



A Comparative Perspective On Legal Register In Pakistani English

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates linguistic variation of legal register in relation to other special and non-special registers in Pakistani English by applying multidimensional analysis approach introduced by Biber (1988) in his work "Variation across Speech and Writing". In order to describe a register, a comparative register perspective yields baseline data to comprehend the linguistic properties of an individual register. Comparative studies show that there are significant linguistic differences among registers, known as the patterns of register variation. Thus the current study aims to reveal differences and similarities among legal register and other registers in Pakistani context. The corpus of the study includes legal register with eight legal genres and about two million words whereas mean dimension scores of other registers have been taken from Ahmad and Mahmood, 2015; Hussain, Mahmood and Azher, 2016; Alvi, Mehmood and Rasool, 2016. The results show that legal register and editorials are significantly different from each other along dimension 1,3,4,5 whereas legal register and press reportage are found statistically significantly different along all five dimensions. As regards comparison of legal register and non-special registers, the results reveal highly significant difference between them. It indicates that legal register has specific lexicogrammatical features which distinguish it from other registers. Difference among registers might be due to their different goals, norms and audience. It reveals that functional interpretations on the basis of texts regardless of register variation are inadequate.

Keywords: Legal register, Register variation, MD analysis, Dimensions

Introduction

Register variation is inherent in any culture as "no human being talks the same way all the time . . . At the very least, a variety of registers and styles is used and encountered" (Hymes, 1984, p. 44) and each language community has its own system of registers "corresponding to the range of activities in which its members normally engage" (Ure, 1982, p.5).

Pakistani English is a distinct variety which has its own registers and sub registers with systematic linguistic variation. Many registers of this variety have been investigated and distinctive features have been highlighted (shakir, 2013; Ahmad & Mahmood, 2015; Begum, 2016)

Register studies have emphasized that grammatical structures are distributed differently across registers depending upon purpose or communicative situations. Legal register is considered to be a distinct variety in respect of its linguistic characteristics and communicative contexts, i.e. settings, relationship of participants and their background knowledge. Salient features of legal language involve formal expressions, polysemous words, brevity, obscurity and complex constructions. To identify the distinctive characteristics of the target register, it is necessary to empirically compare the language in one register to the language in other register. It helps to understand the linguistics characteristics of a particular register relative to a representative range of register in the language.

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Multidimensional analysis approach is the best approach in this context. It highlights that registers can be identified on the basis of co-occurrence patterns of linguistic features rather than focusing on single or few linguistic features. This study aims to identify the linguistic features of legal register in Pakistani context and compares it with four other registers, i.e. two special and two non-special registers which will help in better understanding of legal register.

Literature Review

2.1 Legal Language

The term “Legal Language” refers to the subject and the field where language functions, i.e. law. Danet (1985) asserted, “While language is central to all human affairs, it is particularly critical in the law. Physicians work with physical substances and entities; in contrast, the work of lawyers and judge is symbolic and abstract. In a most basic sense, law would not exist without language” (p.273).

Legal language is considered a different variety based on its communicative functions and linguistic properties. According to Charrow, Crandall and Charrow (1982), legal English is classified as a language variety due to different linguistic patterns whereas Danet (1985) considered it a special register dwelling upon the concept of register given by Bollinger (1975), 'register is mainly a matter of formality'.

Legal language is characterized with complicated grammatical constructions, Long sentences, frequent use of nominalizations or nouns instead of verbs, limited punctuation, technical vocabulary and archaic terminology which make it different from other registers. Tiersma (1999) described that legal language is marked with “lengthy and complex sentences, unusual sentence structure, wordiness and redundancy, conjoined phrases, frequent use of negation and impersonal constructions” (p. 51).

2.2 Register Variation

Register is used as a cover term for any variety associated with particular situational contexts or purposes. Although register distinctions are defined in non-linguistic terms, there are usually important linguistic differences among registers as was highlighted by sociolinguists such as Ure (1982), Ferguson (1994): “the register range of a language comprises the range of social situations recognized and controlled by its speakers - situations for which appropriate patterns are available” (Ure, 1982, p.5). Ferguson (1994) described that “register variation 'is the linguistic difference that correlates with different occasions of us” (p.16).

Register variation mainly concentrates on the frequent patterns of linguistic variation covering different situations along with functions of those linguistic features. Bhatia (1993) described that “register analysis focuses mainly on the identification of statistically significant lexicogrammatical features of a linguistic variety” (Bhatia, 1993, p.8).

In order to determine characteristic features of any register, three methodological points needs to be considered.

1. Comparative approach
2. Quantitative analysis
3. Representative sample

Two approaches have been applied to study register variation: register analysis and multidimensional analysis. All of the studies using register analysis (Crystal & Davy, 1969; Gustaffsson, 1975, etc.) focused on the analysis of either single or few linguistic features quantitatively and ignored the association between co-occurring linguistic expressions and their communicative functions. They have been challenged and found inappropriate in exploration of register variation.

In contrast, Multidimensional analysis is considered the most suitable approach in register variation. The current study adopts this approach in order to analyze linguistic variation among registers.

2.3 Multidimensional Analysis

The principal concept of multidimensional analysis is linguistic co-occurrences. These patterns are identified as dimensions of variation which are determined on the basis of linguistic features. There is another idea behind this approach that linguistic features co-occur because they have the same functions. Biber (2009) described that co-occurrence of features is inevitable in register analysis.

The relative distribution of common linguistic features considered individually cannot reliably distinguish among registers. There are simply too many different linguistic characteristics to consider and individual features often have idiosyncratic distributions. However, when analysis is based on the co-occurrence and alternation patterns for groups of linguistic features, important differences across registers are revealed. (p.824)

Several registers in Pakistan have been examined by using multidimensional analysis approach.

Shakir (2013) analyzed print advertisement in his work “Linguistic variation across Print Advertisements in Pakistani Media: A Multidimensional Analysis” by applying both 1988 MD and New MD approach. Corpus comprised 1351 advertisements. Findings revealed that advertisements are similitude to promotional genres (written discourse) instead of conversation as was claimed in previous studies. He identified some new dimensions of variation (Directive vs. Informational discourse, Expression of organizational Policy vs. other concerns, Impersonal vs. audience oriented style) in his data.

Amjad and Shakir (2014) in their work “Study of Information Generating Linguistic Features in Online University Prospectuses” analyzed the language of prospectuses of three countries (Pakistan, UK and India) along dimension of “involved versus informational production” identified by Biber (1988). Data were based on the sections of Prospectuses i.e. “about us, facilities, department, and vice Chancellor’s message and library sections. MAT (v 1.0) was applied for tagging and analyzing data. Findings showed the prospectuses informational. Prospectuses of India were the most informational of all. Among sections of prospectuses, department sections proved highly informational.

Ahmad and Mahmood’s (2015) study of multidimensional analysis focused on register of Pakistani News reportage. He found out the differences and similarities among different categories of news reportage. Size of corpus included in this investigation was 2000 text

involving 2.3 million words. Findings revealed the variation between British and Pakistani news reporting.

Another research entitled “Register Variation in Pakistani English: A Multidimensional Approach” was conducted by Hussain, Mahmood and Azher (2016) who examined Pakistani English along parameters of linguistic variation by applying New multidimensional analysis. Findings revealed that there are more variations among registers in Pakistani English than other varieties. Four new dimensions of variation, specific to Pakistani variety, were determined i.e. “Uncertain Interactive versus Abstract Informational Discourse, Evaluation: Personal versus objective, Reporting of Past Events, Online Discourse”.

Alvi, Mehmood and Rasool (2016) analyzed editorials in Pakistani English newspapers by applying 1988 multidimensional analysis (Biber, 1988). The corpus consists of 250 editorials collected from five newspapers. Five dimensions of linguistic variation proposed by Biber in his 1988 work were identified and interpreted functionally. The result showed a remarkable difference between British and Pakistani editorials. Editorials in the newspaper “The Frontier Post” were found similar to British editorials.

Begum (2016) investigated academic writing of university scholars in Pakistani context by applying both models of Multidimensional Analysis. Her data were based on Ph.D. and M. Phil. theses comprising 8.3 million words. She identified variation among theses of different disciplines along with the differences among different sections of theses. She compared Pakistani academic writing with British academic writing and found considerable similarities between them.

Review of the previous researches on multidimensional analysis leads to the current study. It has helped in understanding the methodological design along with the provision of reference points (previous studied registers) for comparison with legal register. It has shown that the most of the studies focused on exploration of single register in determining the characteristics of specific register with reference to other Pakistani or British registers. Current research is also a contribution in this regards as it has been conducted to determine the unique identity of legal register in relation to other registers.

Materials and Methods

The present study applies multidimensional analysis approach to study distinctive linguistic properties of legal register in relation to two special and two non-special registers, i.e. - editorials and press reportage, academic writing and instructional writing respectively. Microscopic and macroscopic approaches have been used. Both types of analyses are complementary to each other. The microscopic analysis presents a functional analysis of linguistic features but it does not provide overall parameters of linguistic variation among registers which is the concern of macroscopic analysis.

3.1 Corpus

The corpus of legal register covering the written activities in Pakistani legal context has been selected for the study. It comprises eight legal genres (directives, legal decisions, articles, legal reports, ordinances, rules and regulations, acts and constitutions) and around two million words. The corpus has been borrowed from department of Applied Linguistics, Government

College University Faisalabad. It has been tagged by using Biber's tagger at Northern Arizona University. The tagger identifies 67 linguistic features along with mean dimension scores.

As this study is aimed to compare legal register with two special and two non-special registers based on mean dimension scores so the same scores of four other registers (editorials and press reportage, academic writing and instructional writing) have been taken from MD analyses (Ahmad and Mahmood, 2015; Hussain, Mahmood and Azher, 2016; Alvi, Mehmood and Rasool, 2016).

3.2 Data Analysis

Data have been analyzed by applying 1988 model of MD analysis introduced by Biber, (1988). It is based on 67 linguistic features and five dimensions, i.e. Involved vs. Informational Production, Narrative vs. Non-Narrative Concerns, Explicit vs. Situation Dependent Reference, Overt Expression of Argumentation/Persuasion, and Abstract vs. Non-Abstract Style.

The dimensions explored in Biber's (1988) work "Variation across Speech and Writing" are often applied as a reference point for description and comparison of registers and genres investigated according to 1988 Model of variation. Separate Factor analysis is not required for application of 1988 MD model as related linguistic features are already fixed.

A study based on 1988 factor solution is comparable with any other study based on this model so findings (based on 88 MD analysis) of the current study, have been compared with two special registers, i.e. editorials and press reportage and two non-special registers, i.e. academic writing and instructional writing.

Data analysis involves the following steps: tagging data through Biber's lab, normalizing linguistic features to avoid errors which may occur due to different lengths of texts, standardizing linguistic features to give them equal weight, computing dimension scores and comparing registers on the basis of dimension scores.

In order to compare legal registers with other registers in Pakistani English, bar graphs have been applied whereas significance of differences has been measured by using independent sample t test. It has helped to find out the answer of following question.

1. What are the similarities or differences among legal register and other registers in Pakistani context?

3.3 Reliability of MD analysis

A number of studies have been conducted to examine the reliability of Multidimensional analysis approach in identifying register variation (see in chapter of literature review). Biber (1990) has applied factor analysis on the split corpora and found out similar results. Furthermore, he (1992) has conducted confirmatory factor analysis in order to test factorial structure of 1988 model identified through exploratory factor analysis.

4. Results

4.1 Variation among Registers

1988 Model of MD analysis functions as a point of reference for comparison among registers. It leads to comprehension of legal discourse in contrast to other registers. In order to examine that linguistic features identified in a specific genre or register are distinctive or they are similar to other registers/genres, it is necessary to compare it with other registers. This section compares Pakistani legal register with some other registers outside the field of law in Pakistani context. Other registers include two special registers (press editorials, press reportage) and two non-special registers (academic writing, instructional writing).

4.2 Comparison of legal register with Non-special registers

This section compares legal register with two non-special registers, i.e. academic writing and instructional writing and answers the second part of the question: What are the similarities or differences among legal register and other specialized and non-specialized registers in Pakistani context?

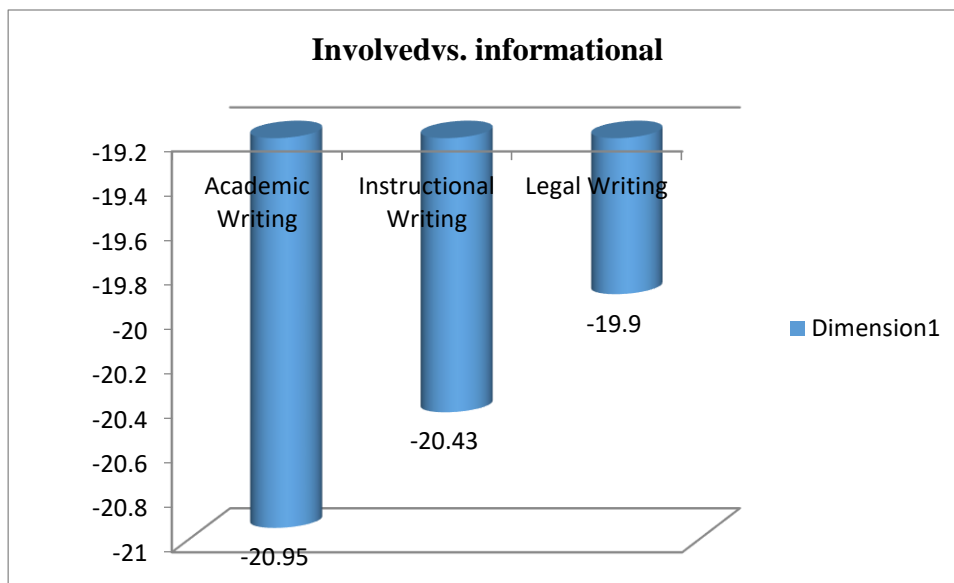
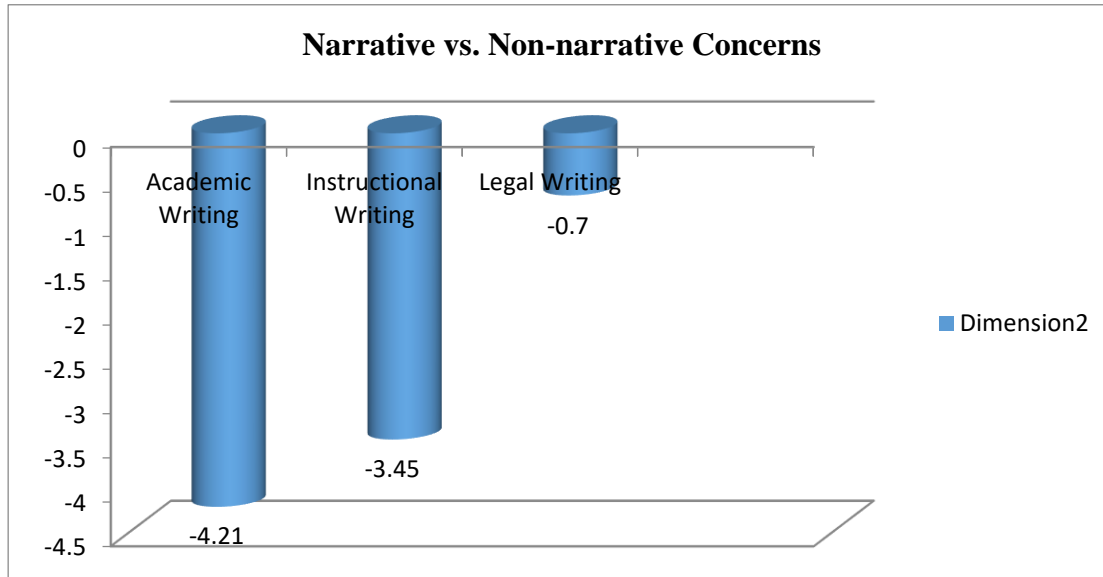


Figure 1.
Comparison among Registers along Dimension 1

Figure 1. shows a comparison between legal register and other non-special registers along dimension one, i.e. “Involved vs. Informational Productions”. Academic writing and instructional writing have higher negative scores on this dimension than legal writing, but all of them are marked with negative scores thus point to their informational nature. It reflects that they have a higher frequency of negative features associated with information. It corresponds to the fact that all of these registers are associated with transmission of information.

Figure 2. Comparison among Registers along Dimension 2



On dimension 2, comparison of all three registers reveals that all three registers have a tendency toward non-narrative concerns. Their scores on negative pole insist upon their non-narrative nature. Academic writing and instructional writing have higher negative scores (-4.21, -3.45 respectively) on this dimension as compared to legal writing. Very low negative scores of legal register (-0.7) indicate its hybrid nature. Its scores cluster around mean scores which show that some of the legal texts have narrative trends.

Figure 3. Comparison among Registers along Dimension 3

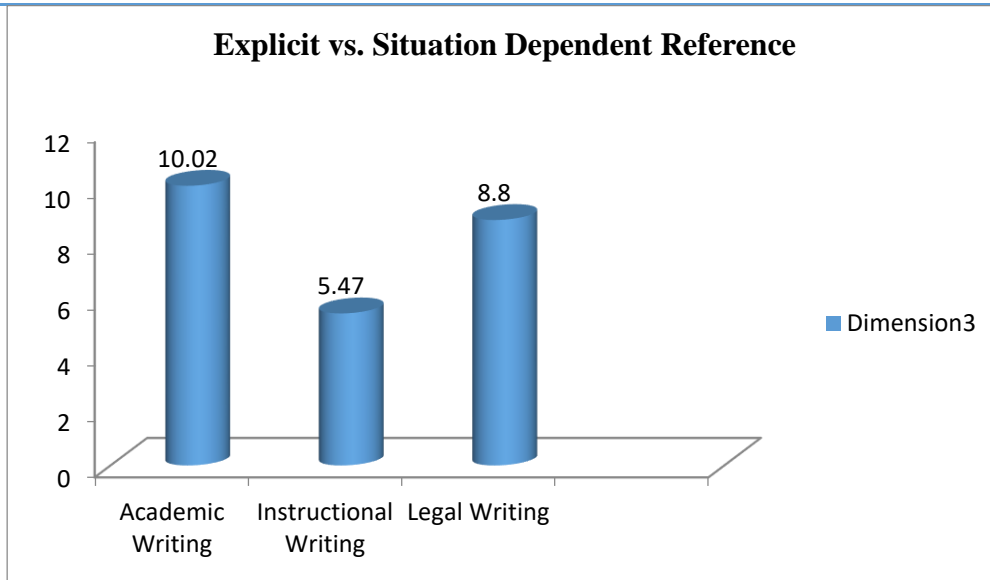


Figure 3 presents a comparison among registers along dimension3. Findings indicate that academic writings are the most explicit and decontextualized of all registers. It has “highly explicit, text- internal reference” as compared to other registers. Legal writings have the second highest positive scores on this dimension. Instructional Writing is the least explicit of all three registers. Overall all registers have positive scores on this dimension, thus revealing the trend of being non-context dependent. Such text is packed with dense information and is marked with WH clauses along with phrasal coordination and nominalizations.

Figure 4. Comparisons among Registers along Dimension 4

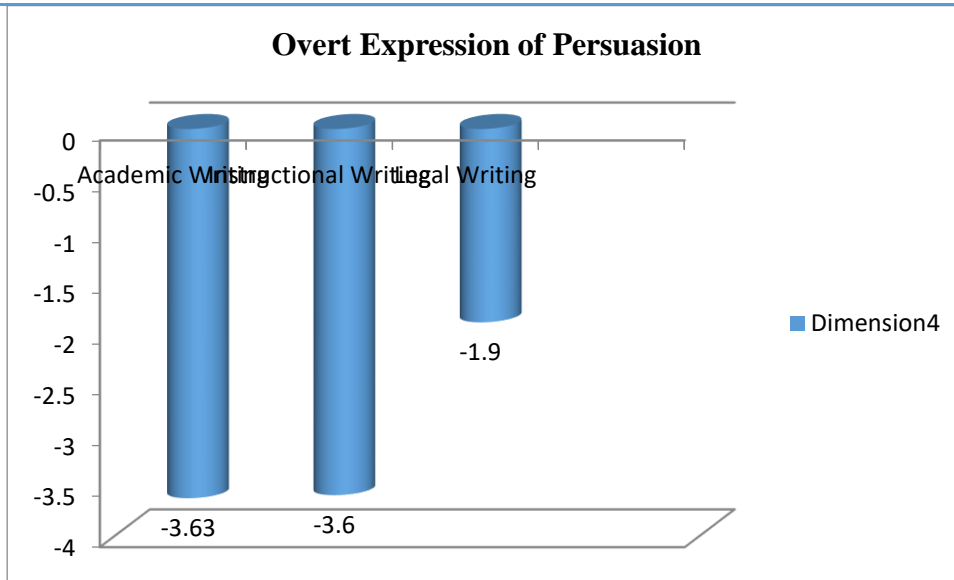


Figure 4 reflects the comparative analysis of all three registers along dimension4. This dimension has only positive features. Positive weight on this dimension is marked with persuasion. Absence or least frequency of positive features indicates that the registers are not persuasive in nature. The figure shows that all of the registers on this dimension have negative scores which reflect the absence of argumentative features in them. So far as the configuration of registers on this dimension is concerned, academic writings and instructional writings have higher negative scores and lesser persuasive than legal writing. This conforms to the opinion of Biber (1988, p.149) that academic text is unmarked on this dimension, and both legal writing and academic writing fall in this category.

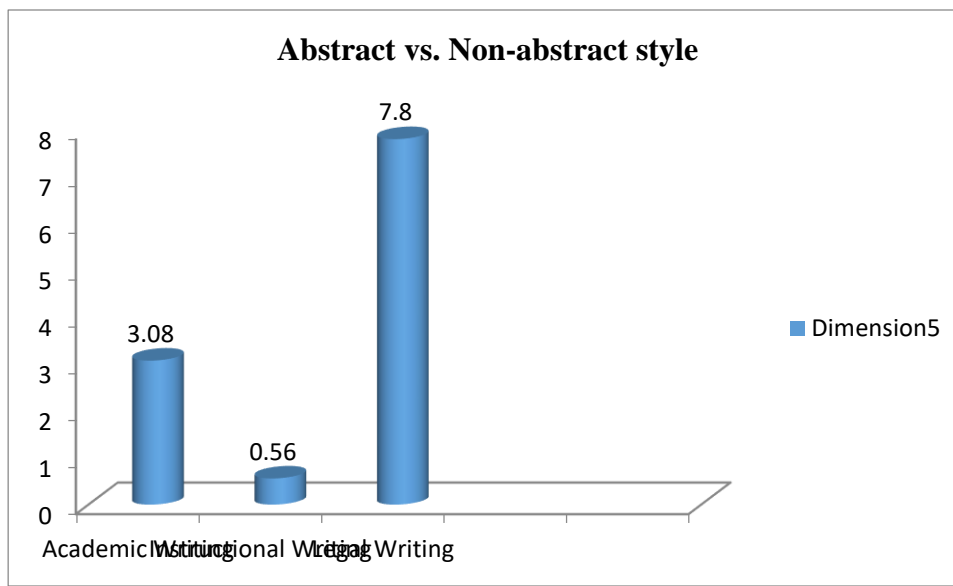


Figure 5.
Comparison among Registers along Dimension 5

Figure 5 offers a comparison among registers along dimension 5. This dimension distinguishes discourse with abstract information from one with non-abstract information. Results indicate that all registers, i.e. legal writing, academic writing and instructional writing have positive weight on this dimension thus indicate their abstract nature. Legal register is marked with the most objective and impersonal sort of writing. Findings correspond to the notion regarding legal language that it is abstract and impersonal, not opinionated (Tiersma, 1999; Gibbons, 2003). The second highest positive scores are found in academic writing. As regards register of instructional writing, its score is very low on positive pole which shows that it involves both types of data i.e. impersonal as well as non- impersonal. Linguistic features involving communicative function of abstraction are: passive constructions, post nominal clauses and adverbial clauses etc.

Table 1. Comparison of Legal Writing and Instructional Writing

	Legal Writing	Instructional Writing	t-value	P-value
Dimension1	-19.91±0.119	7.8	233.73**	0.000
Dimension2	-0.67±0.075	-3.8	41.88**	0.000
Dimension3	8.88±0.094	4.4	46.31**	0.000
Dimension4	-1.91±0.078	5.7	97.34**	0.000
Dimension5	7.84±0.121	2.1	47.51**	0.000

NS = Non-significant (P>0.05); Significant (* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001)

A comparison of the legal register with the register of instructional writing has been made through the t-test. Results show that the difference between both registers is significant as the value of significance is below 0.05.

Table 2. Comparison of Legal Writing and Academic Writing

	Legal Writing	Academic	t-value	P-value
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Writing

Dimension1	-19.91±0.119	-15.6	36.35**	0.000
Dimension2	-0.67±0.075	-3.1	32.50**	0.000
Dimension3	8.88±0.094	6.6	22.98**	0.000
Dimension4	-1.91±0.078	-1.7	2.71**	0.007
Dimension5	7.84±0.121	4.0	31.79**	0.000

NS = Non-significant (P>0.05); Significant (* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001)

t test has been applied to see a statistically significant difference between legal writing and Academic writing. As the value of significance is lesser than 0.05, results reveal a significant difference between both registers.

4.3 Comparison of legal register with other special registers

In this section, legal register has been compared with other special purpose registers along five dimensions of 1988 model of variation. Comparison finds out the answer of the first part of this question: What are the similarities or differences among legal register and other specialized and non-specialized registers in Pakistani context?

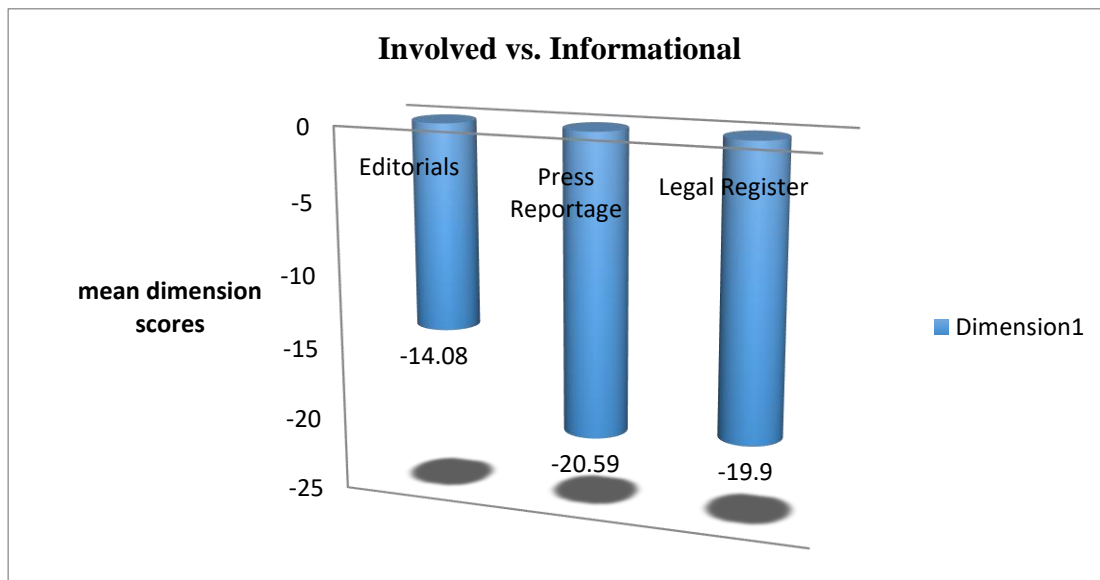


Figure 6. Comparison among Registers along Dimension 1

Figure 6 maps the mean dimension scores of legal register along with press reportage and editorials. Positive scores on this dimension reflect that a particular variety has involved orientation, whereas negative scores on this dimension reveal its informational nature. The figure shows that all three registers are informational. Mattila (2006) describes that “legal language transmits messages relative to the law, and facts of legal importance” (p. 33). Legal register and register of press reportage are almost similar in the level of information they convey with score -19.9 and -20.59 respectively. Editorials are also informative but lesser than other registers (mean score, -14.08). Biber and Conrad (2009) state that newspaper registers are meant to convey information. The results are not surprising as all these registers are functionally associated with information transmission. Their large negative scores show that they are marked with features related to information (nouns, prepositions, attributive adjectives).

Figure 7. Comparison among Registers along Dimension 2

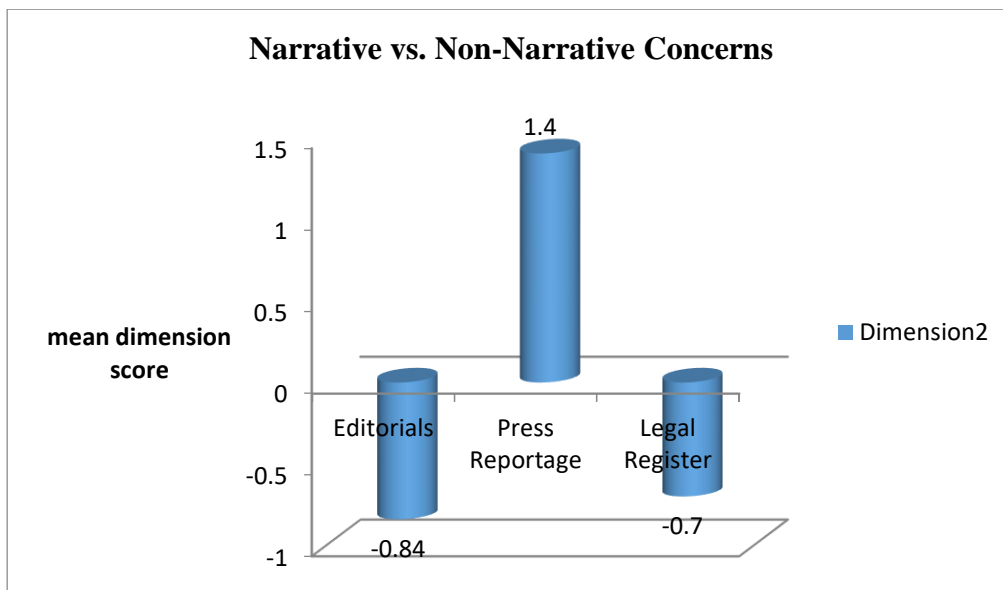
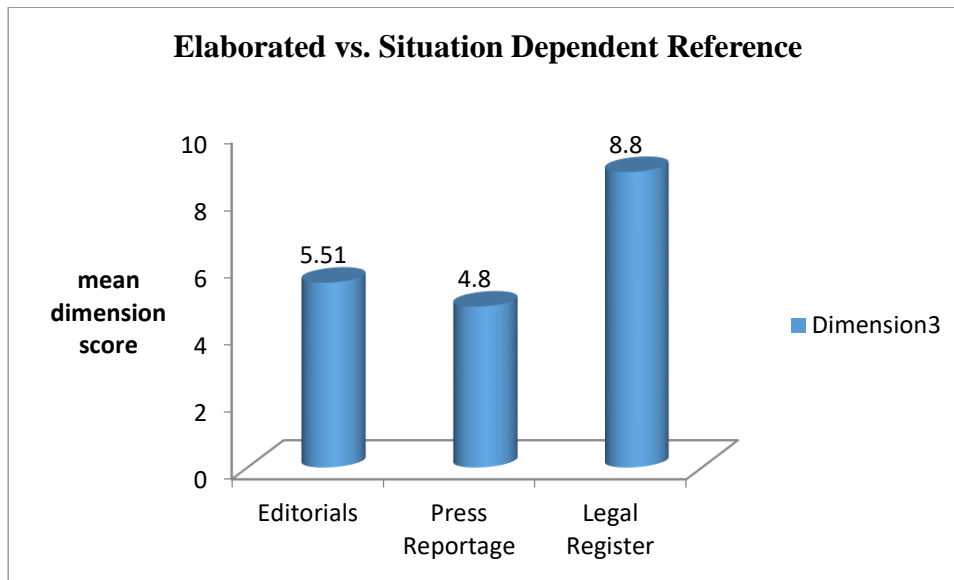


Figure 7 displays mean dimension score of legal register along with editorials and press reportage on dimension 2 “ Narrative vs. Non-Narrative Concerns”. Positive scores on this dimension show that a variety is associated with narration where as negative scores indicate non narrative nature of discourse. The above figure shows that press reportage has positive scores in opposition to other registers. It is true to the fact that its function is to narrate incidents and events. In this dimension, legal register has an almost similar score to editorials indicating their non-narrative concerns which in the words of Biber (1988) are “marked by immediate time and attributive nominal elaboration (p. 109). But their very low negative scores, i.e. -0.84, -0.7 reflect that some of the texts in these registers have narrative orientation. Micro analysis of linguistic features related to narration (past tense verbs, perfect aspect verbs, third person pronouns and

public verbs) indicates that legal register and editorials are least concerned with narration as compared to press reportage.

Figure 8. Comparison among Registers along Dimension3



The above figure related to the comparison of mean dimension scores of legal register with other special registers shows that all registers have positive scores on this dimension “Elaborated vs. Situation- dependent Reference” However the level to which these registers are elaborated is different. Legal register has the highest scores (8.8) which reflect that legal discourse is the most elaborated and decontextualized of all. On the other hand, editorials and press reportages have lesser positive scores. The features of elaboration involve: WH relative clauses on subject position, WH relative clauses on object position, pied piping (WH relative clauses on the object position with prepositional fronting), phrasal coordination and nominalizations. Linguistic features associated with situation dependent discourse are: place adverbs, time adverbs and other adverbs (excluding time, place adverbs along with emphatics, hedges, amplifiers, downtoners). Positive scores of all registers indicate that they have positive features in a higher frequency and are context independent.

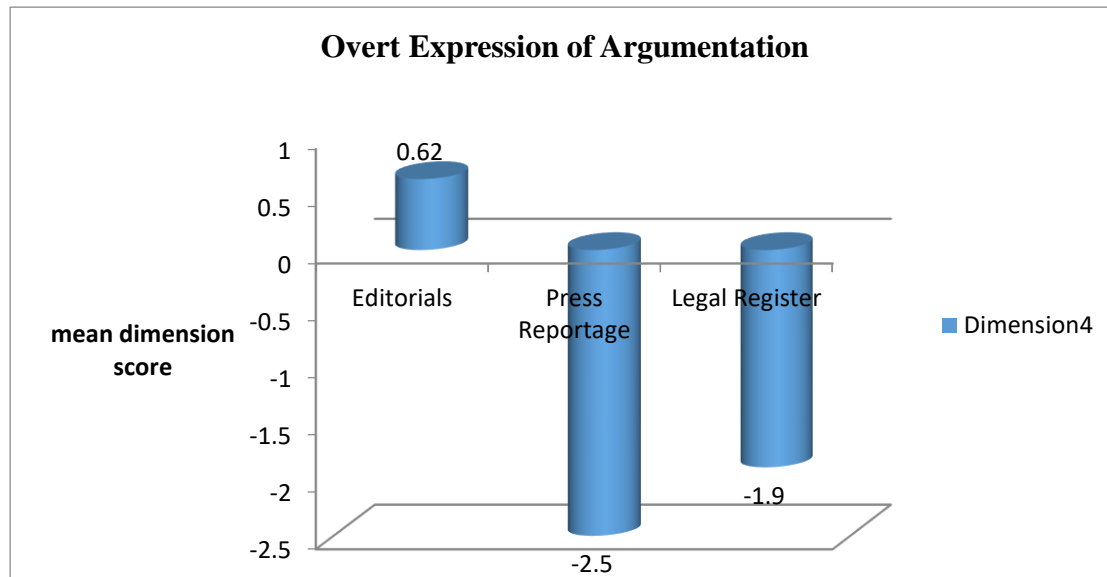


Figure 9. Comparison among registers along dimension 4

Figure 9 plots mean dimension scores of all registers along dimension 4 labeled as “Overt Expression of Argumentation (Persuasion)”. Figure shows that legal register and press reportage have negative scores on this dimension but with varying degree. Press reportage has the highest negative score i.e. -2.5, whereas Legal register has lesser negative scores (-1.9) than those of press reportage. Some of the categories of legal register may have positive scores on this dimension. This indicates that they use persuasion or argumentation to the minimum extent. The results do not correspond to the claim made by Mattila (2006): “The legal community is essentially a community of persuasion” (p. 41). As regards press reportage, its results conform to the general concept that it is never opinionated. On the other hand, editorials having positive scores on this dimension show their tendency of persuasion. This agrees with Biber (2009) that editorials are marked with the overt expression of opinion and persuasion. Linguistic features related to persuasion include: infinitive verb, modal of prediction, suasive verb, conditional subordinators, modal of necessity, adverb within auxiliary.

Figure 10. Comparison among registers along dimension 5

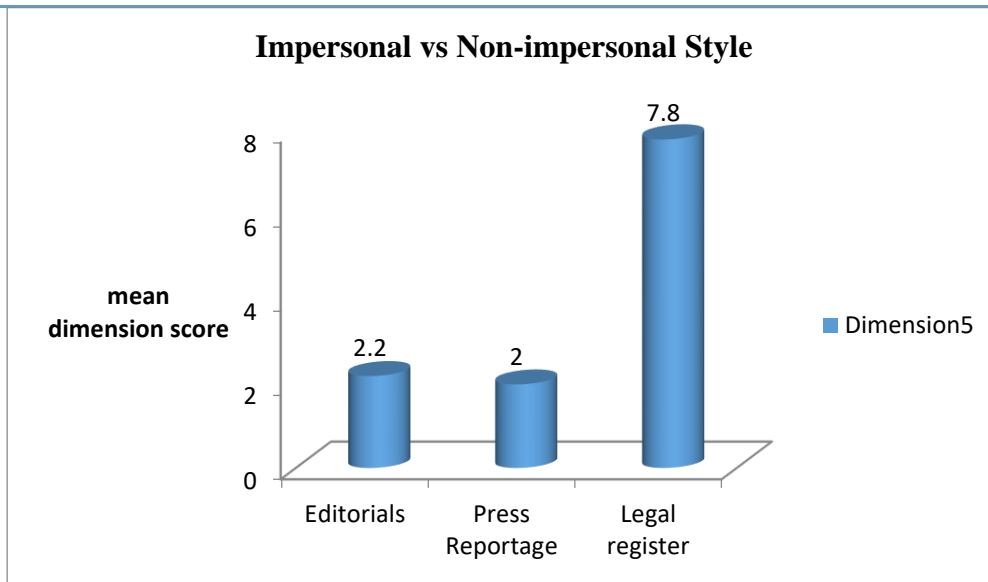


Figure 10 shows mean dimension scores of legal register, editorials and press reportage on dimension 5 labeled as “Impersonal vs. Non-Impersonal style”. Initially this dimension was named as “Abstract vs. Non-abstract Information” (Biber, 1988, p. 113). Later, it got label of “Impersonal vs. Non-Impersonal Style (Biber, 2010, p. 180; Bibber, 2009, p. 843; Biber *et al.*, 2004, p. 50). The figure indicates that legal register has the highest positive score, i.e.7.8 on this dimension which reflects that this register is the most abstract of all (register included in comparison). The abstract nature of this register is highlighted by Mattila (2006), “legal terminology is abstract, and therefore obscure” (p.35). Other registers, i.e. editorials and press reportage have low positive scores, i.e. 2.2 and 2 respectively. These registers are less abstract and objective because they are different from legal register in their communicative purpose. To sum up, all registers are formal, abstract and impersonal (as is shown by the figure given above). However, their degree of abstraction varies considerably. The linguistic features ascribing to this dimension are: adverbial conjuncts, agentless passive verbs, passive by, passive post nominal modifier and subordinating conjunction other. All these features “give prominence to the patient of verb” and are markers of “abstract and formal style (Biber, 1988, p. 112).

Table 3. Comparison of Legal Register and Editorials

	Legal Register	Editorials	t-value	P-value
Dimension1	-19.91±0.119	-14.1	49.00**	0.000
Dimension2	-0.67±0.075	-0.8	1.69 ^{NS}	0.092
Dimension3	8.88±0.094	5.5	34.65**	0.000

Dimension4	-1.91±0.078	0.6	32.12**	0.000
Dimension5	7.84±0.121	2.2	46.68**	0.000

NS = Non-significant (P>0.05); Significant (* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001)

Legal register and editorials have been compared by applying t-test. Results indicate a significant difference between these two registers along dimension 1,3,4,5 whereas a comparison of registers on dimension 2 shows that difference is not significant.

Table 4. Comparison of Legal Register and Press Reportage

	Legal Register	Press Reportage	t-value	P-value
Dimension1	-19.91±0.119	20.6	341.70**	0.000
Dimension2	-0.67±0.075	1.4	27.79**	0.000
Dimension3	8.88±0.094	4.8	42.07**	0.000
Dimension4	-1.91±0.078	-2.5	7.52**	0.000
Dimension5	7.84±0.121	2.0	48.34**	0.000

NS = Non-significant (P>0.05); Significant (* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001)

t test portrays the results of comparison of legal register and register of press reportage. It shows that both registers are significantly different from each other on all five dimensions.

5. Discussion

This section presents a discussion based on the results reported in the previous section. The discussion is arranged in terms of order followed in interpretations in section4. The current research has been conducted to find out linguistic characteristics of legal register in relation to special and non-special registers in Pakistani context. Besides analysis of single register, corpus based methodology focuses on the comparison of register variation. This perspective helps in understanding the linguistic characteristic of specific register in comparison with other registers in the language. As described by Biber and Conrad (2009), “Most grammatical features are distributed in very different ways across registers. These overall distributional patterns correspond to the differing circumstance of production, purpose and levels of formality across registers” (p. 179).

Legal register has been compared with other registers beyond the field of law which has helped to determine the characteristics unique to a particular register as is stated by Beaker and Pearson (2002), special register can be compared with general ones to highlight their distinctiveness

Comparison of legal writing with academic writing and instructional writing on dimension one (figure 1) shows that all three registers are highly informational as their main concern is to give information. Biber and Conrad (2009) state that academic prose is characterized with dense information. Academic writing has the highest negative scores on this dimension which is followed by instructional writing and legal writing. On dimension 2 (figure 2), all three of them have negative scores thus reveal their non-narrative concerns. Academic prose is the most non-narrative discourse. Legal writing has very low negative scores, which is reflection of its tendency towards non-narrative concerns. This is in consistent with Ozyildirim (2011) who finds that “legal language is markedly non-narrative in orientation” (p.90). It reveals its expository nature. Biber and Conrad (2009) state that technical academic prose is an example of expository discourse.

On dimension 3 (figure 3), all of the registers are found similar, i.e. they have positive weight but with variation in scores. Legal register falls between academic writing and instructional writing. Academic writing is the most elaborated and explicit as compared to other registers, whereas instructional writing has the lowest scores in features of explicitness. On dimension 4 (figure 4), comparison reflects that all three registers are the least persuasive. All of them have negative scores on this dimension which indicates that they are not marked with persuasion. Academic writing and instructional writing have almost the similar frequency of negative scores, whereas legal register has the lowest negative scores of all.

As regards dimension 5 (figure 5), all three registers have positive scores, but there is a considerable variation among their scores. Legal register is the most abstract in nature. Objectivity of legal register is highlighted by many scholars (Shuy & Larkin, 1978; Charrow & Charrow, 1979). Instructional writings are the least objective as they are opinionated. These findings are true to the fundamental aim of this sort of writing. Overall, it can be derived from the results that more or less same features are shared by academic writing, instructional writing, and legal writing but the difference is in their frequency across different registers. Registers in Pakistani context have variation in them depending upon their immediate context, i.e. purpose and settings.

Comparison of legal register with other special registers, i.e. press reportage and editorials, given in figure 6 indicates that all of three registers are highly informational. Legal register has almost similar negative scores to press reportage on this dimension. Editorials are less informative than other registers. The results correspond to the fact that all of these are meant to impart information. Ahmad (2016) describes that it is a norm of press reportage register to convey maximum information to its readership. Biber and Conrad (2009) describe that the primary concern of newspaper registers is to provide information. Same is the case with legal register (Danet, 1980; Mellinkoff, 2004; Bhatia, 1987). On dimension 2, (figure 7) press reportages stand on opposite pole to legal register and editorials. Legal register and editorials have negative scores on this dimension thus indicate their non-narrative tendency. It shows that they have less frequency of narrative features. On the other hand, press reportage has positive

scores on this dimension which show that a fundamental property of press reportage is narration. Roszkowski (2011) opines that “subject matter has a role to play in the frequencies of narrative features (p. 154). As regards dimension 3, all three legal registers (legal register, editorials and press reportage) have positive scores (associated with explicit and elaborated discourse) but with varying levels of frequency. None of them is situation dependent. Legal register has the most explicit discourse as compared to other registers as is stated by Mattila (2006), legal register peruses precision. According to Ahmad and Mehmood (2015), press reportage has developed as an explicit and elaborated discourse.

On dimension4 (9), which is associated with overt expression of persuasion and have only positive features (presence or absence of those features is a marker of distinction between persuasive and non- persuasive discourse), legal register and press reportage are found least persuasive as they have very low frequencies of linguistic features on this dimension. The result is not surprising as the purpose of both registers is not to share opinion and persuade readers. According to Biber (2009), “A straight news report is expected not to state an overt opinion, but rather to report the event with as little bias as possible”. Findings regarding non-persuasive nature of legal register are not consistent with the opinion of Mattila (2006), “The legal community is essentially a community of persuasion” (p.41). As regards editorials, they are persuasive, as is indicated by their positive scores on this dimension. Their primary concern is to persuade readers to the point of view woven in them (Biber, 2009).

Comparison of registers on dimension5 indicates that all three registers (legal register, editorials and press reportage) have positive scores thus indicate their abstract nature. Legal register is the most objective and impersonal. Legal language is objective and does not involve subjective approach in imparting information (Mattila, 2006) so is the case with news reportage (Biber, 2009). Editorials and press reportage have almost the similar scores on this dimension. This result is not consistent with dimension 4 where editorials are found persuasive which is not possible without using subjective approach.

6. Conclusion

Following conclusions have been drawn from the findings of the study:

This work reflects that comparative analysis of registers is essential to describe a language thoroughly. Description of legal register relative to other register indicates that it is not equal to any other Pakistani variety. Considerable variation is found on each dimension when compared legal register with special (editorials and press reportage) and non- special registers (academic writing, instructional writing) in the same socio-cultural contexts. Legal register has specific lexicogrammatical features which distinguish it from other registers on each dimension Difference among registers might be due to their different goals, norms and audience.

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