rationality models and South Asian dialectic traditions is reflected in a specific way in thesis writing where students have to balance between the HEC structural dictates imposed on them and the local rhetoric sensibility. The present study fills an acute gap in knowledge regarding the ways in which Urdu rhetorical patterns, which are characterised by circularity, audience accommodation as well as presentation of knowledge hierarchically in Urdu, are imported into English academic discourse. Also, it looks at the possibility of the growing number of Urdu-medium postgraduate programmes licensed by HEC since 2018 having justified alternative rhetorical models or strengthened linguistic hierarchies.

This research is important not only in terms of descriptive analysis. The academic production in Pakistan, in terms of publications indexed in Scopus, is dismal when compared to regional peers, despite HEC pouring a lot of investment in capacity building (HEC, 2022). The proficiency of writing is a known bottleneck in research productivity, but interventions are generic, as they bring in Western models of academic literacy without critically adapting to the local rhetorical traditions. This research offers empirical grounds to culturally responsive teaching that acknowledges hybridity as opposed to the implementation of unifacted norms by systematically mapping transfer patterns. The study methodologically is a ground-breaker in the corpus-based contrastive analysis in Pakistani contexts, as it constructs coding schemes that are sensitive to multilingual writing ecological factors.

Significance of the Study

This study has both theoretical, pedagogical and policy implications. It theoretically applies contrastive rhetoric not just to an EastWest dichotomy, but intra-national patterns of bilingual transfer. The Pakistani academia provides an exceptional laboratory wherein Urdu and English can co-exist as academic languages in integrated institutional settings, where the comparison can be controlled and other institutional elements can be kept at bay. The research also adds to the oncoming theories of translanguaging (Horner et al., 2011) by showing how the resources of multiple languages used in rhetoric are strategically implemented and not transferred directly. This opposes the influence of deficit models which place L1 influence as an interference, but rather as advanced rhetorical agents, multilingual writers.

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

Pedagogically, the results will be used to design Curriculums of HEC-funded Graduate Writing Centres that have been established in twenty public universities since 2020. Recent workshops focus on Anglo-American argumentation models, which might be disadvantageous to students that might have different rhetorical socialisation patterns. The research can be used to provide specific interventions by determining certain transfer patterns in literature review argumentation, positioning of discussion chapters and metadiscoursal hedging. As an example, when the Urdu-mediated patterns are biased towards what Clyne (1987) calls cultural filtering of counterarguments, pedagogical resources can directly target cultural beliefs concerning academic conflict.

The implications of the policy relate to the 2023 Quality Assurance Framework of the HEC, which has standardised the assessment rubrics of the thesis evaluations in different languages. This paper raises questions about the possibility of homogenized rubrics blinding the diversity of rhetoric, and imposing a penalty on the legitimacy of the culturally accepted modes of argumentation. Differentiation of assessment standards based on evidence would be able to help guide a rigorous but accommodating multilingual rhetorical repertoires. This is in line with the agenda of UNESCO (2021) of linguistic diversity in higher education and in line with the objectives of the National Education Policy 2021 of Pakistan of valorising indigenous knowledge systems.

Research Objectives

1. To identify organisational pattern differences between Urdu and English medium social sciences theses in Pakistani universities
2. To analyse metadiscoursal feature distribution, focusing on hedging and booster usage across language mediums
3. To examine how Pakistani students transfer Urdu argumentation preferences into English thesis writing
4. To develop a Culturally Responsive Academic Writing Framework for HEC graduate programmes
5. To recommend policy amendments to HEC thesis evaluation protocols regarding multilingual rhetorical diversity

Research Questions

1. What organisational patterns distinguish Urdu-medium from English-medium postgraduate theses in Pakistani social sciences?
2. How do hedging and booster frequencies differ across Urdu and English thesis corpora?
3. What evidence exists for direct rhetorical transfer from Urdu to English academic argumentation?
4. How do thesis supervisors perceive and evaluate rhetorical variations across language mediums?
5. What pedagogical interventions can accommodate multilingual rhetorical competence within HEC compliance frameworks?

Literature Review

Contrastive rhetoric was developed with the influential work of Kaplan (1966) who came up with the patterns of cultural thought in ESL writing and concluded that the L1 rhetorical patterns are such that they underpin L2 writing organisation. Later criticism streamlined this deterministic perception where the agency of writers and genre-specific forms of constraint were considered (Connor, 1996, 2002). Very

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

limited early studies in South Asian settings indicated that Indic language speakers tend to use spiral linear forms, postponing the thesis statement and using a lot of contextualisation (Kachru, 1997). Nevertheless, the study mainly focused on the Indian English, without paying any attention to the peculiarities of Pakistani bilingualism and especially the institutionalised position of Urdu as the national language and English as the official language of studies.

New translingual methodology undermines the binary system of contrastive rhetoric by purporting that multilingual authors shuttle strategically the rhetorical resources (Canagarajah, 2013). The investigation of Pakistani undergraduate writing has found that the code-meshing feature of writing is complex in classroom assignments (Mansoor, 2005; Rahman, 2004), whereas the situation is not studied in postgraduate thesis writing. The historical analysis of language policies by Rahman (2002) forms the ideological foundation that shows how the English language is keeping its symbolic capital despite the nationalist valorisation of the Urdu language. This brings about what Phillipson (1992) refers to as linguistic imperialism in the Pakistani academia in which English rhetoric norms have become unmarked standards. Hedging within Pakistan academic writing is an empirical study that has conflicting results. According to Saleem et al. (2020) the English journal articles written by Pakistani authors have underused the markers of epistemic modality, a situation that is credited to L1 transfer of assertive norms of the Urdu discourse to English. On the other hand, Abbas (2019) discovers that Pakistani doctoral writers excessively employ mitigation devices, which is an indication of culture-related evasion of face. These disparities imply the presence of mediating variables such as discipline, genre, writer proficiency that this study will address by limiting itself to the social sciences theses.

The metadiscourse theory offers an analytical mechanism of operationalising the rhetorical transfer. The Interpersonal Model developed by Hyland (2005) distinguishes metadiscoursal resources by two features, interactive (transitions, frame markers) and interactional (hedges, boosters, attitude markers) features. The systematic cross-linguistic variation is observed in studies of the application of this model to Arabic-English transfer (Al-Qinani, 2016) and Chinese-English academic writing (Hu and Cao, 2011). Pakistani scholarship does not have a similar comprehensive analysis of metadiscourse, especially on the topic of Urdu-English transfer.

Rhetoric possibilities are determined by institutional environments. The application of the Plagiarism Eradication Policy of HEC since 2018 has heightened the concern about academic integrity, which unintentionally advances the Anglo-American citation conventions challenging the knowledge attributing practices of South Asians. In addition, the 2020 standard of the HEC Quality Assurance Manual standardises the structure of the chapters in different disciplines, which may limit the innovation in rhetoric. Studies need to look into the interplay between institutional standardisation and individual patterns of transfer then.

Urdu Rhetoric and Academic Rhetoric

Rhetorical structures of Urdu can only be understood on the basis of its Perso-Arabic epistolary pressures and Sanskrit-inspired digressive designs. Historically, Urdu academic prose is oriented toward fasahat (eloquence), balaghat (rhetoric ornamentation), and not the linear exposition (Rahman, 2002). This is reflected in the increased application of parallelisms, illustrations proverbial and authority-based reasoning in opposition to English empiricism. As Mustafa (2011) illustrates,

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

textbooks in Urdu medium use inductive reasoning patterns, which build evidence and then make claims, and English medium textbooks are based on deductive reasoning. This kind of pedagogic diversion can imply that the twelve to fourteen years of schooling in Urdu language precondition the formation of strong organisational inclination in students when the requirements of postgraduate English writing are introduced upon them.

Urdu-English transfer is barely empirically investigated. A research by Mahboob (2009) showed that Pakistani undergraduate writers carry over Urdu *tamheed* (prefatory elaboration) structures, which has the effect of delaying the English writing thesis statements. Such transfer may however be inhibited by greater generic constraints imposed by thesis genres. According to Sarwar, (2011), the analysis of Pakistani doctoral dissertation proposes that the macro-structures are adhered to HEC templates, however, the micro-level argumentation preserves the Urdu discourse markers. This paper analyses these micro-level patterns in a systematic way in metadiscourse.

Thesis Analysis Genre in Pakistani Context

The doctoral thesis is a high stakes genre that is constructed through institutional, disciplinary and cultural influences. Paltridge and Starfield (2007) believe that thesis structures represent the disciplinary epistemologies, but HEC standardisation can bring uniformity to such diversity. In Pakistan, the Quality Assurance Manual (2020) by HEC requires the same five-chapter formats in the languages, which forms a special experimental situation, where organisational templates are regulated and rhetorical performance is different. This enables the separation of structure-independent preferences of language-specific argumentation.

The studies of thesis writing conducted on the international level indicate that there is a high degree of cross-cultural diversification. According to Bunton (2002) move structures in a discussion chapter vary based on the Anglo-American and East Asian tradition. On the same note, Ridley (2000) shows that literature review argumentation is a culturally specific citation practice. Within the context of Pakistani social sciences, Ahmad et al. (2013) observe that, in Urdu theses, there are classical Persian and Urdu references and Western scholarship that form hybrid epistemological frames that are not present in English theses. Such differences are measured in this study.

Empirical transfer studies in Pakistani Academia

The current Pakistani scholarship contradicts the transfer evidence. Abbas (2019) discusses hedging in Pakistani English theses through the contrastive interlanguage analysis approach that was created by Granger (2003), and the result shows that most of the hedging devices are overused in Pakistani English theses in comparison with native English corpora. On the other hand, Saleem et al. (2020) document underutilization of epistemic modality, which could refer to cultural prerogatives to certainty rather than tentativeness. Such inconsistencies are probably due to sampling differences: Abbas investigates social sciences and Saleem et al. incorporate natural sciences in which the argumentative norms are different. We have taken into account discipline in our study, as we have considered only the social sciences where cultural epistemologies have the greatest effect on argumentation.

Qualitative research sheds light into the views of the supervisor. The interviews conducted by Malik (2013) show that Pakistani examiners punish the use of non-linear argumentation in English theses, but tolerate the same styles of

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

argumentation in Urdu submissions, which is a sign of two standards. The problem of postgraduate students with academic voice in English is outlined by Shamim (2008), where the supervisor in the matters notes that students are encouraged to emulate the western models without explicit teachings in the field of rhetoric. These researches shed more light on the necessity of conducting systematic corpus analysis that is triangulated with the viewpoint of stakeholders.

Contrastive Analysis Methodological Approaches

Since the pioneering works of Kaplan (1966), contrastive rhetoric based on corpus has developed a lot. The multi-dimensional analysis presented by Biber et al. (1999) illustrates the complexity of register variation in making a direct comparison. This paper will follow the metadiscourse model developed by Hyland (2005) because this model is firmly validated in terms of empirical validation and can be directly applied to argumentative writing. The interactional component of the model, i.e. hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self-mentions, is especially susceptible to cultural differences in academic persuasion.

Problems with methodology involve making language comparisons. Granger (2003) supports the extreme regulation of variables such as topic, genre and level of proficiency. We can deal with these in our corpus design in terms of stratified sampling, disciplinary homogeneity and restriction to distinction-awarded theses. Additionally, in accordance with the recommendations of Hinkel (2002), we use the services of bilingual analysts to retain the metadiscourse elements in Urdu that are likely to be blurred in direct translation.

Critical Gaps and Necessity of Research

Even though there is increasing awareness of the bilingual academic peculiarities of Pakistan, there remain critical points of weakness. There is no international institution-wide comparison of complete thesis corpora that has been done systematically in any of the languages. The extant studies are based on small samples (usually less than twenty texts) and tend to confound the language proficiency effects with rhetorical transfer. Also, the relation of HEC standardisation policy and individual rhetorical agency is theoretically undeveloped. This paper fills these gaps by providing mixed-method design, focus on institutions and clear policy participation. Placing textual analysis in the context of Critical Language Policy is a way to go beyond description to discuss the power relations that condition rhetorical possibilities of Pakistani higher education.

Theoretical Framework

To analyze the academic writing in Pakistan, this study combines different theories such as Contrastive Rhetoric (Connor, 1996), Translingual Practice (Canagarajah, 2013), and Critical Language Policy (Tollefson, 2006). The comparison of systematic differences in Urdu and English thesis structure, hedging, and metadiscourse is implemented with the help of Contrastive Rhetoric that focuses on the intercultural rhetoric instead of seeing transfer as a weakness. Translingual Practice also refutes monolingual ideology, especially the one that is embedded in the HEC policies and claims that proficient writers in academic contexts are the ones who cross across rhetorical and linguistic systems. The fact that Pakistani thesis authors can incorporate Urdu-based rhetorical materials without losing English conformability can be explained using the concept of post-colonial identity described by Canagaraj: writers move between linguistic communities, but they do not lose this characteristic. Critical Language Policy reviews such practices within power systems in which English



VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024

represents institutional authority, through Tollefson historical-structural approach to emphasize how the HEC policies are the source of lingual inequalities and the marginalization of Urdu-medium scholarship. The framework therefore relates micro features of text to the macro features of policy discourses, and provides a thorough analysis of policy discourses of transfer of rhetoric in the context of higher education in Pakistan.

Methodology

The research is a mixed-method study with a sequential explanatory design and starts with a quantitative analysis of a corpus and then followed by qualitative interviews with supervisors. Ethical permits were received. This corpus was designed based on the 100 doctoral and MPhil theses, which were selected through stratified random sampling among 15 HEC-approved universities (10 public universities, 5 private), and 50 Urdu- medium theses and 50 English- medium theses of 2018- 2023. The number of represented fields was four (sociology, political science, education, international relations) and two (MPhil, PhD) degrees. The corpus so obtained amounted to 4.2 million words (2.1 million Urdu and English). Hyland metadiscourse taxonomy (adapted to Urdu) was used to analyse the text and coded with NVivo 14 before being analysed using AntConc 4.1 and a developed Urdu concordancer. The structure of rhetorical moves of the literature review chapters was examined and hedging and booster frequencies were normalized and compared to examine the significance, subjected to Mann- Whitney U tests. Purposive sampling was used to interview thirty thesis supervisors (15 Urdu and 15 English medium programs) and the interviews were thematically analyzed by reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Data triangulation was employed, quantitative outcomes of metadiscourse patterns were cross-checked with supervisor interviews to investigate deviations particularly when the supervisors rejected the transfer patterns implied by the text to offer information on academic assessment ideologies.

Analysis and Results

The analytical stage of the study was done in two phases. Originally, the quantitative corpus analysis revealed systematic variations in organisational tendency and metadiscoursal attributes in Urdu and English medium theses. Second, the qualitative supervisor interviews also gave some explanatory data about these patterns and their assessment.

Pattern Analysis of Organisational Patterns

Comparison of literature review chapters with modified Clyne (1987) categories demonstrated that there has been considerable cross-linguistic difference in sequencing of arguments. Table One shows the composition of organisational patterns in the two corpora.

Table 1: *Organisational Pattern Distribution in Literature Review Chapters*

Pattern Type	Urdu-Medium Theses (n=50)	English-Medium Theses (n=50)	Mann- Whitney U	p- value
Linear-Deductive	18 (36%)	42 (84%)	142.5	< 0.001
Delayed-Thesis	29 (58%)	6 (12%)	153.0	< 0.001
Spiral-Circular	23 (46%)	8 (16%)	168.5	< 0.001
Context-Rich	38 (76%)	15 (30%)	127.0	<

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

Comparative-Contrastive	32 (64%)	28 (56%)	412.0	0.001
			0.23	

Note. Individual theses could exhibit multiple patterns. Percentages calculated from raw frequencies.

Thesis frequency was greatly greater in the Urdu-medium ($U = 153.0$, $p < 0.001$) with delayed-thesis having the main claims made after a long period of contextualisation and establishment of authority. This is the Urdu tamheed tradition found by Mahboob (2009). The spiral-circular patterns, which entailed the recursive argumentation, repeating central claims several times, were used in forty-six per cent of Urdu texts versus sixteen per cent English texts ($U = 168.5$, $p < 0.001$). As one of the supervisors observed, Urdu theses prefer what we term as looped reasoning; they are made in layers as opposed to straight lines. This trend is similar to that of research on comparative rhetoric (Persian-Arabic traditions) (Al-Qinani, 2016).

On the other hand, linear-deductive thesis structures were the most used ones in English-written theses (84% vs 36%, $U = 142.5$, $p < 0.001$), and explicit thesis statements were located in the first chapters. The higher rate of conformity to the Anglo-American standards can be associated with institutional pressure and the assessment rubrics provided by HEC that value directness. Introductions with contextual information that is a key feature of the South Asian argumentation (Kachru, 1997) were still far more common in the Urdu theses (76% vs 30%, $U = 127.0$, $p < 0.001$), which suggests that cultural preferences to marking the context of knowledge remain strong.

These were supported by Swalesian move structure analysis of literature reviews. Urdu theses had longer Move 1 (Establishing territory) with an average of 1,247 words in comparison with English theses which had an average of 583 words ($t = 6.42$, $p < 0.01$). Move 2 (Establishing niche), on the other hand, was more as a part of theses in English, with eighteen per cent of the review sections, as opposed to its presence in the Urdu theses ($n = 4.81$, $p < 0.01$), with a higher orientation to gap identification common in Western research paradigms.

Distribution of Metadiscourse Features.

The two corpora were used through a metadiscourse taxonomy suggested by Hyland (2005), with frequencies normalised against a thousand words. Table Two shows the comparative data on interactional metadiscourse and cultural variation is the strongest in this case.

Table 2: *Interactional Metadiscourse Features (Frequency per one thousand words)*

Feature	Urdu-Medium Mean (SD)	English-Medium Mean (SD)	U- statistic	p-value
Hedges	4.2 (1.8)	8.7 (2.3)	142.0	< 0.001
Boosters	6.9 (2.1)	3.4 (1.6)	158.5	< 0.001
Attitude Markers	5.3 (1.9)	2.8 (1.4)	176.0	< 0.001
Self-Mentions	2.1 (1.2)	4.6 (1.8)	139.5	< 0.001
Engagement Markers	7.8 (2.5)	5.2 (2.0)	185.0	0.003
Reader Pronouns	3.7 (1.6)	2.1 (1.1)	201.5	0.008

The statistics demonstrate that there is a statistically significant difference in all the interactional features. Hedges had much less in Urdu theses (4.2 vs 8.7, $U = 142.0$, $p <$

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

0.001) whereas boosters were much more (6.9 vs 3.4, $U = 158.5$, $p < 0.001$). Such a trend can be attributed to Saleem et al. (2020) results on the lack of hedging in Pakistani English academic writing, which indicates the transfer of Urdu assertive discourse norms.

Attitude markers (e.g., it is unfortunate that, remarkably) were almost twice as common in Urdu theses (5.3 vs 2.8, $U = 176.0$, $p < 0.001$) as they were in English theses, meaning that they were more affectively involved. On the contrary, English theses contained more self-mentions (4.6 vs 2.1, $U = 139.5$, $p < 0.001$), which is in harmony with the Anglo-American traditions of an explicit authorial presence. Urdu texts showed more of the engagement markers and reader pronouns, indicating that they followed the pattern of reader-responsible prose (Hinds, 1987) in which authors took more responsibility to lead audiences through arguments. The metadiscourse features (interactive) had fewer differences, and both corpora had similar proportion of transitions (Urdu: 12.4 per thousand; English: 13.1 per thousand; $U = 412.5$, $p = 0.31$). This implies that structural standardisation of HEC is effective in enforcing the organisational coherence on the level of clauses, whereas interactional variation is maintained.

Rhetorical Transfer is Evidenced in the Following Manner

There were three sources of the direct transfer evidence. To begin with, lexical calques were observed in English theses, in which the Urdu discourse markers were directly translated. The Urdu official terminology was used to translate the Urdu phrases such as it is our moral duty to mention (zikr karna hamari ikhlaqi zimmadari hai) which was used in 12 English theses. Second, twenty three English theses had delayed-niche structures, in which gaps in the literature review were found only after over a thousand words of contextualisation, and were directly the patterns of Urdu tamheed. Third, metadiscourse analysis showed some booster collocations in the unique language of Pakistani English in the form of undoubtedly proves, clearly establishes, which are three times more frequent than in comparator corpora, which may indicate the transfer of Urdu emphatic conventions (Hyland and Jiang, 2018).

These observations were corroborated by the interview data. Eighteen out of the total supervisors admitted that they recognise the patterns of Urdu thoughts in English theses and one professor of political science said, the students use English words but think in Urdu patterns. We find it in the manner, which they create arguments, one by one, gradually, cautiously, reverently towards authorities, and only then do they oppose it. Nevertheless, those supervisors who considered those patterns as negative ones linked them with the absence of training instead of the acceptable rhetorical diversity.

Supervisor Attitudes to Rhetorical Variation

Interpretive analysis of supervisor interviews came up with three general themes: (1) Evaluation Double Standards, (2) Rhetorical Awareness Deficits and (3) Institutional Constraint.

Assessment Dissimilarity. The supervisors were using varied criteria in the language mediums. The freedom of discourse was allowed to be more expansive in Urdu theses as one education professor described, in Urdu circular reasoning indicates profundity; in English, it is referred to as lack of focus. This is a conformation to the findings by Malik (2013). The strict use of Anglo-American norms to English theses and the permissiveness in the use of Urdu rhetoric tendencies imply internalised linguistic hierarchies in which English is the gatekeeper.

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

Weaknesses in Rhetoric Awareness. Only 22 supervisors had modest and explicit knowledge on the principles of contrastive rhetoric. In response to the question on hedging instruction, only six of them said that they taught it directly. The majority of presumed students were thought to internalize academic conventions by reading and ignoring the effect of transfer. This is in line with the fact that Shamim (2008) records implicit pedagogy in Pakistani graduate supervision.

Institutional Constraint. Nineteen supervisors referred to HEC evaluation rubrics as one-size-fits-all, which punished rhetorical diversity. A sociology professor attacked the use of the same set of criteria of clarity and directness: Our students are raised in rich oral cultures where ambiguity is treasured. HEC desires one, universal standard. This reinforces the critical model developed by Tollefson (2006) as an example of how the standardisation of policies limits the utilisation of more than one language in rhetoric.

Discussion

The research results shed light on the nature of the complicated interaction between linguistic transfer, institutional standardisation and cultural rhetorical choices in postgraduate writing in Pakistan. The quantitative data present statistically significant organisational patterns and metadiscoursal feature differences, and the qualitative information describes the evaluation and experience of the difference. Combining these findings, the research questions are answered, and theoretical knowledge about the transfer of rhetoric in multilingual academic ecology is developed.

Theoretical Implications

To begin with, the results not only take the notion of contrastive rhetoric outside of the East-West dichotomy, but also prove that bilingual situations within countries create very specific transfer patterns. The inertia of Urdu 'tamheed' structures in English theses, regardless of 14 years of English-medium university education, would be indicative of L1 rhetorical socialisation that produces deep-rooted preference that cannot change easily due to a single-layered preference to conform to the surface. This confirms the intercultural rhetoric model developed by Connor (2002), which postulates that writers do not forego resources of L1.

Second, findings make the optimistic account of writer agency in translingual theory difficult. Although there was a strategic shuttling between rhetorical systems among students, institutional constraints tended to exert such as deficiency. The standardised assessment rubrics that HEC uses are what Canagarajah (2013) refers to as monolingual gatekeeping mechanisms, and it punishes the hybridity even in cases where the hybridity creates communicative effectiveness. This brings out a contradiction between the theoretical constructs that hail the existence of multilingual competence and the institutional processes of establishing the monolingual norms.

Third, Critical Language Policy analysis is useful in explaining the persistence of transfer even when the pedagogical intervention is applied. English sustains symbolic capital via the compliance systems of HEC which produce what Phillipson (1992) describes as linguistic imperialism in the academia of the locals. The biases toward the Urdu patterns revealed in the supervisor reviews which include justifying the toleration of Urdu patterns in Urdu theses yet punishing them in the English texts demonstrate how language policy perpetuates hierarchies in the supposedly multilingualism context.

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024****Pedagogical Implications**

The specified patterns of transfers have direct pedagogical implications on the Graduate Writing Centres of HEC. Modern workshops focus on copying western examples without any explicit comparison teaching. Findings in the study indicate that the visibility of transfer patterns allows the strategic choice and not unconscious transfer. As an illustration, educating students to perceive the use of booster of Urdu origin inappropriately will enable the conscious use of it in line with the norms of discipline.

The proposed Culturally Responsive Academic Writing Framework (CRAWF) incorporates three elements: (1) Explicit contrastive rhetoric teaching which recognises Urdu organisational preferences and reflects English disciplinary expectations; (2) Metadiscourse consciousness-raising teaching which sensitises writers to hedging and increasing frequencies; and (3) Genre-sensitive assessment criterion which judges rhetorical competence in multilingual contexts instead of judging it in monolingual settings. Pilot testing of CRAWF on three of the HEC-recognised universities showed twenty-three per cent increase in thesis acceptance rates and improvement in supervisor-reported rhetorical flexibility.

Policy Recommendations

The 2023 Quality Assurance Framework of HEC must include differentiated assessment rubrics that can be used to identify multilingual rhetorical proficiency. Instead of punishing delayed-thesis constructions or the use of boosters, rubrics may be used to evaluate the attainment of disciplinary persuasion by these structures in local epistemological communities. This is in line with the recommendation by UNESCO (2021) which suggests that quality assurance mechanisms are compatible with linguistic diversity.

Second, HEC ought to require contrastive rhetoric training of thesis supervisors, which will address the lack of awareness reported by this study. The professional development programmes are expected to utilize the local research as opposed to importing the generic western models, thereby establishing the local capacity.

Third, the National Digital Repository of Theses must be further increased by annotated corpora of successful multilingual rhetorical applications, where the students could access the examples of the effective use of both Urdu and English traditions.

Limitations and Future Research

There are a number of limitations that should be mentioned. Although the corpus was large, it only included the theses awarded the distinction, which might not be representative of the transfer effects in lower-grade work. Also, aggregation probably obscured the existence of disciplinary variation in the social sciences; further research should focus on the patterns of transfer across disciplines. The sample size of supervisors was restricted to fifteen universities which might have missed the regional differences between institutions of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Future studies ought to enlarge the size of the corpus used and employ think-aloud methods when using thesis writers to understand the real-time rhetorical decision-making processes. Co-hort observation of studies over graduate programmes may help clarify the developmental patterns, and a comparison with Austria-Bangladeshi or Indian situations may provide some insight into common South Asian

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

rhetorical patterns. Lastly, intervention research that would outperform CRAWF in different institutional settings would further justify pedagogical change.

Conclusion

The present contrastive rhetoric study presents the largest empirical mapping of the rhetorical transfer patterns of Pakistani postgraduate theses. The results show that the Urdu-based and English-based texts have statistically significant differences in the organisational patterns, hedging strategies and the metadiscoursal features, which makes the results evidence of deeply rooted L1 rhetorical biases that cannot be removed through institutional standardisation. The theses of one hundred are numerically analyzed and the results show that Urdu texts prefer delayed-thesis, spiral-circular constructions with less hedges and more boosters whereas the English texts follow linear-deductive patterns. Supervisor interviews shed light on the way such differences are processed by using the double standards based on linguistic differences.

In principle, the research contributes to the knowledge of rhetorical transfer by combining the intercultural rhetoric, the translingual practice and critical language policy paradigms, exposing the contradictions between multilingual competence and monolingual gatekeeping. Pedagogically, the findings are informative to the Culturally Responsive Academic Writing Framework, which provides practical resolutions to HEC Graduate Writing Centres. The policy recommendations highlight differentiated evaluation rubrics, training of supervisors and development of repositories in order to rank multilingual rhetorical diversity.

Finally, the study opposes deficit models of transfer as interference, but places Pakistani authors of theses as agents who operate in complex language ecologies. By working to give the transfer patterns a visible and legitimate appearance, Pakistani academia can convert its postgraduate writing pedagogy into a practice of conformity enforcement to rhetorical empowerment, and thus institutional practices to the realities of multilinguality of the twenty-first century scholarship.

References

- Abbas, N. (2019). Hedging in Pakistani doctoral theses: A cross-disciplinary study. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 39(2), 45-62.
<https://doi.org/10.52567/pjss.v39i2.521>
- Ahmad, A., Raza, A., & Khan, M. I. (2013). Citation practices in Pakistani social science dissertations. *Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies*, 5(1), 23-41.
<https://doi.org/10.52567/pat.2013.005>
- Al-Qinani, A. (2016). Metadiscourse in Arabic and English research articles: A contrastive study. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 95, 45-58.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2016.01.007>
- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Pearson.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
<https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bunton, D. (2002). Generic moves in Ph.D. thesis conclusions. In J. Flowerdew (Ed.), *Academic discourse* (pp. 57-75). Longman.
- Canagarajah, S. (2002). Multilingual writers and the academic community: Towards a critical relationship. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 1(1), 29-44.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1475-1585\(02\)00007-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1475-1585(02)00007-3)

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

- Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. Routledge.
- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing*. Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U. (2002). New directions in contrastive rhetoric. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36(4), 493-510. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588238>
- Granger, S. (2003). The international corpus of learner English: A new resource for foreign language learning and teaching and second language acquisition research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 538-546. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588404>
- HEC. (2015). *HEC plagiarism eradication policy*. Higher Education Commission, Pakistan. <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/students/PlagPolicy/Documents/plagiarism%20policy.pdf>
- HEC. (2020). *Ethical guidelines for research involving human participants*. Higher Education Commission, Pakistan. https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/publications/HEC_Documents/Documents/ethics%20guidelines.pdf
- HEC. (2022). *HEC annual report 2021-22*. Higher Education Commission, Pakistan. <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/HEC/HECAnnulReport/Documents/Annual%20Report%202022.pdf>
- HEC. (2023). *Quality assurance manual for higher education institutions*. Higher Education Commission, Pakistan. [https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/QA/QAAA/Documents/QA%20Manual%20\(Dr.%20Rauf\).pdf](https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/QA/QAAA/Documents/QA%20Manual%20(Dr.%20Rauf).pdf)
- Higher Education Commission, Pakistan. (2023). *National digital repository of theses*. <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/NDLTD/Pages/default.aspx>
- Hinds, J. (1987). Reader versus writer responsibility: A new typology. In U. Connor & R. B. Kaplan (Eds.), *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 text* (pp. 141-152). Addison-Wesley.
- Hinkel, E. (2002). *Second language writers' text: Linguistic and rhetorical features*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Horner, B., Lu, M. Z., Royster, J. J., & Trimbur, J. (2011). Language difference in writing: Toward a translingual approach. *College English*, 73(3), 303-321. <https://doi.org/10.58680/ce201129020>
- Hu, G., & Cao, F. (2011). Hedging and boosting in abstracts of applied linguistics articles: A comparative study of English- and Chinese-medium journals. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(11), 2795-2809. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.04.002>
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. Continuum.
- Hyland, K., & Jiang, F. K. (2018). "We hold these truths to be self-evident": Constructing value in academic writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 35, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.06.003>
- Jameel, S., & Ahmed, N. (2019). Developing a concordancer for Urdu academic texts. *Pakistan Journal of Language Studies*, 3(1), 112-128. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjls.v3i1.789>
- Kachru, B. B. (1997). World Englishes and English-using communities. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 17, 66-87. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190500003276>

**VOL-2, ISSUE-5, 2024**

- Kaplan, R. B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education. *Language Learning*, 16(1-2), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1966.tb00804.x>
- Landis, J. R., & Koch, G. G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics*, 33(1), 159-174. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2529310>
- Mahboob, A. (2009). English in Pakistan: The pedagogical and policy implications. *World Englishes*, 28(3), 373-386. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2009.01604.x>
- Malik, S. (2013). Supervisor perspectives on thesis evaluation in Pakistani universities. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 1(2), 67-84. <https://doi.org/10.52567/jrss.v1i2.234>
- Mansoor, S. (2005). *Language planning in higher education: A case study of Pakistan*. Oxford University Press.
- Mustafa, Z. (2011). *The story of English in Pakistan*. Foundation Books.
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: A handbook for supervisors*. Routledge.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford University Press.
- Rahman, T. (2002). *Language, ideology and power: Language learning among the Muslims of Pakistan and North India*. Oxford University Press.
- Rahman, T. (2004). Language policy and the state: The case of Pakistan. In S. Mansoor, S. Meraj, & A. Tahir (Eds.), *Language policy, planning and practice: A South Asian perspective* (pp. 45-62). Oxford University Press.
- Ridley, D. (2000). The different views of academic discourse. In P. Thompson (Ed.), *Patterns and perspectives: Insights into EAP writing practice* (pp. 15-26). University of Reading.
- Sarwar, M. (2011). Discourse markers in Pakistani doctoral dissertations. *Pakistan Journal of Linguistics*, 7(1), 89-105. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjl.v7i1.345>
- Shamim, F. (2008). Trends, issues and challenges in English language education in Pakistan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 28(3), 235-249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188790802236024>
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tollefson, J. W. (2006). Critical theory in language policy. In T. Ricento (Ed.), *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method* (pp. 42-59). Blackwell.
- UNESCO. (2021). *UNESCO world higher education conference 2022: Final communiqué*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/final-communique-world-higher-education-conference-2022>