

Linguistic Variation across Sports Category of Press Reportage from British Newspapers: a Diachronic Multidimensional Analysis

Maha Latif, Ayesha Chaudhry
Government College University Faisalabad

Abstract : The present study investigates multidimensional analysis of sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers. The main purpose of this study is to exhibit how much linguistic difference lies among the sports category of press reportage from British newspapers. In this study a corpus-based methodology is used and the data has been checked, tagged and analyzed through Biber's Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (MAT). To collect the data for this study, the footsteps of Biber's study have been followed in which six texts were collected for sports category of press reportage. There were approximately 12,088 words in these six texts. The findings of this research show that there are diachronic differences exist among the sports category of press reportage from British newspapers on Biber's five textual dimensions. The researchers can claim from the results that as Biber indicated that the text having more nouns is said to be more informative as compared to the text having less noun. On the basis of this claim, researchers maintain that the British sports category is more informative. It has also been found from the data in the current research that the informational, narrative, explicit features in the sports category of press reportage from British newspapers are used for the expression of persuasion and argumentation.

Keywords: Register, Press Reportage, Sports Category, British Newspapers, Multidimensional Analysis

I. Introduction

Newspaper is one of the most readable and easily available genres in print media all over the world. People have access on all types of information about politics, sports, entertainment, business, weather and about the whole world through newspapers. Newspaper press reportage is an important media discourse and has its own distinguished linguistic feature.

The present study is a register analysis based on multidimensional analysis of sports category of press reportage in British Newspapers. According to Biber, there are three basic features of register studies: the description of situational characteristics, elaboration of linguistic characteristics and functional association between linguistic and situational features (Biber, p.33).

Biber & Conrad (2009) had conducted a study in which they said that all the studies which are based on individual linguistic features are not correct and they are subjective as well. The basic purpose of their study is to analyze those linguistic features across sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers which occur regularly in journalistic English. Biber have given us a complete methodology of multidimensional analysis of English language to study register. He also helps to understand of the variation among different registers and different languages.

MAT is software that is used for analyzing text on five various textual dimensions which is freely available on internet otherwise, Douglas Biber's MD analysis software is available to analyze text like but that software was not available and could only be used in Douglas Biber Lab.

Research Questions:

- How far does linguistic variation exist among the sports category of press reportage in British Newspapers
- What are the diachronic linguistic differences exist across the sports category of press reportage in British Newspapers along Biber's five textual dimensions.

II. Literature Review

World's third biggest newspaper buyers are British people. In British newspapers, Press Reportage is a great source of public awareness and education. It explains every topic from news to literature and provides the reader up-to-date information. Newspapers are an important source for public and government to explain their thoughts or point of views.

Westin & Geisler conducted a study based on diachronic variation in British newspaper editorials. The aim of this study is to analyze 20th-century British newspaper editorials on five textual dimensions. These editorials which were published between 1900 and 1993 had been taken. These editorials had been taken from the three newspapers the Guardian, the Daily Telegraph and The Times. The results of this study show that, during the 20th century, British editorials more persuasive and argumentative and they are less narrative. Westin (2001) also conducted a diachronic study on a large number of grammatical features. Shabbir did an analysis of editorials in two leading English newspapers by using content analysis. The aim of this study was to examine the description of editorials in two leading English newspapers towards the government policy. The findings show that the both newspapers had a great criticism on the government policies.

There is another study in this vein in which Ahmad & Mahmood (2015) conducted a multidimensional analysis study to find out the linguistic variation among the sub categories of press reportage in Pakistani newspapers. To compile the corpus of Pakistani press reportage, they took five Pakistani newspapers. From these five newspapers, they collected 2000 texts. There are approximately 2.3 million words in these texts

The present study is objective and quantitative in nature. As the present study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of British Newspapers and identify the linguistic variation that exist among the sports category of Press Reportage in British Newspapers thus multidimensional approach has been chosen for the analysis.

The corpus

To collect the data for this study, I followed the footsteps of Biber's study in which six texts were collected for sports category of press reportage. There were 12,088 words in these six texts. In this study a corpus-based methodology is used and the data has been checked, tagged and analyzed through Biber's Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (MAT).

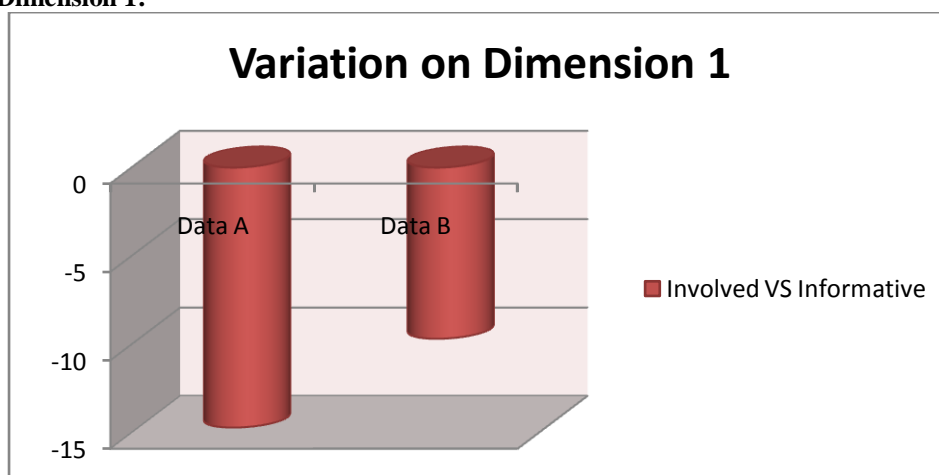
Results:

Table 1 below lists the two data and their mean scores on each of the dimensions. The primary goal of this study is specification of the textual relations in English speech and writing, that is, the linguistic similarities and differences among English texts. To this point, six parameters of variation have been identified through a factor analysis and interpreted as underlying textual dimensions (Biber, p.121).

Table1. Variation among sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers

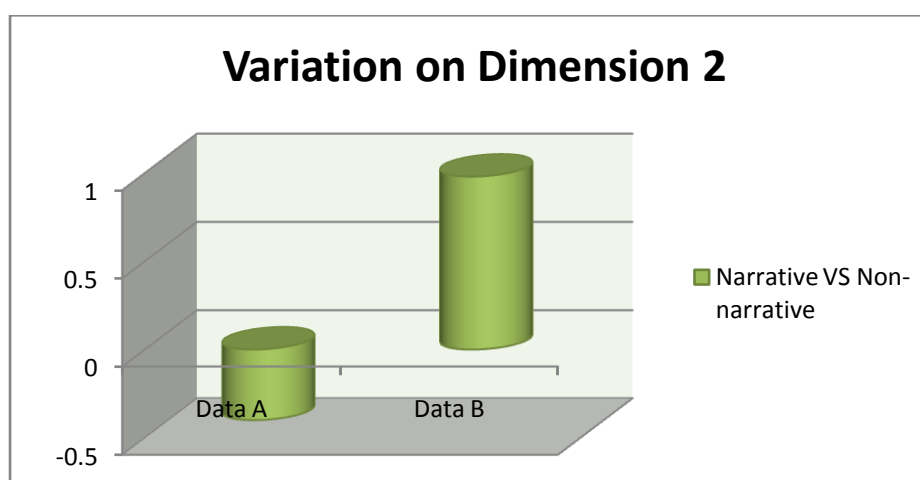
	Data A (Lob Corpus)	Data B (Present Age)
Dimension1	-14.7	-9.68
Dimension2	-0.4	0.98
Dimension3	-1.2	2.27
Dimension4	-0.5	0.11
Dimension5	0.1	-0.07

Variation on Dimension 1:



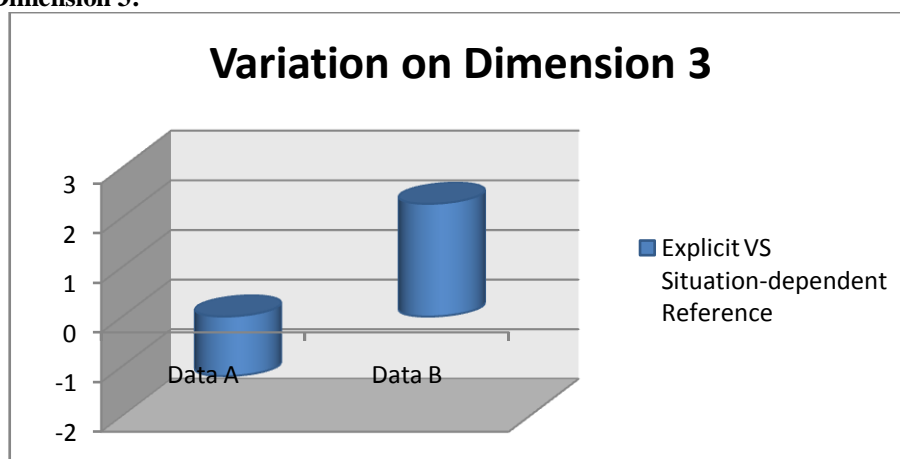
Dimension 1 is the difference between Involved and Informational discourse. According to Biber, dimension is the dimension which compares most of the linguistic features (Biber, 1988). There are no significant differences on Dimension 1. On dimension 1, Data A and Data B have been found highly informational. On dimension 1, Data of Lob corpus (-14.7) and data of present age (-9.68) score highly informative on the involved/informative continuum. The results of this dimension indicate that sports category of British newspapers is highly informative which means sports category of British newspapers presents many nouns, long words and adjectives among other features. Negative features include noun, word length, preposition, type token ration and attributive adjectives etc.

Variation on Dimension 2:



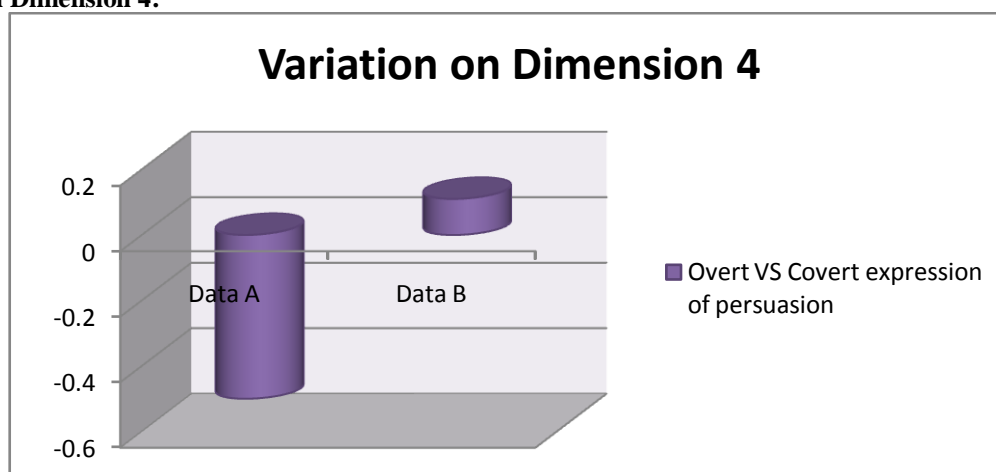
Dimension 2 is the difference between Narrative and Non-Narrative. There are significant differences on this dimension. Data A score (-0.4) and data B score (0.98) on this dimension. Data A scores negative in this dimension while Data B score positively in this dimension. The score of data A indicate that data A is least narrative and the score of data B indicate that Data of lob corpus is narrative which means that data B presents third person pronouns and past tenses among other features. The positive features associated with this dimension include past tenses, third person pronoun, and perfect aspect verbs etc. There is not a great difference between Data A and data B on this dimension.

Variation on Dimension 3:



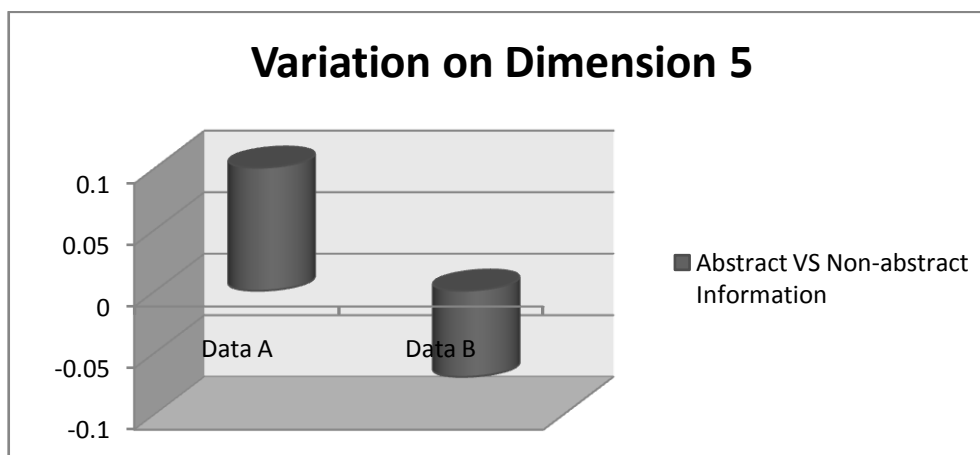
Dimension 3 is the difference between Context Independent Discourse and Context Dependent. There are significant differences on this dimension. Data A scores (-1.2) that indicates that they are context dependent while Data B scores (2.27) which indicate that they are context independent. It means that the texts in data A have the high frequency of the features like time, place and the texts in data B have the high frequency of the features like nominalization, phrasal coordination etc. A low score in data A indicates that the texts in data A present many adverbs among other features whereas a high score in data B indicates that the texts in data B presents many nominalization among other features.

Variation on Dimension 4:



Dimension 4 is the difference between overt expression of persuasion and covert expression of persuasion. There are significant differences found dimension 4. The private category of verbs is mostly consisted on mental and activity verbs (Biber, 1999) which makes the language of prospectus more persuasive towards the target audience and established the language of prospectus as promotional register. Data A scores (-0.5) closest to the overtly persuasive side of the axis, that indicates that they are less overtly persuasive. Data B score (0.11) on the positive side on this dimension which indicates that data of present British newspaper is overtly persuasive. The scores of data B indicate that data B is persuasive and presents many modal verbs among the other features while the scores of data A indicate that there is lack of modal verbs in data A.

Variation on Dimension 5:



Dimension 5 is the difference between Abstract and Non-Abstract Information. There are significant differences among data A and data B on this dimension. Data A scores (0.01) on dimension 5 which indicate that data A provides information in an abstract and formal way. Data B scores (-0.07) on this dimension which indicate that data B provide least information in an abstract and formal way. The scores of data A shows that data A have many passive clauses and conjunctions among other features.

III. Conclusion

The present study has discussed the linguistic variation across sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers on Biber's five textual dimensions. The linguistic variation across sports category of press reportage from British newspapers can be analyzed individually on five textual dimensions. The current research finds that there are statistical significant variation exists among the sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers.

There are significant differences found at the level of dimension 2, 3, 4 and 5 among the sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers. On dimension 1, there are no significant differences occur between data A and data B as both of the data are more informative than involved. The results indicate that there are diachronic differences exist across the sports category of press reportage from British Newspapers along Biber's five textual dimensions.

References

- [1.] Westin, I., Geisler, C. A multi-dimensional study of diachronic variation in British newspaper editorials. ICAME Journal.
- [2.] Hussain, Z. Mahmood, A. Azhar, M. (2016). REGISTER VARIATION IN PAKISTANI ENGLISH: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH. Science Institute Lahore,28(4),391-402
- [3.] Alvi, U. Mehmood, A. Rasool, S. (2016). A Multidimensional Analysis of Pakistani Press Editorials. 270-284.
- [4.] Biber, D. (1988). Variation Across speech and writing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- [5.] Biber, D., Finegan, E. (1989). Drift and the evolution of English style: A history of three genres. Language, 65, 487-517.
- [6.] Biber, D., & Finegan, E. (1994). Multidimensional analyses of authors' styles: Some case studies from the eighteenth century. Research in Humanities Computing, 3, 3-17.
- [7.] Biber, D. (1995). Dimensions of register variation: A cross-linguistic comparison. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [8.] Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., Finegan, E. & Quirk, R. (1999). Longman grammar of spoken and written English (Vol. 2). MIT Press.
- [9.] Biber, D. (2006). University language: A corpus-based study of spoken and written registers. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- [10.] Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). Register, genre and style. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [11.] Biber, D. (2011). Corpus linguistics and the study of literature: Back to the future? Scientific study of literature, 1, 15-23.