A Corpus-based Study of Analyzing the Lexical Specificity in the Preface Section of the Selected Pakistani Academic Textbooks

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Abstract

A preface is the author's endeavor to describe the text and indicates why the text has been written. It also underlines some of the author's references and the text's relevant point of concern. Thus, the preface functions as the author's introduction to the book. It is the section of the book in which the authors guide the reader about the text and share their opinions and beliefs on the text's content. Due to the importance of prefaces in textbooks, the present study attempts to explore the linguistic specificity in the preface section of the Pakistani academic soft discipline textbooks at Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) and Bachelor's level. As specificity in writing is a crucial concept in using English for academic purposes. In a mix-method study, we have used the quantitative method (statistical percentage) in which the frequency along with percentage is recorded and further qualitatively interpreted with the help of concordance lines via AntConc software. The data of this study is compiled with the assistance of text fixer and file converter software. For the analysis of the corpus, Ken Hyland's (2009) model of lexical Specificity is adopted. The self-mention and hedges categories of the lexical specificity model have been analyzed for the preface section. The findings showed that there has been frequent use of the first-person pronoun 'I and we' to build the authorial stance in the preface section. Further, the hedges like 'will and would' used in the preface section of the textbooks manifested the positive attitude of the authors by establishing solidarity for their readership and increasing the communicative tendency of the text. Thus, it is concluded that the preface of soft sciences textbooks would act as the mean with having dual communicative purposes, either to present the book and to publicize it to the potential readers.

Keywords: specificity, preface, self-mention and hedges, soft discipline textbooks

1. Introduction

Textbook plays an influential role throughout academia. It is basically a lengthy piece of writing and comprised of a long period of extensive research to contribute to the originality in the field of knowledge. In addition, it also provides the guiding principles for the students, teachers, and scholars. Academic textbooks are further comprised of many disciplines which include hard sciences (biology, chemistry, and physics) and soft sciences (economics, law, education, history linguistics). The members of the specific discipline are responsible for constructing a world view and developing unique modes of discourse (Bruffee, 1986; Wells, 1992; Hyland, 2012). Some disciplines are based on investigating the physical world that includes the health sector while other disciplines require the systematic view of the society in terms of language, cultural and historical perspective.

Different sections are incorporated within the academic textbooks which serve as the gateway to the book. These are the introductory section and the main content of the books. The introductory section includes many subcategories as forewords, preface, introductions, and acknowledgments. Thus, a textbook is qualified as an academic genre that provides the credited facts. Typically, academic textbooks are considered to have a peripheral position and are spotted as commercial undertakings (Hyland, 2004). Furthermore, Swales (1995) stated that academic textbooks require not to be discarded from the study of the genre as it provides the applicable research findings, incorporate new research findings, and introduce contemporary topics for study. Every text or genre has its own specific linguistic choices that need to be evaluated to uncover the communicative purpose of the specific genre or text. In this specific context, the preface section of the academic textbook has been selected to understand the specific lexical features employed in this part.

On this account, the 'specificity model' proposed by Hyland (2009) is used for the lexical specificity of the preface section. Specificity is a trait in the language that separates different referents (nouns) as is explicit to a particular context (Hyland, 2008). This notion further maintains that every language has some linguistic/lexical features and these features fluctuate in different genres. The same is true with disciplinary variation as each draws heavily on distinct lexical items, grammatical choices, and rhetorical features for creating unique specialized knowledge. Such as

the discipline of science characterizes with technical vocabulary having mostly of specialist terms which explain the happening or existence of something in the world. The humanities discipline is accompanied by dictions related to abstraction. That leads from illustrations then moving to generalizations for the construction of more abstract versions of any events. Thus, the text is specific to discipline grounded on the marked lexical diversity of that domain (Prior, 1998; Hyland, 2002).

In the nutshell, the disciplinary variation is dependent on the community in which the specialists used a repertoire of literacy practices. Hence, the specialists are the skillful writers/authors who are thoughtful of their readers like any communicator. Accordingly, the writing is only considered to be successful if it is based on the appropriate understanding of professional context (Hyland & Bondi, 2006). So the authors of the textbook used the colony of genres such as preface, forwards to communicate with readers directly about their attitudes and beliefs related to the text. Though college-level students come across with the blending of different academic subjects and it is sometimes problematic for them to find suitable textbooks of a specific discipline. Based on this, it is also hard to read the whole textbook before purchasing it. The only way of analyzing the quality of the competitive textbook is dependent on the effective preface section. It acts as a doorstep that inspires the reader's community and instigates the novice writers/authors towards developing the language sensitivity used in different academic genres such as preface. In order to realize the linguistics choices employed in the preface section of the textbooks the present study aims; to find out the common lexical features for self-mention and hedges used by Pakistani authors in the preface section of academic textbooks and to explore the specific lexical features for self-mention and hedges to understand the communicative purpose in the preface section of Pakistani academic textbooks.

2. Literature Review

Over the past few decades, a wide range of scrutiny of genre patterns and the schematic structure of textbooks have been recorded in cross-discipline with special consideration on the introductory section. Yet, the former studies in this area have been rather confined in extent because they concentrated on particular genres patterns. Thus, there appears to be scope for further

exploring the introductory section of the textbooks with a particular focus on the preface. As the crucial task of textbook authors is to convince the potential audience to buy it. The humble way is to write an effective preface (introductory note) that aims to persuade the readers to buy a book. In Pakistan, English is regarded as a lingua franca, and it is used in almost all academia (Mackenzie, 2014). It is noteworthy to explore the Pakistani textbook written in the English language as it provides insight into the ways the English language is being modified by the authors (Aib & Zahra, 2018). Therefore, this study is based on exploring the common lexical features used by the Pakistani authors and the specific lexical choices that assist to understand the communicative purpose of the preface section of the academic textbooks.

As evident from the previous studies, the textbook is a notable academic genre in a professional setting. On this ground, Swales (1995) asserts that the role of the textbook authors not only is to communicate with students but also to the audience in the professional domain who are concerned in evaluating the academic textbooks, they are inclined to write reviews about the textbooks and make a decision whether these textbooks are applicable in the classroom or not. He further extends his claims that academic textbooks are more dialogic as it establishes the interaction between evaluator-reader rather than with the consumer-reader. Thus, it seems that the textbook authors are tied up with the lucid nature of the writing task. This leads to the present study of concentrating on the textbooks' preface section at both the level of academic and promotional genre.

Textbooks' introduction entails many subcategories which include an introduction, preface, forward note, and acknowledgment. Among these, the textbook's preface provides a view of the books as a whole and also presents the promotional aspect (Bhatia, 1997, 2004). According to Bhatia (1997), textbooks' introductions and prefaces are both distinct categories. The introduction of the textbooks is informative while the preface of textbooks serves both the promotional and informative function. Thus, prefaces would act as the medium with dual communicative purposes, to present the book and to publicize it to the potential readers. As emphasized by Mohsenzadeh, "Prefaces are crucial because they enable the reader to gain an overview of the book, to get some information about the different sections of it, and therefore to

determine which parts correlate to their aim in mind and thus worth to read" (2013, p.318). Regardless of this prominence, book prefaces are mostly under-researched.

Few studies have been conducted on the textbooks' preface as a persuasive genre. In one of the studies, Kuhi (2008) investigated a total of 21 textbooks prefaces and the textbooks were selected centered on writer experiences in order to study the pattern of move structure by applying Swale's analysis (1990). He identified four move structures i.e. purpose, audience, chapter introduction, and acknowledgment. Genre-related study of preface sections of the textbooks was further held by Azar (2012). He conducted the study on 22 prefaces in the field of linguistics and applied linguistics. By employing the Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) pattern of moves analysis, he pinpointed 4 moves pattern to construct a niche, establishing the orientation, sketch of chapters, and acknowledgment. This structural framework suggests the textual tactics manipulated by authors in order to approach their communicative goal. Another study on the move pattern of books prefaces was conducted by Abdollahzadeh and Salarvand, (2013). They explored the move patterns of book prefaces specifically in three distinct fields of study related to management, metallurgy, mathematics. They have taken 180 academic books from 2000-2011 respectively. They have further analyzed the frequencies of move and step in the corpus of the preface. According to this corpus-based study, there are no considerable differences between the three disciplines in terms of move structure, with reference to communicative purposes and readers' expectations. These studies revealed the fact that the textbook prefaces display both informational and promotional features. Hence, textbooks preface is a kind of metatextual genre that provides an interactive platform to manifest the real-time mediation in a discourse between participants which includes the readers and stakeholders.

In the context of Pakistan, textbooks play a vital role in teaching and learning resources that are used across the curriculum at the level of schools, colleges and universities. Just like in other countries, Pakistan also has designed a procedure to evaluate academic textbooks. There ought to be a consistent struggle and demanding research required for developing and producing one single piece of a textbook. The quality of the textbooks depends on the process of textbooks evaluation that is based on field-testing. In Pakistan, the Ministry of Education (Curriculum wing)

is responsible to devise and sanction the curriculum for the subjects till the intermediate level. The curriculum wing has been authorized to prescribe and remove any textual data which is inconvenient for students (Mahmood, Iqbal, & Saeed, 2009). Although textbooks have a massive impact on what and how is education being imparted in primary, elementary, secondary, and higher secondary classes. Most teachers use textbooks as their first curriculum manual and thus receive paramount importance in Pakistani teaching domains. In developing countries, textbooks are considered as the only medium of information by the teachers. It has been revealed that textbook is the single accessible learning source in most educational institutions. Further materials as teaching audio-visual aids, additional reading e-books and school libraries are practically rare (Mahmood et al., 2009). The most renowned publishers in this respect include Dogars publishers, Auraq, Learners, Scholars and Global publications houses which produce academic books every year with revised editions. The present study is focused on the academic textbooks prefaces of social sciences at Higher Secondary School Certificate and undergraduate/Bachelors's level written by Pakistani authors.

Just like any genre, the preface genre also entails lexical choices which writers manifested through the specificity of diction in writing. Specificity is a tool that works in highlighting the specific lexical features of academic writing. In 2008, Hyland asserts that specificity in writing is a crucial concept in using English for academic purposes. His further findings reveal that within disciplinary specificity, there is a significant difference between soft and hard disciplines. For any specific purpose within a particular discourse community, the usage of language is governed by certain specific conventions. That is why all the discourse community depends on its unique characteristic features of communication. In order to understand the different linguistic features to identify and appreciate the language across disciplines, computer technology achieves a prominent role in which corpus-based analysis is noticeable. Within the Corpus-based analysis, corpus tools and corpora play a significant role when studies have been made in language learning. Many types of research are evident in the corpus-based analysis as Al-Zubaidi & Jasim, (2016) conducted research on prefaces of linguistics books in two languages English and Arabic. Total 80 published books were selected from 1990-2010 (40 in English and 40 in Arabic). Frequencies and

percentages were used to analyze the findings of this study. The findings demonstrated that the preface genre comprised of 9 move structures with some variation. This also revealed that the authors employed certain socio-cultural textual strategies as Islamic ideology in the Arabic corpus especially in the opening and closing move patterns.

The corpora analysis plays an important part in various fields such as English for academic purposes. It has paved the way to understand and closely examine the real-time instances of language usage patterns, the most frequent words/phrases in different disciplines or domains. These findings lead to identifying the particular genre. This is known as an evidence-based approach in EAP in which particular linguistic features are identified that are employed in specific discourse. One of the significant corpus-evidence-based studies is conducted by Hyland and this article is focused on the aim of making students familiar with the academic expressions or words which remove the hurdles in understanding the unknown text. The analysis of this study is based on exploring the frequency, collocation, and meaning of words in the Academic Word List from a multidisciplinary large corpus (2009). In Pakistan, corpus linguistic has got the focus of attention by scholars and researchers as it is an emerging field and many useful kinds of research have been performed. The genre-based corpus analysis of language specificity has also been the most prominent study among these. For instance, the study on specificity is conducted by Gul & Khattak (2021), this is about the different linguistic choices that are frequently used in the Vice-Chancellors' messages on the universities' websites. Likewise, one of the studies in Pakistan was conducted to explore the features of academic verbs specificity used in the introductory part of Ph.D. dissertations in the domain of English studies (Khattak & Shehzad, 2018).

Furthermore, one study is focused on lexical bundles used in academic textbooks. The findings showed a total of 102 lexical bundles that are frequently occurred in the selected Pakistani (Chemistry and Physics) textbooks and there was a prominence of referential expressions and discourse organizers in functional categories (Hussain, Zahra, & Abbas, 2021). Thus, many studies have been conducted on academic articles, book reviews, academic lectures but the introductory section preface receives less attention from the researchers in Pakistan. Thus, the present research aims at viewing the lexical choices used by the Pakistani authors in the preface of the academic

textbooks and their communicative functions. This study has investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the general lexical choices for self-mention and hedges employed by the Pakistani authors in the preface section of academic textbooks?

2. How do the specific lexical features used for self-mention and hedges show the communicative purpose in the preface section of Pakistani academic textbooks?

3. Methodology

The current study has adopted the corpus-based method to identify specific lexical choices prevailing in the preface section of Pakistani academic textbooks used in the soft sciences. A burgeoning area, the corpus-based study is theoretically a sophisticated approach in the present era. In it, the corpora are incorporated to test the hypothesis with the existing theories (Lindquist, 2018). Hence, the corpus is said to be a collection of text kept in an electronic device (Kennedy, 1991). For the execution of this study, we have used the mixed-method approach. As it has analyzed the frequencies with the percentage of lexical choices employed by textbooks authors and concordance lines for further clarity. The data for this research comprised of academic textbooks of social sciences prescribed at the Higher Secondary School Certificate (Henceforth HSSC) and undergraduate (Bachelor's degree in Arts) level.

The HSSC social sciences textbooks were selected as recommended by the 'Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board, Lahore' and 'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board' in the colleges of Punjab and Federal. The academic textbooks at the undergraduate / Bachelor's degree in social sciences proposed by the Punjab University were also nominated as data for this study. There was a list of options provided to the students at both the HSSC and undergraduate / Bachelor's level and these were retrieved from the Higher Education Commission website. Although, these are considered to be optional subjects in academia. For the data of the current study, we have selected only those Pakistani textbooks which were widely used in the colleges of Rawalpindi and capital territory Islamabad colleges. For the said purpose, the convenience sampling technique was employed. The quality of the textbooks was based on the preferences based on the renowned publishers as Dogars, Unique series and Learners, etc. The social sciences

textbooks include Economics (06), psychology (03), international relations (03), law (06), English (05), Islamiyat (03), women studies (03), education (03), journalism (03), public administration/ business studies (05), political science (03), civics of Pakistan (05) and sociology (02). Further, the details of the data are given in the appendix section with structural annotation. The lexical specificity in the preface section of Pakistani textbooks (social sciences) was extracted to use as data in this study. Three frequently occurring lexical items were selected from each category and further supported with the assistance of concordance lines retrieves from the corpus. For ethical consideration, this corpus is not published and shared by any regulatory bodies.

The present study is based on a few methodological limitations that the data consists of only the preface section of social sciences textbooks used in two major domains as HSSC and Bachelor's level. Many subjects of social sciences might not be part of the data due to a limited number of textbooks available in the marketplace. Lastly, the prefaces of the textbooks are not equal in number e.g., the textbooks of English and Islamiyat are considered from 'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board', the textbooks of Law, English Jurisprudence, Business communication and functional English from Punjab University. The maximum count for each subject taken for the prefaces of social sciences textbooks is three in number. The results of this study are taken into consideration in the light of available data.

Furthermore, there has been inaccessibility of soft copies of the selected textbooks and due to this, the preface section of the textbooks was copied from images. These images were transformed into Microsoft office MS Word 2013. These files were then handled through the Text-fixer software for data cleaning which includes removing extra spaces in between lines and paragraphs. The Text-fixer software is available online and is freely accessible (https://www.textfixer.com). Then the clean Microsoft word files were converted and further passes through the file converter in order to make text files with free online source (https://www.online-convert.com). Afterward, when the desired Text files were attained then they were uploaded on AntConc version 3.5.9 (Windows) 2020 for the extraction of specific linguistic choices used by the authors of the social sciences. The data analyzes of this study was centered on the 'specificity model' by Hyland (2009). The lists of Keywords belonging to the lexical specificity

proposed by Hyland (2009) were considered. Only two of the categories were taken into account for the analyses of the data as Self-mention and Hedges. The frequencies were analyzed and then the concordance lines were interpreted accordingly.

Table 1: *Composition of the Corpus of Pakistani Social Science Textbooks*

Total files	Types	Tokens	Corpus Software
50	3196	18029	AntConc 3.5.9

Table 1 explains that the preface section of 50 different social sciences textbooks was taken with word types 3196 and word tokens 18029. AntConc software (Anthony, 2020) was adopted, for the recording of frequencies and analysis of concordance lines.

3.1. Theoretical Framework

The present study has focused on the language specificity items proposed by Hyland (2009). Specificity to language is the crucial aspect with regard to analyzing discourse and language teaching. Hyland (2009), draws a clear distinction among the two broad categories of disciplines as hard and soft sciences. Every discourse has a specific communicative event that can be achieved only through lexical specificity. These conventions help the readers to identify the unique characteristics of the specific domain of discipline they are involved. In order to clearly understand the lexical specificity of soft and hard sciences Hyland (2009) devised a list that consists of different categories with linguistics items as listed below:

Table 2: *Lexical Specificity Model by Hyland (2009)*

Lexical specificity	Definition
Self-mention	The representation of the authorial self (Wu et al., 2014) e.g. I, We, Me, etc.
Hedges	The manifestation of words or phrases in a sentence that indicate the probability, e.g. can, would, like, etc. (Hyland, 1994).
Directives	The words that usually direct the readers to execute some action e.g. ought, could, might, etc.

	to accomplish academic persuasion (Hyland, 2002).
Reporting Verbs	The specific words that facilitate the writer to take the responsibility of the argument being made (Charles, 2006), e.g. say, develop, claim, etc.
Lexical Bundles	This category refers to reoccurring sequences of a group of 3 or more words that exist together (Biber et al., 2004), e.g. as well as, in the place of, etc.

Table 2 shows the different categories within the model of lexical specificity. as self-mention, hedges, directives, reporting verbs and lexical bundles. For this study, the lexical specificity developed by Hyland (2009) appears to be the most appropriate framework. The literature further supports this stance of using the framework (Khattak & Shehzad, 2018; Gul & Khattak, 2021). Therefore, to explore the specific linguistics features used in the preface section of the soft sciences academic books specificity model is adopted. The study is delimited to only focus on two domains of the specificity model such as self-mention and hedges. The rationale for selecting these two categories is that the authors mostly instilled the social and cultural influences through their voice (self-mention). Ultimately, in the case of textbooks, the authors are imparted promotional as well as informational prospects in the product to gain prominence in the marketplace. The categories of self-mention and hedges are highly prominent lexical specificity employed by the authors to achieve their desired target discourse. While the directives and reporting verb categories are linked to instruct the students towards interpreting and evaluating the learning content in text. Lastly, the lexical bundles are associated with the smooth cohesion of the text. In this regard, only those categories are considered which support to achieve the aims of this study.

4. Data Analysis

To address the research questions of the study, the converted text files are analyzed in AntConc 3.5.9 software. Self-mention and Hedge's list of lexical specificity were scrutinized for the present study.

4.1   Self-Mention in Textbooks' Preface

The first category introduced by Hyland (2009) in lexical specificity is the list of self-mention words. Self-mentioning is acting as the tool of authors to mention themselves in the written discourse with the help of certain usage of pronouns that assist to builds the argument. According to Wu et al. (2014), the lexis used for self-mentioning is a dominant rhetorical approach used to build an authorial stance in the research articles. He further posits that the researcher's authorial identity created by the voice or opinion of the authors is comprised of three features. For instance, the individual, the detached self and the mutual one, these three aspects depend on the type of self-mentioning pronouns used in the writing.

Table 3: *Self-Mentioning used in preface section of soft sciences academic textbooks*

Pronoun	Frequency	Percentage in corpus
We	**70**	**0.38%**
You	10	0.05%
I	**152**	**0.84%**
Them	**37**	**0.20%**
Us	26	0.14%
They	30	0.17%
Me	**52**	**0.28%**
Mine	01	0.005%

Table 3 reveals that the first prominent self-mentioning pronoun is the first-person singular pronoun "I" with the highest frequency of 152 (0.84%). The details of concordance lines in the corpus show that the usage of pronoun "I" is frequent when the author presents his work as authentic to the readers.

- **I** have drawn heavily on the eminent scholars, past and present; and to all of them.

- **I** have utilized the innovations and methods employed by modern scholars of comparative politics.

- **I** have attempted to explain political premises in a way, **I** expect, as will help the students to understand the nature and significance of the political activity.

All these instances manifested the personal voice of the Pakistani authors which they use to establish the link towards the readability and show emotive attitude as well. "I" is used as 'individual self' in these examples (Wu et al., 2014). In addition, the highest percentage of 'I' is based on other important aspects that is every author acknowledge the publisher and contributor of the books. For instance;

- **I extend my heartiest** felicitation and special thanks to those teachers and students.

- **I acknowledge** with deep gratitude the assistance.

- **I am awfully grateful** to my colleagues and friends for their invaluable suggestions.

The pronoun "me" as First-person is 52 times used with the percentage 0.28%. The usage of "me" is associated with the authors and almost all the preface section demonstrate its usage.

- I am highly thankful to my friends and students who virtually wish **me** to write.

- The long drawn demand of English medium students and teachers urged **me** to write Psychology book for Intermediate level.

- My vast experience of competitive exams, together with the teaching experience, has enabled **me** to compile a comprehensive book.

Mostly it has been used either to take the responsibility of his endeavor of the task as an author or appreciative for the opportunity of writing a book. The next frequently used pronoun that appears in the preface section of social sciences textbooks is "we" with 70 (0.38%) times. The first-person plural pronoun "we" manifested the mutual feelings of the authors which he intended to construct solidarity with the readers of the text. Certain verbs are associated with the pronoun "we" in order to achieve the communicative purpose.

- **We** have solemnly **worked hard** to extract the answers of the questions asked in competitive examination.

- **We trust,** both students of English Medium Schools and their teachers will find Islamiyat for students very useful in their respective tasks.

- **We hope**, would truly illumine fate for its users.

These emotive statements positively influence the reader to maintain readability by convincing them of their bright future. The pronoun "we" is represented as a "collective self" (Wu et al., 2014) in all these examples as it creates a harmony of the argument for the effect of generalization. The third highest frequency is the Third-person pronoun "them" with 37 (0.20%). The corpus analysis shows the demonstration of the pronoun "them" as "collective self" (Wu et al., 2014). For instance;

- The students' valuable comments and suggestions to enable me to serve **them** even better.

- I am also very much obliged to my university authorities (UOL) for providing me an opportunity to work for **them** in good academic environment.

- This book provides a blend of traditional approach, as well as, application of modern techniques to dig out the pertinent issues and in providing a practical approach to address **them** too.

Again, it provides the readers the sense of satisfaction about the quality of the textbooks and the future success in academia. In the third example, here the author need not bring propositional information rather they assist their readers in sorting, identifying, understanding, assessing, and responding to the content. Thus, self-mentioning lexical items in the text provide a platform for the writers to claim their work and express their stance to the prospective readers (Hyland, 2009).

The corpus analysis of the preface section of soft sciences textbooks shows the usage of first-person (singular) 'I' is 0.84%, first-person 'me' is 0.28%, first-person (plural) 'we' is used 0.38% and third person 'them' is used 0.20%. The significance of the representation of self by authors is through the individual and collective self in the preface section of the Pakistani social sciences textbooks.

4.2   Use of Hedges in Textbooks' Preface

The second category in the 'Lexical specificity model' is Hedges (Hyland, 2009). The functioning of Hedging is communicative and interactive in academic discourse by employing the purpose to heighten or lessen the intensity of assurance in the accuracy of given statements (Hyland, 2009). According to Salager Meyer (1994), the role of using hedging is to make the argument more fluid and adaptable. Hedges are the prominent lexical choices used to make the language of written discourse more indirect, polite and illustrate uncertainty in statements. It also shows the grammatical tense and aspect features in writing. Moreover, the usage of the hedges device provides the writers a platform where they prove that the claim made is not absolutely proven in order to lessen the effect of abrupt reaction of the reader. In addition, hedges perform a different function in the text as it is a more standardized pattern of academic writing and serves to have rhetorical impacts on the readers. It further establishes the opposing claims more politely so that these become productive for the potential readers. As Lakoff (1975), highlights that the diction used to manifest the hedges is to portray the claims more or less vague.

Table 4: *Hedges used in preface section of soft sciences academic textbooks*

Hedge	Frequency	Percentage in corpus	Hedge	Frequency	Percentage in corpus
That	**115**	**0.63%**	May	29	0.16%
Will	**77**	**0.42%**	Look	04	0.02%
Can	31	0.17%	Should	15	0.08%
Would	**36**	**0.19%**	Must	10	0.05%
Believe	05	0.027%	Possible	10	0.05%
About	23	0.12%	Sure	04	0.02%
Like	31	0.17%	Virtual	00	-

Table 4 shows the frequencies of all the Hedges included in the 'lexical specificity' model proposed by Hyland (2009). The highest frequency is 'That' with a percentage of 0.63%. The analysis of corpus illustrates that the usage of 'That' is most frequently part of the complex

sentences in which the authors of the book prefer to put it as a connector to refer to the previous chunk of information. The authors of the textbooks usually employ 'that' to keep the long information in a precise manner.

- International Relations, relatively a new discipline **that appeared** in the academic arena.

- The instant book is based on meticulous research **that will enable** the readers and students of IR to develop a terse.

The convention of using "that-clause" ultimately reduces the abrupt reaction of readers and employs the rhetorical impact on them (Gul & Khattak, 2021). Furthermore, "that" can be used after the reported verb in the clause. For instance;

- **It is advised that** each student make up a number of copies of this map.

- **It is hoped that** it would serve its purpose amicably and would help in the purification of society

This example shows that the author intended his reader to entail the action and suggest the 'subjective opinion' in a polite tone. Another example illustrates the usage of "that-clause" to begin the clause. Likewise;

- **It is a fact that** geography is neither a physical science, nor a social science, rather it combines the characteristics of both, and bridges the gap between the two.

- **The reason is that** there were a lot of books in this subject, and they were not in accordance with requirements of the prescribed syllabus.

This signifies that the authors used "that" to establish the credential related to the subject in a rhetorical manner. The rhetorical strategy is employed by the authors to locate the significance of the content present in the textbook. It further seizes the attention of the buyer which enhances the communicative tendency to publicize it among the stakeholders as well.

The usage of the modal verb 'will' with a percentage of 0.42% is prominent in the preface of soft sciences to show the concerns of the authors towards the bright future of the students.

- After reading it, the students **will** acquire a lot of confidence and **will** be able to solve the question paper easily in the examination.

- The technical jargon presented in this book **will differentiate** a layman writing from an expert and consequently **will help** in yielding more than average marks.

The examples of 'will' indicate that it is used to maintain a strong bond with the readers by providing a prosperous future. This shows the politeness strategy by the authors to make the claim more informative and develop the readership. The hedge "will" has also an implication of committing humbly which aids in their learning.

- Without being over-optimistic, **I hope that the book will be of some useful help** to those who are interested in learning about communication theory, business correspondence, report writing and other communication techniques.

- **We hope that this book will** enhance teaching and learning skills of the readers.

This is a positive assurance of the author towards his readers and it also engages the reader's attention to the main features of the textbook. This indicates the more informative aspects are shown with the help of "will". Another modal verb used in the preface section of the social sciences textbook is 'would' with a percentage of 0.19%.

- This book resist the temptation to oversimplify world politics with a superficial treatment that **would mask complexities** and distort realities, it **would prove** a boon to our prospective students.

The usage of 'would' shows the soft tone to direct some kind of possibility to illumine the fate of the potential readers. It further highlights the inclination of the authors. For instance;

- The examples presented in the text are in the context of **Pakistani society which would give students an additional benefit** while taking the examination.

- In order to get at the essence of the subject, it **would** need right amount of dedication on the readers part.

Through this, the author shows his concerns towards readers and the students. The usage of "would" is a politeness strategy employed by most authors for the promotional perspective rather than being informative. The authors used the "would" to extent their gratitude in the preface

section. It is deployed to motivate the contributor for the promotion of the textbook. Thus, these specific lexical items ultimately eradicate the remoteness between the readers and the author.

- I **would** like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all of the authors, writers, bloggers, individuals and organizations whose material – even a single word- was tapped.

On the whole, the result of the corpus further confirms the findings and affirms the list prosed by Hyland (2009). According to Hyland, There has been a large number of self-mention and hedges used in social sciences and Humanities as compared to Science and Engineering (2009). The corpus of the preface section of soft discipline shows that the authors used both the self-mention and hedges in a soft manner to influence their readership.

5. Conclusion

The results retrieved from the corpus of the present study show that the lexical specificity is prominent among Pakistani soft discipline authors while writing the textbooks. This study is delimited to only the preface section of the academic textbooks used in the colleges at the HSSC and undergraduate/ Bachelor's level. In addition, two lexical specificities as self-mention and hedges are taken into consideration while analyzing the data. The findings suggest that the self-mention pronouns which are frequent in the preface section include (I, me, we, and them). These self-mentioning lexical items indicate the representation of the author's identity as an individual and collective self (Wu et al., 2014). This further advocates that the author proposes his opinion or voice but by creating solidarity with the readers. The authors used the preface sections as an interactive platform with the pronoun 'we' to communicate with readers which also shows the dialogic nature of this platform (Swales, 1995). Then the use of Hedges like (that, will, would) indicates the author's attitude or feelings towards the readers. These lexical choices mark the specificity of communicative purpose which the authors achieve to establish a readership.

According to Hyland (1998), Hedges is marked in the written discourse to achieve the communicative function as these lexical categories are less direct and polite. The two specific categories as self-mention and Hedges used frequently by the authors in the preface section of the soft sciences textbook as the manifesto of the message being made. This also affirms that the

lexical specificity belongs to self-mention and Hedges appears to present the positive portrayals of the textbook written by the expert authors. These positive linguistics choices help to influence the readers of the textbook and with the assistance of this, the informative and promotional aspects of the preface section are achieved (Bhatia, 1997, 2004; Gul & Khattak, 2021). Thus, prefaces would act as the mean with having dual communicative purposes, either to present the book or to advertise it to the potential readers. In the Pakistani context, this study is significant in several ways as it reveals the textual devices used in the preface section with specific lexical features like self-mentioning ad hedges which manifest the social practices of authors as skillful participants of academic discourses. The outcomes of the research assist the college level students towards establishing disciplinary-specific repertoire with the help of which they can select the appropriate textbooks within a particular domain. It is also beneficial for novice writers to make the potential readership as the preface section is promotional and persuasive. Likewise, based on the current study, there can be ample choices for future researchers to investigate this specific domain of introductory sections of the academic textbooks. Moreover, the further direction will be to make a comparative analysis of both hard and soft discipline textbooks written by Pakistani authors is still needed to explore. Conclusively, all these researches promote the quality of the textbooks which improve the standard of academia in Pakistan.

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Appendix

STRUCTURAL ANNOTATION OF DATA

S.no	Title of Book	Name of Author	Publication Year	Total number of words	Code number
01	**Corporate Goverance in Pakistan**	Syed Kashif Saeed, Umer Faiz	2018	97	SS-PRE-01
02	**National Security: Imperatives and Challenges Through a Prism of International Law**	Ms. Beenish Sultan Qazi	2017	475	SS-PRE-02
03	**Women in Pakistan**	Dr. Naima Tabassum	2016	728	SS-PRE-03
04	**Economic Management and Emerging Issues in Pakistan**	Professor Dr. Mohammad Aslam Chaudhary	2019	1712	SS-PRE-04
05	**Pakistan A descriptive Atlas**	Rizwana Zahid Ahmed	1999	291	SS-PRE-05
06	**Psychological Processes**	Prof. Zarin Bukhari, Saniya Sameer, Hania Shah	2009	263	SS-PRE-06
07	**Economic Development of Pakistan**	Abdul Haleem Khawja	1995	277	SS-PRE-07

08	Islamic Education	M.D.Zafar	1991	362	SS-PRE-08
09	An Approach to Psychology	Rakhshanda Shahnaz	2010	289	SS-PRE-09
10	Islamiyat For Students	Farkhanda Noor Muhammad	2018	267	SS-PRE-010
11	Islamic Education	A.S.Bukhari, M.D.Zafar, Dr. M.Yahya, Prof. Abdul Sattar Shakir, Hafiz Aitbar Khan, Z.S. Bukhari	2009	519	SS-PRE-011
12	Principles of Economics II	A. Hamid Shahid	1998	220	SS-PRE-012
13	Sociology	Amal sajjad, jawad tariq	2017	239	SS-PRE-013
14	General Agriculture	Dr. Muhammad Akhtar Abbas	2016	366	SS-PRE-014
15	Income tax law	Dr. Zalifqar Ahmad Bowra, Prof. Rifat Iqbal, Qazi Shahzad Ehtesham	2016	278	SS-PRE-015
16	Business law	Qazi Awais Amin	2007	537	SS-PRE-016
17	International Relations	Muhammad Ikram Rabbani	2014	495	SS-PRE-017
18	Public Administration	Iqra Riaz-Ud-Din	2016	260	SS-PRE-018
19	Economic Development of Pakistan	Shakeel Ahmed	2020	137	SS-PRE-019
20	Jurisprudence	Imran A. Nyazee	2007	307	SS-PRE-020

21	Introduction to Political Science	Muhammad Sarwar	1992	549	SS-PRE-021
22	Physical geography	M.IFTIKHAR AKRAM CH.	2003	699	SS-PRE-022
23	Functional English	Prof.Muhammad Aslam Gondal	2008	366	SS-PRE-023
24	Business Communication & Report Writing	Prof. M. Hafeez-ur-Rehman	2015	322	SS-PRE-024
25	English Compulsory (Grade-XI)	Waheedullah	2018	351	SS-PRE-025
26	Essentials of International Relations	Kanwal Batool Naqvi	2020	315	SS-PRE-026
27	Political Science	Shahid Mehmood	2018	339	SS-PRE-027
28	Psychology	Tayab Saifullah	2021	214	SS-PRE-028
29	Anthropology	Sara Khan	2020	132	SS-PRE-029
30	English Jurisprudence	Muhammad Aslam Chaudhry	2010	256	SS-PRE-030
31	Police, crime and Politics	Hafiz S.D. Jamy	2005	220	SS-PRE-031
32	Civics of Pakistan	Muhammad Asif Malik	2009	174	SS-PRE-032
33	Journalism	Safiq Baloch	2018	276	SS-PRE-033

34	**Education**	Prof. Dr. Abdul Khaliq	2012	341	SS-PRE-034
35	**Introduction to Law**	Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee	2016	526	SS-PRE-035
36	**Journalism**	Muhammad Asif Malik	2005	339	SS-PRE-036
37	**Linguistics For Beginners**	Tariq Rahman	2010	585	SS-PRE-037
38	**Economic theory**	Abdul Haleem Khawaja	2007	383	SS-PRE-038
39	**Education**	Dr. Khalid Rashid	2010	281	SS-PRE-039
40	**Gender Studies**	M. Nawaz Khalid Aarbi	2021	324	SS-PRE-040
41	**Essentials of Home Economics**	Prof. Matina Zia	2012	378	SS-PRE-041
42	**International Relations**	M. Safdar Mullick	2015	375	SS-PRE-042
43	**An introduction to Gender Studies**	Samraiz Hafeez, Waheed Khan, Humaira Tehsin	2020	336	SS-PRE-043
44	**Journalist**	Abid Tehami	1997	289	SS-PRE-044
45	**Political Science**	M. Aslam Chaudhary	2008	269	SS-PRE-045
46	**Public Administration**	Dr. Sultan Khan	2006	305	SS-PRE-046

47	**Labour and Taxation law**	Saima Pervaiz Butt	2000	141	SS-PRE-047
48	**Business Communication**	Shakeel Amjad	2010	359	SS-PRE-048
49	**Health and Physical Education**	Prof. Muhammad Altaf	2020	533	SS-PRE-049
50	**Business Communication**	Hafeez ur Rehman	2010	138	SS-PRE-050