

Appraisal Analysis of Acknowledgment Section of Doctoral Theses

Savera Naheed¹

Abstract

Gratitude and acknowledgement are social customs deeply ingrained in all cultures and traditions throughout the globe representing socio cultural consciousness and civic framework of society. A lack of acknowledgement in regular social life can result in various psychological and professional problems. While massive research is already available on diverse components of academic writing together with introductions, literature reviews and methodologies, confined research has focused especially on the acknowledgement sections of theses. Thereby, using appraisal theory and appraisal model, the contemporary study aims to analyze and compare the linguistic patterns in the acknowledgement sections of doctoral theses of English linguistics and literature from Pakistan, India and United Kingdom. The findings revealed that Pakistani and Indian doctoral acknowledgments employ emotionally intensified affect, moral judgment through frequent first-person and collective pronoun use (e.g., “I am deeply thankful,” “we are indebted”), spiritually and relationally oriented appraisal vocabulary referencing God, supervisors, institutions and family, emotionally sequenced coherence and complex sentence structure, whereas British acknowledgments favor restrained appreciation realized through formulaic expressions such as “I would like to thank” or “I am grateful to”, limited pronoun repetition, professionally focused, linear coherence and syntactically concise constructions within the appraisal framework.

Keywords: acknowledgement, society, gratitude, appraisal, doctoral, culture

Introduction

Gratitude and acknowledgement are habitual social behaviors, ingrained in cultures and traditions across the world. A lack of acknowledgement in the framework of regular social life can lead to a variety of psychological and

¹Department of English, COMSATS University, Islamabad – Pakistan

professional problems. While enormous research is already accessible on sundry components of academic writing in conjunction with introductions, literature reviews and methodologies, confined research has been on the acknowledgement sections of theses. The contemporary study is aimed to analyze and compare the linguistic pattern in the acknowledgement section of doctoral thesis of English linguistics and literature of Pakistan, India and United Kingdom. Acknowledgment has been held as a fundamental aspect of human interaction long since but embedded in cultural and social practices across the world. Expressions of gratitude and recognition serve as tools for the maintenance of harmony, mutual respect and strengthening of social bonds (O'Connor, 2013). In many societies, acknowledgement goes beyond simply being a polite expression - it is a reflection of values (reciprocity, humility, collective responsibility). These practices find their way into institutional and academic practices by the natural tendency of acknowledging as a formalized discourse of gratitude.

The language of acknowledgment shows how academic writing is related to larger socio-cultural frameworks. For example, in various cultural contexts, doctoral writers may show gratitude to supervisors, peers, family, religious entities or even political leaders, which is a reminder that gratitude is influenced by societal norms and expectations (Giannoni, 2002). The linguistic choices used - for example, the choice of pronouns, appraisal vocabulary and sentence structures - give insight into writer's negotiations of formality, intimacy and cultural belonging. Thus, the study of acknowledgments is not only a study of linguistics, it is a study of socio-culture.

Given these considerations, the acknowledgment section of doctoral theses proves to be a rich place to study the use of language, the practices of discourse, and the question of cultural identity. By considering pronouns, evaluative vocabulary, coherence, and sentence structures this study aims to understand the ways that doctoral writers convey their expressions of gratitude and the ways in which their expressions of gratitude reflect wider societal and cultural frameworks.

Review of the Literature

The academic discourse has always been interpreted as the socially integrated practice that is defined by the institutional conventions, cultural anticipations, and interpersonal negotiations. In this discursive universe, the recognition section of a doctoral thesis is placed in a very exposing place. Even though it is peripheral to the principal scholarly argument, it serves as a deep linguistic place where authors express identity, emotion, gratitude and relational belonging. Scholars have become

more and more aware of how so-called non-academic elements of text might shed light on the ideology and interpersonal relations of academic culture. In this meaning, the acknowledgment section is a somewhat significant window to the ways in which writers locate themselves in webs of support and necessity, which reflects more widely on theories of stance, evaluation, and interpersonal meaning in the language (Hyland, 2004).

The increased interest in evaluative language in the scholarly writings is a result of the rise of the systemic functional linguistics, specifically the Appraisal Framework by Martin and White (2005). The framework, originally developed to study the expressions of attitudes, alignment, and intensification by speakers and writers has spread into other directions, exploring interpersonal positioning in a variety of genres. Its applicability to recognitions is obvious: recognitions are full of perceptions of gratitude, self-judgment, emotional attitude, and interpersonal correspondence. Other scholars like Thompson and Hunston (2000) have highlighted that evaluation is not a mere linguistic display but a vital resource whereby writers build authority, negotiate meanings and place themselves either in relation or opposition to specific values. It is this theoretical orientation that has shaped the investigation of scholarly genres such as research articles, theses and dissertations to a realization that evaluation is a constituent part of scholarly communication.

Past studies conducted regarding the topic of acknowledgements have revealed that there has been a lot of diversity across cultures. The research in Spanish, Chinese, and English-speaking settings presents an image of acknowledgment varying in the length, intensity of emotions, hierarchical orientation, and social actors involved (Pho, 2008; Yang, 2012). As an example, a study of Chinese doctoral recognitions by Yang (2012) revealed that the author focused much on collectivism and filial piety, with authors showing much appreciation to their family and their ancestors. Conversely, a corpus of acknowledgments in the English language published by Hyland (2004) between the UK and the US showed a more subdued style, and the evaluative expression was usually confined to scholarly authors. Such disparity is indicative of more general cultural preferences: East and South Asian cultures prefer highly expressive, relationally dense recognitions, the Western academia is more looking forward to professionalism than to emotion.

The use of pronouns, evaluative words and structure of the sentence is also affected by the presence of religious discourses in the acknowledgements. Indicatively, the numerous first-person singular pronouns in Pakistani and Indian

acknowledgements (i.e. I am thankful, I owe, I am deeply grateful) are indicative of an expressive position which both foregrounds individual emotion and also indicates humility. Within the Appraisal Framework, these manifestations belong to the affect subsystem, which displays the not only emotional but also the attitude towards social actors. These stylistic features can be contrasted with the situations in the United Kingdom, where authors are not supposed to be too emotional and use modality and hedging in order to keep within the precincts of professionalism. Western academic writing, as explicated by Hyland (2012), is likely to avoid obvious affect in attempts to appear neutral even in personal parts of the work like acknowledgements.

The acknowledgment genre is thus becoming an important subject matter of linguistic study since it captures several interpersonal meaning-making dimensions. Scholars have discovered that acknowledgements form gratitude both as an interpersonal and discursive performance which is determined by social expectations (Basturkmen, 2012). As an example, authors usually show thanks in the form of lists, hierarchies, and groupings of assessing adjectives, all of which constitute what Chafe (1994) terms as constructed dialogue, a discourse of interpersonal relationships that is designed to appeal to an academic reader. These phrases not only make known those whom the author admires but also how they view their academic life and its relationship basis.

The Appraisal Framework designed by Martin and White (2005) is one of the most powerful frameworks of interpersonal meaning analysis in texts as it offers mechanisms of studying emotions, value judgments, stance, alignment, and intensification. The theory of appraisal has been utilized in other genres, such as news reports (Bednarek, 2006) and even political speeches (Coffin, 2002) and in each case it demonstrates how authors incorporate interpersonal perceptions in their lexical choices, grammar and discourse structuring. In this context, one can make a subtler analysis of subsystems of attitude, engagement, and graduation that enable writers to express feelings, assess others, negotiate the dialogic space, and proceed in intensity. The applicability of the framework to the discourse of acknowledgment is obvious: the discourse of acknowledgments is filled with the signs of affect (I am deeply grateful), judgment (a supportive mentor), and appreciation (valuable guidance) which contribute to the creation of relationships and identities within the actual cultural standards.

The use of pronouns, which is the major subject of the given research, has been a popular topic of discourse analysis. Wales (1996) supports the idea that the

pronouns are important in forming social identity and interpersonal relationships. Studies of first- 3 person pronominal have indicated how authors negotiate power and position. Tang and John (1999) have found that several roles of I exist in academic discourse, including the I as a writer to the I as a thinker. The first-person singular pronoun is frequently used in recognitions and indicates the emotion and the personal story. The relationship between the self and the collective is, however, shown in collectivist cultures where the interaction between the I and the we and the allusions to the divine or communal objects are shown to reflect the way the self is discursively placed within the larger structures of relationality. This interpretation is supported by studies of South Asian Englishes, including that of Parasher (1991) and Kachru (1992), which emphasize the cultural interest in collective identity expression, in the form of the use of pronouns and the evaluative formulations.

Another important aspect of the discourse of acknowledgment, coherence, has also been explored with the help of the cohesion theory. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), the coherence is achieved to form cohesive relationships (reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion, etc). Although the current research does not preempt their framework as a main framework, its principles inform the fact that coherence is culturally fashioned. To illustrate, the South Asian recognition tends to use additive repetition instead of using formal conjunctions to ensure continuity, and this is an attribute of the oral traditions of the rhetoric (Kachru, 2006). In British recognitions, however, it is 14 common to find explicit discourse markers in order to organize linear progression and this is evidence of the western academic logic in use. These differences explain why cross-cultural lenses are important in the analysis of coherence patterns in academic writing.

The structure of the sentences also differs largely in cultural contexts as well as in genres. Sentences that are more complex and compound-complex are more typical of South Asian academic writing and in part due to the fact that authors will stack up multiple phrases of thanks and appraisal in one syntactic structure (Biber et al., 1999). This makes this type of writing be very longer and flowing with emotional and relationship value. British writers, on the contrary, prefer shorter, more constricted sentences with little subordination, like a need to be understood and be brief. These trends are in line with previous studies that propose that English spoken in the Indian subcontinent still has the rhetorical characteristics of the local languages, which tend to be elaborative and syntactically complex (Kachru, 1983). In this way, the sentence structure is a culturally significant part of the

acknowledgment discourse that exposes the greater rhetorical custom, which forms the styles of academic writing.

Altogether, the previous studies show that acknowledgments exist as a multifaceted junction of cultural practices, academic dictums, and interpersonal positioning. They show how authors show their thanks, judge relationships, deal with emotional intensity, develop academic identity, and find their way through institutional hierarchies. These patterns can be studied effectively through the appraisal framework, which provides a powerful analytical spectacle to the cultural contexts because it does not only focus on the linguistic choices made by people, but also the values that lay the groundwork of the choice. Combining the findings of the genre theory, cross-cultural pragmatics, stance analysis, and evaluation studies, the current study positions the discourse of doctoral acknowledgment in a wider intellectual tradition according to which academic writing is essentially interpersonal, culturally situated, and ideologically endowed.

Cross-cultural pragmatics research also plays a very important role in the recognition writing in Pakistan, India and the UK. In the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), politeness strategies were discovered to be different across cultures in a systematic way that is based on social stratification and anticipations of formality. This model aids in understanding the reason why South Asian 27 works use long series of gratitude and lavish praise-techniques that are consistent with the positive politeness techniques that aim at social cohesion. British recognition writers, in their turn, rely more on indirect forms of acknowledgement and mitigated appreciation, which clearly reflects respect to the individual limits and professional independence. Such distinctions are related to the rapport management theory by Spencer-Oatey (2008), who suggests that cultures are not alike in the distribution of social harmony and individual autonomy in discourse practices.

The recognition sections will be analyzed here, where Martin and White Appraisal model have been used. This could assist researcher in examining the use of pronouns, vocabulary of appreciation, coherence, and styles of the sentence by writers. Ample information is already documented on numerous aspects of academic writing like the introduction, literature reviews and methodologies, minimal studies have been done specifically on the acknowledgement section of theses. Comparing Pakistan, India, and the UK will allow the researcher to observe every similarity and cultural difference in the way gratitude is offered.

Methodology

The chapter establishes the methodological framework that will be used in the study titled *Appraisal Analysis of Acknowledgment Sections of Doctoral-Level Theses*. This paper explores the use of language by Pakistani, Indian, and United Kingdom doctoral writers to express gratitude, construct identity and position themselves socially in the academic community. The analysis of the use of pronouns, appraisal vocabulary, coherence, and sentence structure will help to reveal the ways in which interpersonal meanings are coded in the discourse of acknowledgment. In the chapter the qualitative and interpretivist design of the study is described, including the data collection, sampling and analysis procedures in the context of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). Every methodological procedure has been formulated in a way that a systematic and context sensitive understanding of evaluative language is achieved. The last parts discuss the credibility, ethical aspects, and limitations of the research, which guarantee transparency and reliability of research process.

❖ Research Design

The study in question adopts a qualitative research design since it is based on the exploration of the underlying meaning of interpersonal and ideological reflections on the language used in the doctoral acknowledgment sections instead of quantifying variables. The qualitative method gives the researcher the opportunity to study language as a social and cultural practice in which the researcher constructs gratitude, identity, and hierarchy (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The design allows us to gain a better insight into the ways writers place themselves both emotionally and socially within the academic discourse showing us the latent patterns of humility, respect and relationship alignment.

This study takes descriptive and interpretive design within the context of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the application of the Appraisal Theory suggested by Martin and White (2005). With this theoretical background, the paper explores the strategies of using the evaluative language resources, that is, Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation, by doctoral writers to show appreciation, settle on solidarity, and regulate the intensity of gratitude. The qualitative analysis of these linguistic characteristics gives information about the way in which Pakistani, Indian and UK writers encode emotion, authority and academic humility in their acknowledgment sections linguistically.

❖ **Data Collection**

The data sources used in this research were those that are publicly available on the internet, such as the NUML Digital Library, India's university of Gujrat and university of Sialkot, and the EThOS database of the United Kingdom. We chose these repositories due to the fact that they offer genuine doctoral-level research texts of different academic fields.

To enable the cross-cultural comparison, a total of *60 acknowledgment sections were collected; 20 each in Pakistan, India, and the United Kingdom. Inclusion criteria were the following:

- This is to be a doctoral (PhD) thesis.
- The acknowledgment part should be in English.
- The publication of the thesis should fall within the period of 2015 and 2025.

❖ **Population**

This research sample comprises of all doctoral level theses written in English in universities within Pakistan, India and the United Kingdom. These countries were chosen as the representatives of different academic traditions and sociolinguistic settings where English can be considered an important medium of scholarly communication. The unit of analysis is the acknowledgment section of every thesis because it offers a distinct platform on which academic authors are able to show their gratitude, establish relationships, and negotiate their identity using language. The population is representative of a diverse set of disciplinary and institutional context, which presents a chance to investigate how interpersonal meanings may be created in various academic cultures.

❖ **Sampling Techniques**

The purposive sampling method is the most appropriate sampling approach that can be applied in the study due to a qualitative and interpretivist research that is aimed at depth, richness, and relevance instead of generalization (Pakistan et al., 2015). Out of the greater number of the population, 20 theses per country, or 60 acknowledgment sections in all, were chosen on the following grounds with intent to represent:

- The thesis should also be in English.
- It has to be doctoral (PhD) dissertation.

- It should have a distinctly recognizable acknowledgment section. 4. It should be published in the year 2015 to 2025.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is based on the systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and specifically on the theory of Appraisal that was formulated by Martin and White (2005). The framework offers the holistic model of evaluative language and interpersonal meaning analysis of discourse. It allows the discussion of how authors of the doctoral level theses exploit linguistic means, e.g., pronouns, adjectives, modality, and intensifiers, in order to create emotion, judgment, and appreciation in the sections of acknowledgment. Appraisal Theory builds out the interpersonal metafunction of SFL by exploring the way writers assume the alignment and distance positions in regard to the audience.

It defines evaluative meaning into three significant subsystems:

Attitude: Cares about emotional response, (affect), judgment, which is an ethical assessment of actions, and appreciation, which is an assessment of things, processes, or people (appreciation). The phrases like I am most grateful, I wish to thank, well, it was a great honour, etc. are discussed in this paper to determine how doctoral writers express feelings of affection and gratitude.

Engagement: Concerns the manner in which writers recognize, widen or draw back other voices. The high frequency of first-person pronouns (I, we) and second-person address terms (you) demonstrate how the writers establish or establish interpersonal space in communication with supervisors or institutions or friends or relatives.

Graduation: It is concerned with the escalation of intensity or focus of evaluation. Gratitude can be intensified with the help of intensifiers as extremely, profoundly or truly mean that the writer feels the powerful emotions and the degree of his deference.

Analytical Model

The method of analysis in the research paper is a qualitative and interpretive linguistic model on the basis of the Appraisal Theory in the wider context of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) model. It will involve the systematic identification, categorization, and interpretation of evaluative language options within the acknowledgment section of the doctoral theses; it will include the usage

of pronouns, the use of appraisal vocabulary, coherence and sentence structure. All these dimensions are explored in order to learn how doctoral authors build interpersonal significance, emotional and authorial identity.

The analysis model develops as follows:

Data Familiarization

Each of the sixty acknowledgment passages is read several times to have a holistic view of tone, emotion intensity, and flow of the story. The first immersion helps the researcher to identify recurring linguistic patterns like first-person pronouns, evaluative adjectives, and cohesive devices.

Linguistic Coding

The texts are coded manually by a detailed coding sheet on the basis of three subsystems of appraisal of Martin and White (2005):

Attitude: There are cases of affect (expressions of emotion), judgment (moral review), and appreciation (value or appreciation).

Engagement: Direct address, use of pronouns, and attributional markers are coded in order to identify how writers identify themselves as being close to others or distanced.

Graduation: Adverbs, modifiers which add intensity to meaning (e.g., deeply, truly, greatly) are pointed out to evaluate the strength of the assessment. All the coded examples are put in a specific category with a note on the linguistic form, referent and use of the specific example.

Pronoun Analysis

Pronouns are discussed as the signals of the interpersonal agreement and authoritative attitude. First-person pronouns are classified in terms of purpose (self-reference, collective identity or humility). Pronouns of the second and third person (you, he, they) are analyzed in terms of their assignment of the relational hierarchy or praise. Pronunciation and role of pronouns will also indicate the power and emotional closeness in scholarly recognitions (Hyland, 2002).

Analysis of Vocabulary Assessment Evaluations

Lexical items with evaluation connotation (in particular adjectives, adverbs, and verbs) are classified as attitude, engagement, or graduation. Their semantic role is

construed in context to get to learn the way in which doctoral writers show their gratitude, respect, or humility. This step relates directly to the second research question, that is, evaluative language use.

Coherence Analysis

The consistency of every acknowledgment section is analyzed in the framework of cohesion by the authors Halliday and Hasan (1976) that discusses the reference, conjunction, substitution, and lexical repetition. It assists in determining the way writers attain textual wholeness and emotional continuity, which answers the third research question. Debate Sentence Structure Analysis

Sentence structures are evaluated on the basis of complexities, mood and thematic organization. Simple, compound and complex clauses are detected in order to determine the rhythm and the tone of the recognition. Thematic progression (Theme patterns-Rheme patterns) can be seen to develop the development of ideas on gratitude. This is equivalent to the fourth research question regarding sentence structure.

Comparative Interpretation

Results of the three regional samples, which include Pakistan, India, and the United Kingdom, are contrasted to find the differences between the cultures and styles. Interpretation is still context sensitive and concentrates on how linguistic features were used to manifest social values, academic hierarchy and humility or solidarity

Reflexive Interpretation

Lastly, the researcher takes part in reflexive interpretation where she recognizes herself as an interpreter and also her linguistic background. Analytical memos are kept all the way along the way to foster transparency and theoretical correspondence to the interpretivist paradigm (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This multi-layered analytical model permits both the micro-level linguistic descriptiveness and the macro-level social-cultural interpretation so that every section of acknowledgment is interpreted both as the item of personal expression and as the item of institutional discourse Analysis.

Analysis of Acknowledgment Section Doctoral theses of Pakistan

The acknowledgment begins with the following line “All the praises due Allah Almighty, the Lord of the Universe”, a phrase that has an emotion-filled content and

appreciation (Martin and White, 2005). Lack of “I” indicates involvement, and gratitude is treated as a group and religious activity (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). As the author subsequently makes the statement, “I am very thankful to the most gracious Allah”, the first-person pronoun provides personal touch, and it is a sign of emotional sincerity. The intensifier very is a form of graduation, which increases reverence. This divine recognition is a reflection of Pakistani cultural and academic values, according to which success is perceived as a collective gift, not the personal achievement. The author has applied appreciation to give positive assessment on mentors in the article “I owe thanks to Prof. Dr. Muhammad Safeer Awan and Prof. Dr. Inayat Ullah Khattak”. Additional terms such as the title of professors and doctors, words such as worthy and productive, increase the respect of graduation (Martin and White, 2005). Reiteration of “I” owe, “I am grateful and I am gratified” is an indication that there is a matter of engagement through obedience to the authority (Hyland, 2004). The grading, the hierarchy up to the examiners, is coherent and reflective of the hierarchy of institutions. This tendency towards the systematized appreciation demonstrates that recognition strengthens social stratification and reverence in the Pakistani academic context.

The attitudinal affect through words such as sincerest and encouragement is evident in the line in which the author thanks his supervisor because he “encouraged him”, “supported him”, and “gave him advice”. The phrase He has always criticized my ideas is a mixture of judgment and appreciation, intellectual and moral gratitude (Martin and White, 2005). The compromise of having to read through screeds of incoherent sentences is a broadening plea that lessens hierarchy by the humor (Thompson and Thetela, 1995).

This closeness and respect are the mentor-student relationship in Pakistan, which is traditionally regarded both as ethical and educational advice. The paragraph, “I would also like to say my most extreme recognition and affection to my deceased father” uses affect where words such as love and sorry are used. The use of “my” is also a sign of intimacy, and the use of always makes graduation even stronger. The mention of his economic status gives an impression of value of virtue and endurance. The memory of a deceased father and mother shows how Pakistani people are very family-oriented, and their achievements at school are regarded as an extension of parents dreams and sacrifices.

The use of terms such as all those and especially “Sadaqat Tahir” in the paragraph title “I am indebted to all those who helped me psychologically, spiritually and verbally” demonstrates the inclusive involvement (Levinson, 1988). The adversity is

once again reorganized under positive judgment as the clause even to the people who gave me a tough time restructures the adversity into development. This is a manifestation of the Pakistani spirit of endurance which has resonated throughout the country, which views adversity as part of its moral education and a strength factor.

Throughout the acknowledgment, the appraisal vocabulary; “thankful”, “gracious”, “indebted”, “supportive” is emotionally charged. The frequent intensifiers (very, deepest, always) are a sign of graduation, which enhances the sincerity. There is no modal ambiguity through the monoglossic position (Martin and White, 2005) that strengthens belief and sincerity. This verbal confidence is in line with the Pakistani communicative standards, where heartfelt and sincere appreciation is more likely to be welcome than cold formality.

Structurally, the order of sequence of gratification, starting with divine thanks, mentors, family, and peers, is supported by connecting items, such as first of all and I also. The use of complex and compound sentences in the minimum use of modal verbs indicate emotional certainty and monoglossic interaction. This is a structured but emotional form that reflects harmony between the mind and the heart in Pakistani literature where thanks are due to moral order and honesty.

Pakistani theses include acknowledgments that do not just serve the purpose of academic courtesy but have a social, emotional and moral role to play. With the help of attitude, 40 writers demonstrate love and reverence, with engagement, they associate with faith and hierarchy, and with graduation, they enhance sincerity (Martin and White, 2005). These readings indicate that education in Pakistan is not an individual endeavor, but a communal ethical endeavor among God, teachers and family. Acknowledgment, in this way, is a social practice of membership, which glorifies gratitude as a cultural merit and an academic virtue.

Analysis of Acknowledgment Section of UK theses

The acknowledgment starts "Firstly, I wish to thank my supervisors Deborah Longworth and Jan Campbell for their vital encouragement and expert guidance throughout this project." The writer begins with a polite and formal tone, which is typical for British academic writing, and where thanks are expressed in a measured and respectful way. Through attitude, the recognition conveys appreciation as opposed to affection; the focus is on professional competence - "vital encouragement" and "expert guidance" - rather than emotional warmth (Martin & White, 2005). Graduation is visible in "vital" and "expert" which intensify respect,

but are nonetheless within the boundaries of academic decorum. The use of the pronoun "I" is done as a grammatical necessity rather than an emotional emphasis. Psychologically, this was the controlled use of "I" that reflected the British preference for restrained use of the self - acknowledging the ability of the individual, without sounding self-centered or sentimental. This opening is typical of the UK's cultural value of professionalism and modesty, in that gratitude upholds hierarchy in a polite and emotionally unexposed manner.

In the lines "I am very grateful to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for providing me with the essential support of a full Doctoral Award, and the University of Birmingham Graduate School for their financial and administrative support," the acknowledgement moves on to institutional appreciation. The tone is formal and accurate and objective. Through attitude, the writer expresses gratitude to systems and not to individuals. The intensifier "very" and the adjective "essential" act as graduation, which increase the perceived importance of the support while avoiding being too explicit. Engagement here is increased in a small way through the coordination of many institutions, which is spread evenly across the academic network. The pronoun "I" is consistent but impersonal - it does gratitude as a social duty and not as emotional release. Psychologically, this shows a self-disciplined person who understands the institutional power structures but possesses personal professionalism. This is indicative of the collectivist formality of British academia where gratitude to funding bodies symbolizes conformity to institutional ethics and recognition of public support systems.

The section "I would also like to thank the staff and fellow postgraduates of the English Department for making the Department such a supportive one" leads in the tone of collegial warmth. Through attitude, the writer shows appreciation not only for the academic assistance but for an inclusive community as well. Such phrases as "supportive one," "opportunity to present," and "essential training" show balanced regard for social and professional aspects. Graduation takes place through "such a supportive one," enhancing of friendliness without loss of management. Engagement expands with reference to participation by the many; that is, that the writer sees scholarship as a collective intellectual space. The repeated "I would like to thank" keeps the tone of politeness and social decorum, and psychologically, it conveys the image of a cautious but sociable personality that is not afraid of teamwork, but does not violate the academic reserve. This is a reflection of British social culture where gratitude is often focused on collegial civility and group

cooperation emphasizing the importance of teamwork and respect for common intellectual environments.

The next passage "I would also like to thank Dr Brycchan Carey . . . and everyone else who has been involved in the annual Literary London Conference for allowing me to try out new ideas" reveals engagement in the form of inclusion of a wide professional network. Attitude can be observed in the appreciation for "feedback" and "influence" which represents gratitude as intellectual exchange rather than emotional debt. The fact of graduation comes in "greatly influenced this work" which intensifies respect for academic collaboration. The "I" is consistent but detached - as a small self who understands contribution but not ownership. Psychologically, this restricted self-presence implies a writer conforming to British academic manners, in which individual achievement is understood in the context of joint scholarship. The paragraph is typical of the collaboration ethos of UK academia, in which recognition is more important as a way of building professional networks and intellectual reciprocity than as emotional bonds. The sentence "A big thank you to my family and many friends for lightening the mood and helping me to keep a healthy perspective whilst buried brow-high in books" brings warmth and humour to the story. Through attitude, in the first time affect is made visible - "lightening the mood" and "healthy perspective" shows emotional relief. Graduation comes from the informal intensifier big - breaking free from previous restraint. The writer's "I" disappears here and is replaced by a more collective and conversational tone which makes the acknowledgment more human. Psychologically, this short period in which there is no "I" implies comfort and emotional security in personal relations, in contrast with the formal nature of professional thanks. This combination of humour and sincerity is a reflection of British cultural tendencies to gentleness of emotion and to use humour as a means of softening it, a way of demonstrating affection indirectly through light understatement rather than open sentimentality. The last set of expressions-"I am also grateful to Liam Bell and Gavin Goodwin" and "Ulrich Kinzel" and "Dianne Calder". Last but by no means least, I would like to thank Nick Royle, who has allowed me to contribute to ideas that he has shared with us over the years." "return to formal appreciation, combining academic recognition with social tact. Graduation is seen in phrases such as "faith enough" and "positive attitude" which increase respect without losing balance. The repetition of "I would like to thank" is a hint of courtesy, and "last but by no means least" is a social awareness and courtesy idiom. The psychological use of "I" demonstrates control and composure, a self-aware writer who is able to make sure that inclusive writing is done without an emotional overflow. This type of measured

closure is a reflection of British social etiquette - ending in a way which stays polite, is inclusive and involves a degree of emotional warmth, so that nobody is excluded and you still preserve dignity. In the UK, acknowledgment is a social activity which symbolizes emotional self-control, fairness, and respect for hierarchy. It is less about emotional confession and more into keeping the social equilibrium through language. Expressions of thanks strengthen professional relationships without losing individuality and privacy. The repetition of I is grammatical rather than emotional and implies accountability rather than self-focus. Socially, acknowledgement in the British context perpetuates values of civility, modesty and equality - gratitude is expressed, but always with composure. This is a restraint that reveals the cultural preference for balance: Emotion is there, but it is managed, humility is demonstrated at the same time not submission is demonstrated, appreciation is expressed as a kind of social harmony. Acknowledgment is therefore a kind of covert social ritual, a reflection of the British ethos of politeness, fairness and controlled sincerity.

Analysis of Acknowledgment Sections of doctoral level Indian Theses

The personal sincerity and social inclusivity of the pronoun use of this acknowledgment is demonstrated. The repetition of I and my is a significant indicator of a pronounced sense of individual involvement and emotional ownership, while allusions to others via relational pronouns (my supervisor, my parents, my brothers, my best friends) are a sign of an interconnected identity based on a sense of collective belonging. This balance between individuality and collectivism is the same concept as Martin and White's (2005) concept of engagement, where the writer connects his or her personal voice with the moral and emotional presence of other people. The movement from institutional to familial and then friendly relationships builds up a layered social self - professional, but with emotional roots. It is the consistent repetition of I would like to thank that signals a sense of humility and shows respect, as part of a cultural marker about how Indians were polite and respectful of those in positions of authority.

The appraisal vocabulary illustrates warmth, reverence and gratitude in the form of a blend of affect, judgment and appreciation. Words such as sincere gratitude, valuable suggestions, moral support, love and blessings reveal some level of affective intensity and a moral dimension of respect. Positive judgment is seen in the descriptors such as patience, continuous support, and encouragement which focus on the virtue and reliability of others. Appreciation comes in mention of institutional help, for example, supplying study materials, indicating respect for

intellectual and bureaucratic systems. However, the language is formal and a little restrained and is characteristic of Indian academic discourse where such emotional expression is toned by hierarchies and respect. Gratitude is expressed in a tone that is more of humility than emotional overflow clearly a reflection of the Indian value of modest self-positioning before authority figures.

The way coherence is achieved is by a clear hierarchy order where the movement is from academic to personal acknowledgment. The order - supervisor, department head, teachers, institutions, family and friends - follow an Indian sociocultural pattern of reverence, which begins with formal authority and ends with emotional intimacy. Transitional phrases such as I would like to express, I am also thankful, special thanks and finally help to create logical progression and textual cohesion. This structure ensures a balance of academic decorum with the expression of personal affection, for the sake of which gratitude does not interfere with professional tone. The overall coherence represents a collectivist and hierarchical view of the world, in which respect is proportionate to the roles of people in society and within institutions.

The sentence structure is mainly simple and compound, with an orientation towards clarity and not complexity. The repetition of specific types of declarative statements such as I would like to thank and I am also thankful helps to create rhythm and predictability, which helps to support the polite and formal tone of acknowledgment. Few complex sentences or subordinate clauses are found, which is a sign of a preference for communicating simply over communication for the sake of communication. This syntactic simplicity reflects the cultural importance on being clear, humble, respectful and not self-displaying. The tone is polite and deferential with emotional restraint usually characteristic of Indian academic writing since there is a hierarchy in Indian society and it affects the linguistic expression. Viewed critically as a social phenomenon, acknowledgment in the Indian academic context performs emollient functions of the social and cultural duty. It reinforces social hierarchies and moral interdependence: teachers as mentoring figures, institutions as enabling devices, and family as emotional moorings.

The linguistic politeness and muted sentiment is symptomatic of the collectivist ethos of India, where being grateful is a moral obligation, ingrained with the sense of respect, and not self-celebration. Unlike the individualism of Western academia, Indian recognitions imply a highly relational worldview - one which favours humility, continuity and reverence. Through such writing the academic act became

a reflection of the Indian social order of a combination of devotion, intellectual respect and familial love in a single moral framework (Martin & White, 2005).

Findings and Conclusion

The central aim of the study was to analyse and compare the linguistic patterns of the acknowledgment sections from doctoral theses of English Literature and linguistics written in Pakistan, India and the United Kingdom. The research used as the guiding theoretical model for this study is Martin and White's Appraisal Model (2005) to access the linguistic construction of gratitude, emotion and interpersonal stance in these texts. The four research questions were aimed at pronoun usage, appraisal vocabulary, coherence, and sentence structure, based on a different aspect of the ways in which academic writers enact social relations and personal identity through acknowledgment writing.

Across all corpora, the Appraisal Model was effective in detecting the evaluative mechanisms employed by writers to convey attitude, engagement and graduation. Pakistani and Indian writers exhibit a high concentration of affective and judgment vocabulary, very strong expressions of emotional warmth, spiritual affiliation and respect for authority. The British writers on the other hand use controlled appreciation and balanced engagement through balanced expressions of gratitude in polite but restrained manner. These distinctions represent underlying cultural orientations - collectivist and interdependent in South Asia, individualistic and self-contained in the UK.

The first research question was conducted to find out the types and functions of pronouns used in the acknowledgment sections of doctoral theses from Pakistan, India, and the United Kingdom. The results reveal that pronouns, though simple in grammar, must possess a lot of interpersonal and cultural significance. Their use shows how writers express gratitude, build relationships and form their academic selves in relation to others. Through the framework of Martin and White's Appraisal Model (2005), pronouns are 150 tools of interpersonal management for managing attitude, engagement and graduation in which writers identify with or separate from a variety of social and emotional positions. In the corpus of Pakistan, the use of first person singular pronouns especially "I" and "my" prevails in the acknowledgment discourse. These pronouns are found in almost every sentence that forms the backbone of the writer's expression of gratitude. Examples like "I am thankful to Almighty Allah," "I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor," and "I am highly indebted to my parents" show that acknowledgement in the Pakistani context is

framed as a personal, moral and spiritual act. The co-occurrence of divine references along with first-person pronouns is frequent and suggests that the "I" of Pakistani academic discourse is one within moral and religious dependence. The pronoun here does not show self-assertion but humility. Within the framework of Appraisal this pattern is associated with high Engagement (especially dialogic expansion) in which the author opens the text to multiple external authorities, including God, teachers, and parents. The Indian corpus shows the slightly different pattern, but related one. Here, the use of "I" is still common but it is accompanied by a noticeable increase of collective pronouns like "we," "our" and "us." This dual use is an example of a hybrid model of academic identities in which individuality and collectivity exist. Sentences such as "I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor for his invaluable guidance" tend to come next to statements such as "Our department has been supportive throughout my research." The alternation of singular and plural pronouns is based on the transition from the acknowledgement of the individual to the institutional recognition, which is a mark of a transitional state of the academic ethos of India, a combination of reverence with functionality. In the Indian corpus, the possessive pronoun "my" is used in a similar context as in Pakistan with a greater amount of institutional variation. Writers thank "my supervisor," "my guide," "my department," and "my colleagues," giving a special emphasis both on personal and professional relationships. The pronoun "our" extends the sense of belonging to the institutional level as in "our research center" or "our college." This writing pattern means that Indian acknowledgment writing positions gratitude in cross-aligned networks - personal, institutional and communal. The "I" is relational, but also academically aware, and is balanced in emotion and rationality. From the point of view of the Appraisal Model, the Indian writers use the pronouns to express Attitude (affect and judgment) in a balanced manner without excessive subjectivity and with moral warmth. The distribution of pronouns is quite different in the United Kingdom corpus. The first person singular "I" is used primarily, but much less repetitively and associated almost exclusively with formulaic or mitigated expressions of gratitude. Typical constructions are "I would like to thank my supervisor," "I am grateful for the support of" or "I appreciate the guidance of." The possessive my occurs in few contexts - almost exclusively before formal nouns like 'supervisor', 'colleagues' or 'department'. Unlike South Asian writers, British writers rarely use "I" with emotional verbs such as "owe" or "pray." Instead, they use neutral or polite performatives such as "thank" and "appreciate." This stylistic restraint that is driven by the cultural notion of maintaining professionalism and objectivity in academic discourse (Hyland, 2012). When comparing the three regions, some clear

contrasts in both frequency and function appear. Pakistani writers use pronouns to demonstrate their humility and moral indebtedness, Indian writers balance their personal feeling with institutional identity, British writers limit the use of pronouns to preserve a tone of professionalism. The pronoun "I" is used for different identities in each case; a humble servant of faith in Pakistan, a respectful student in India, a responsible researcher in the UK. The use of the plural "we" and "our" further shows the different levels of collectivism: the most 152 common in India, the moderate in Pakistan, and the least in the UK. The findings therefore suggest that the use of pronouns is therefore not simply grammatical, but ideological, representing different conceptions of the self in academic culture.

The second research question aimed to identify and describe the way that writers use appraisal vocabulary when expressing gratitude, emotion and evaluation in the acknowledgments sections of the doctoral thesis. Guided by Martin and White's Appraisal Framework (2005), the subsystem of Attitude, specifically affect, judgement and appreciation were the main focus and how they are linguistically realized in three cultural contexts: Pakistan, India and United Kingdom. The results show that although all writers use evaluative language to express gratitude, they make very different choices, intensities and ranges of emotion, which reveal different cultural orientations and institutional conventions. In case of Pakistani acknowledgments, the usage of affective vocabulary is extensive and emotional. Words like "thankful," "grateful," "indebted," "blessed," "merciful," and "benevolent" are used frequently and often with the verbs of emotion, such as "owe," "pray," and "appreciate." The high frequency of these lexical items shows that Pakistani writers consider the acknowledgement as a form of academic practice not just but it is a moral and spiritual act. Phrases such as "I am deeply thankful to Almighty Allah for His countless blessings" or "I owe my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor for his kind guidance" indicate the combining effect of affective and religious vocabulary that 154 produces gratitude as a form of devotion. This usage of religious and moral appraisal vocabulary will expand the field of gratitude from academic to spiritual, corresponding to the Affect and Judgment subsystems of the Appraisal Model. Emotional sincerity and moral reverence are predominant in the linguistic tone and convert acknowledgment into a discourse of humility and faith instead of professional recognition. Indian doctoral acknowledgments, by contrast, reveal a more even relationship of affectionate and intellectual appraisal. While affective terms such as "heartfelt," "sincere," and "grateful" are common, often they have a cognitive and professional accompaniment, like "scholarly," "insightful," "constructive," and "meticulous." This blending of feelings and intellect suggests

that the Indian writers see acknowledgment as an expression of gratitude as well as an affirmation of academic proficiency. For example, expressions such as "I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor for her scholarly insights and patient guidance" combine warmth of affect with cognitive respect. This pattern suggests that emotional sincerity does not get separated from the academic rigor, and rather it coexists in the same evaluative frame. By contrast, in the British corpus, appraisal vocabulary is very restrained and professionally neutral. The most common ones are formulaic and conventionally polite: "I would like to thank," "I am grateful to," "I appreciate the support of," and "I am indebted to." These phrases express thanks, but in a manner that is more focused on being polite and on brevity rather than on elaborating on one's emotions. Adjectives like "helpful," "insightful," "supportive" and "encouraging" are common, but emotionally charged words like "heartfelt," "immensely" or "deeply" occur rarely. Instead of affective intensification, British writers tend to express gratitude through Appreciation - expressing gratitude for contributions in terms of their professional or intellectual value. This is reflected in phrases such as 'for his critical feedback', 'for her valuable suggestions' and 'for their constructive comments'. Such usage is part of an academic culture that gives priority to being detached and precise rather than emotive (Fairclough, 2003; Hyland, 2012). A comparative study of the three regions shows that appraisal vocabulary serves as a cultural and emotional reflection of academic identity. Affect is the priority of Pakistani 155 writers who employ emotional and moral vocabulary to highlight humility and faith. Indian writers blend Affect and Judgment - expressing their heartfelt emotion as well as their intellectual respect. British writers play more on Appreciation - they evaluate the contribution of others through formal acknowledgment without affective amplification. These linguistic tendencies fit in with more general sociocultural trends: Pakistani and Indian contexts emphasize collectivism, hierarchy and relational warmth, while in British academia there are more individualistic, egalitarian, and professionally restrained trends.

The third research question was how coherence is constructed and maintained in the acknowledgment sections of doctoral theses written in Pakistan, India and the United Kingdom. Coherence is the logical and relational flow that helps the reader interpret a text as a coherent and meaningful discourse. While all writers seek to create cohesive and emotionally continuous texts, the strategies they use to achieve coherence vary considerably from one cultural/academic context to another. This variation reflects not only linguistic choices, but cultural conceptions of order, hierarchy, and relationality. In Pakistani acknowledgments coherence is majorly accomplished through emotional sequencing and spiritual hierarchy. The structure

of most of the texts in Pakistani language follow a predictable order or sequence, that is, the beginning is a prayer of gratitude to Almighty Allah, followed by acknowledgments to the supervisor, the institutional authorities, the colleagues and then family and friends. This order reflects religious and social hierarchies that are present in Pakistani culture. Coherence is, therefore, not only, or even primarily, textual but moral and spiritual. The frequent use of formulaic expressions, like "I am thankful to Almighty Allah," "I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor" and "I am grateful to my parents," create a rhythmic and recursive structure that has bound the text together rather through repetition than through syntactic logic. In the Indian corpus coherence is found in a combination of the hierarchical structure and the logical progression. Indian writers have a tendency to place acknowledgments in a definite order following a traditional academic pattern - starting with gods, then authorities of institutions, then the supervisors, then colleagues, and family. However, unlike Pakistani texts, the acknowledgments in Indian texts contain explicit discourse markers that link sections and form a logical progression for the reader through the hierarchy of thanks. Such common words as "first and foremost," "besides," "furthermore," "moreover," and "lastly" form explicit cohesion between paragraphs. This controlled sequencing indicates that Indian writers blend emotion with rationality with self-discipline which is not out of place in the context of India's academic culture which values both sanctity and intellectual order (Kumar & Singh, 2020). The repetition of words (lexical repetition) is also a prominent cohesive device in Indian acknowledgments, but unlike the more intense affective repetition in Pakistan, this is done to reinforce the logical continuity of the text. Words such as "support," "guidance," "help" and "encouragement" appear repeatedly over several sentences; they add a sense of thematic unity to the work while preserving emotional unity. The coherence of Indian recognitions is also achieved through thematic layering - the careful grouping of related expressions of thanks in certain paragraphs. For example, one paragraph may focus completely on academic mentors, another on colleagues and another on family. This paragraph-level organization creates clarity in terms of text, and room for elaboration in terms of emotion. In the United Kingdom corpus coherence is achieved through the structural conciseness and syntactic precision rather than emotional sequencing. British writers are inclined to create acknowledgments in a linear and minimal fashion, where each content of paragraph is related to a particular group of contributors - supervisors, colleagues, institutions or family members. The transitions between these sections are very smooth, yet understated, and are often marked by simple transitions such as "also," "finally," and "above all." Unlike South

Asian writers, the British writers do not resort to lexical repetition but rather to the varied but semantically related verbs of gratitude ("thank", "appreciate", "acknowledge") to maintain the thematic unity. This technique establishes coherence by means of lexical diversity and controlled variation instead of affective redundancy. Comparatively, the three corpora have shown different but culturally coherent ways of achieving text unity. The Pakistani writers use emotional and moral coherence by repetition, religious sequencing, and affective intensity to link ideas. Indian writers blend emotional and logical coherence and maintain the balance of coherence through the use of explicit connectors, thematic development and hierarchical structuring. British writers achieve coherence by the economy of structure, sameness of syntax, and accuracy of vocabulary. Essentially, whereas Pakistani and Indian texts move through relational and moral frames, British texts move through logical and institutional frames.

The fourth research question examined the structural patterns of sentences of acknowledgment sections in doctoral theses written in Pakistan, India, and the United Kingdom. While the acknowledgment genre seems formulaic, the syntax of the genre is a subtle reflection of the writer's cultural identity, expression of feeling, and relationship to the academic community. The results suggest that sentence structure in acknowledgments is not only grammatical but also interpersonally meaningful for the expression of interpersonal stance and ideological orientation. The analysis showed that the general use of long, complex and compound-complex sentences is practiced, wherein Pakistani authors are often blending multiple ideas of gratitude, faith and emotion into one grammatical unit. A typical sentence has a number of subordinate clauses connected by coordinating conjunctions or relative pronouns like "who," "which" and "that." For example: "I am thankful to Almighty Allah, who has blessed me with the courage and wisdom to finish this work, and to my supervisor, whose patience and guidance with kindness made it possible for me to study this work." Such kind of syntactic construction establishes a layered and cumulative rhythm and enables the writer to recognize the divine, academic, and familial contributors in one breath. In contrast, the acknowledgements in India are seen to have a balanced structure of syntax, that is, both complex and compound sentences in a controlled manner. Indian writers tend to organize their gratitude in a sequential manner, with each sentence covering a specific group, such as supervisors or departments or colleagues or family members, while doing so at the same time while keeping the balance inwards through coordination. Sentences such as "I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor for his invaluable guidance, and to my family for their constant support" are examples of the frequent use of a

coordination instead of deep subordination. This structural moderation is the expression of the Indian writer's awareness of the academic decorum without sacrificing emotion expressiveness. The corpus of the United Kingdom is characterized by a very different syntactic tendency, consisting of short, autonomous and grammatically simple sentences. British writers prefer to express in a concise structure, with little subordination or elaboration. Sentences are formed with the use of 1 main clause, sometimes connected using a simple connection. For example, "I would like to thank my supervisor, for his guidance." I am also thankful to my colleagues for their support." Each sentence does only one thing - recognition of one contributor in the sentence, and then passes to the next. This stylistic restraint reflects the general cultural and academic preference for clarity, brevity and impersonal tone (Hyland, 2012). The paratactic structure of British texts produces rhythmical uniformity. Writers employ repetitions of the syntactic architecture "I would like to thank", "I am grateful to", or "I wish to acknowledge" opening up a formal, yet impersonal tone. This uniformity fosters coherence and readability of texts with an emotionally distant. British authors refrain from lengthy multi-clausal constructions which may imply excessive sentiment. Instead, syntax is for the sake of professional modesty and institutional decorum. The use of modal constructions ("I would like to," "I wish to") has also made the act of thanking often more tentative, turning the process of being thankful from an expression of emotion into a polite academic norm (Brown & Levinson, 1987). A cross-cultural comparison of these syntactic patterns shows very obvious distinctions in emotional and ideological orientation. Pakistani writers use the elaboration in syntax as a mirror to the depth of emotions and moral responsibility; Indian writers use the mix of complexity and coordination in the sentence that allows for maintaining a relationship between people and things; and British writers use the restraint in syntax as it projects professionalism and control. In short, the length and layering of sentences is commensurate to the conception of the academic self in any given culture.

In conclusion, the acknowledgment sections of doctoral theses from Pakistan, India, and the United Kingdom are three ways of academic expression which are very different, yet equally valid. Pakistani acknowledgments represent the moral and spiritual self, Indian acknowledgments the relational and balanced self and British acknowledgments project the professional and autonomous self. These findings thus reassert that academic writing is in no way a neutral cultural practice, but a deeply situated practice that retains traces of its writers' beliefs, values, and worldviews. The acknowledgment section, therefore, should not be read only as a

token of gratitude but a meaningful discourse of connecting personal emotion with academic identity in a trans-cultural way.

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Correspondence:

Savera Naheed

saveranaheed@gamil.com
