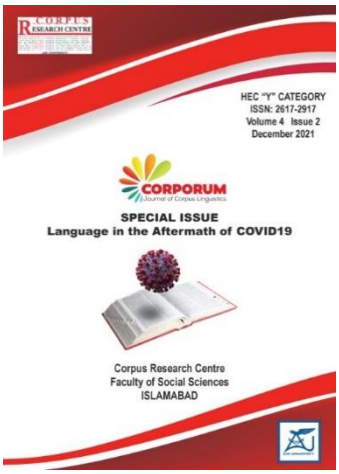

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The Use of Intensifiers in the Aftermath of COVID-19 Pakistani Tweets: An Analytical Comparison Between Pakistani Tweets and Contemporary English Speech (COCA)

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Abstract

This research studies the use of intensifiers in the aftermath of COVID-19 tweets by Pakistani Twitter users (using English as non-native English speakers). It further compares the use of intensifiers in Pakistani tweets with that of the contemporary English speech data, popularly known as COCA. Three types of analyses (distributional analysis, adjectival collocations, and semantic prosody) have been performed on the target (COVID-19 Pakistani tweets) and reference (COCA) data. Most frequently occurring intensifiers in the Pakistani English tweets are 'very' (Urdu بہت) and 'so' and these results correspond with the American contemporary data. The data was analyzed in terms of 'adjectival collocations' as well. To see the combination of the frequently occurring intensifiers with the neighboring adjectives, five most frequently used adjectives (good, true, nice, bad, and hard) were examined in both the reference and the local tweets data. The results bring forth different patterns of adjectival collocation in the reference and target data. The intensifier 'so' hasn't been coupled with 'bad and 'hard' in the target data. Similarly, 'very' hasn't been combined with 'nice' and 'hard' in the target data. In the reference data, 'very' is used with all the adjectives; however, 'so' doesn't occur with the selected adjectives. The results of 'semantic prosody' data reveal some differences and similarities between the two corpora. The results align with the previous researches (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003, and Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005) that suggest 'very', 'really', and 'so' as the top most intensifiers used in the British and the American data. The study of adjectival collocation and semantic prosody in the reference and the local tweets data allow us infer that the study can be valuable for the academicians and social media users as it highlights striking differences between the two corpora. Further, this study can be expanded into different dimensions using different types of data in order to find generalized patterns in the native English and Pakistani social media data.

1. Introduction

Tagliamonte & Roberts (2005) define intensifiers as adverbs that are used as 'linguistic tools' in order to 'boost or maximize meaning' (further explanation of the term 'intensifier' can be seen in 'literature review section'). Peters (1994) refers to the use of intensifiers as 'subject to fashion' as the speakers use them to grab attention and to bring innovation in their conversation. Su (2016) states that there are very few corpora-based studies that discuss the use of intensifiers by the second or foreign language users. The use of intensifiers in the aftermath of COVID-19 tweets by Pakistani public is particularly significant for research purpose due to the following reasons: a) No significant study could be found related to the use of intensifiers in Pakistani context; so, there is a huge opportunity to see for the first time the types of intensifiers used in Pakistani English and Urdu tweets. b) This study will let us know about the most frequent Urdu and English intensifiers used in Pakistani COVID-19 tweets. c) This will also allow us to compare the use and frequencies of intensifiers in the social media (tweets) based data (target data) with that of the contemporary American English corpus famously known as COCA (reference data).

The data have been analyzed in three ways:

1. Distributional analysis has been performed to see the most frequently occurring intensifiers in both the target and reference corpora.
2. Intensifiers have been seen in combination with their neighboring adjectives. This type of analysis has been named as 'adjectival collocations'.
3. Further, the intensifiers have been particularly seen in the contexts they have been used in both the corpora. This type of analysis has been named as 'semantic prosody'.

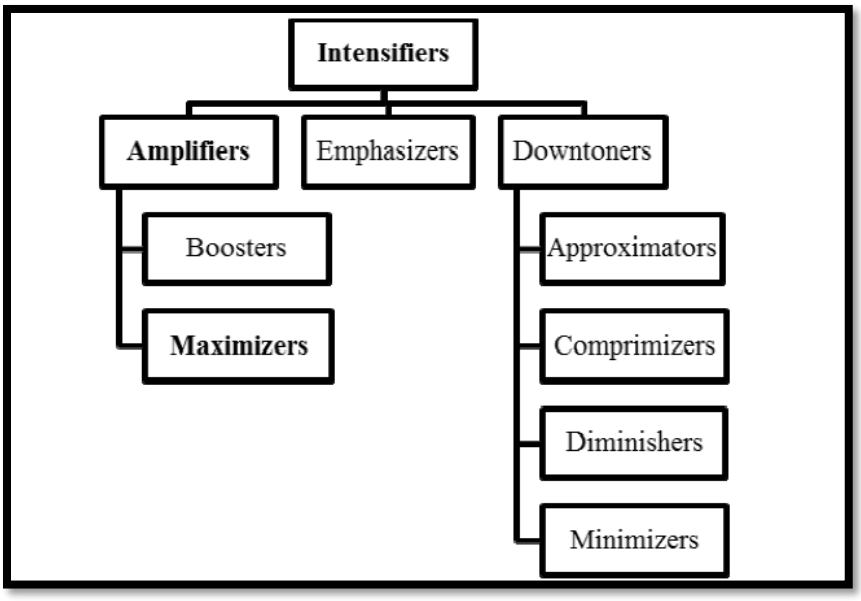
2. Literature Review

Research on the use of intensifiers is not a very new phenomenon. Different studies have investigated the use of intensifiers under different terms, like 'degree words' as used by Bolinger (1972), and 'emphatics' by Biber, Douglas, Conrad and Reppen (1998). Another comparatively recent research (Richard and Tao, 2007) uses the term 'amplifiers', while most of the recent researchers (that include but not limited to Mai Kuha, 2005; Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005; Wittouck, 2011; Scandrett, 2012; Hanafiyeh and Afghari, 2014, and Patumanon, 2016) prefer to use intensifiers. Grammatically speaking, intensifiers are referred to as 'modifiers of degree' or 'adverbs of degree'. While defining intensifiers, Quirk et al. (1985) termed them as 'linguistic devices' that elevate or 'boost' the meaning of a property from 'assumed norm'. If we date back, we see that Stoffel (1901) uses the terms 'intensive adverbs' while talking about the high degree of expression and 'downtoners' for the moderate degree of expression.

Athanasiadou (2007) talks about intensifiers in terms of intensification where speakers' feelings are involved while expressing their opinions. He further presents an 'intensity scale' or a 'scalar level' for the intensifiers across which their meanings intensify in terms of negative or positive degree. Positive intensifiers are called 'boosters' and 'maximizers', while negative intensifers are named as 'compromisers', 'diminishers', and 'minimizers' (Quirk et al., 1985; Paradis, 1997, as cited in Athanasiadou, 2007). Özbay and Aydemir (2017) facilitate with the

following diagram (Fig. 1) to show the classification of intensifiers at one place. We see that 'intensifiers' is a general term for all the types of adverbials.

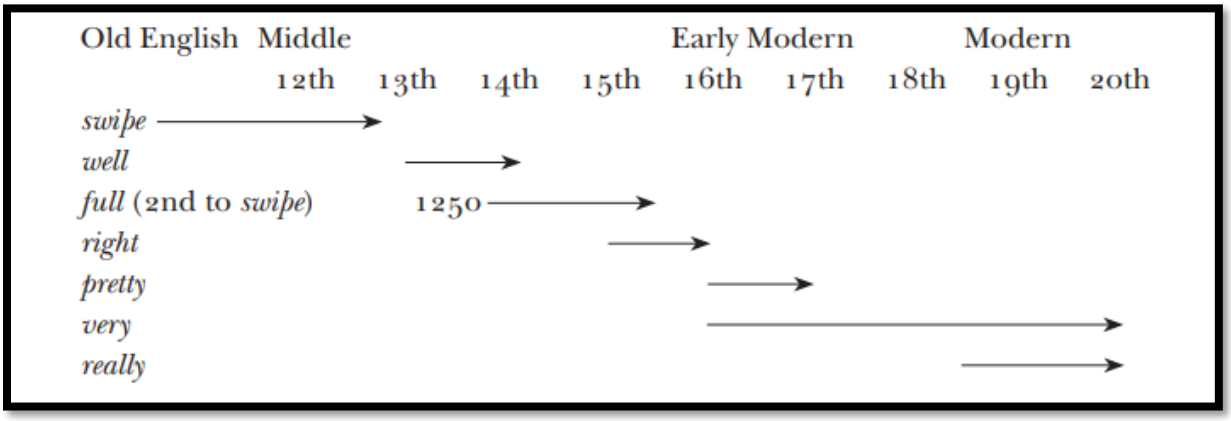
Figure 1
Classification of intensifiers adapted from Özbay and Aydemir (2017), page 41



Quirk et al. (1985) came up with the terms 'amplifiers', 'emphasizers', and 'downtoners'. While Quirk et al. (1985) present intensifiers on 'scalar level' that amplify or minimize the meaning in a given context, Chalker (1984) and Alexander (1988) assume that intensifiers only boost the meaning; however, Biber et al. (1999) find that they are used to highlight that 'the extent or degree' is either greater or lesser than the usual state. It is important to note that intensifiers are more commonly used in the spoken discourse than the written academic texts; however, in informal pieces of writings the frequency of intensifiers/amplifiers is higher than the formal texts (Xiao and Tao, 2007). If we have a look at the history of the intensifiers in terms of their use across different periods of the English language, Tagliamonte and Roberts (2005) present a precise but comprehensive diagram based on Mustanoja (1960).

The Fig. 2 below presents an overview of the dates and an estimate of the duration when the said intensifiers were being commonly/frequently used. In the 12th century, the most commonly used intensifier was 'swipe', which was eventually replaced by 'well'. Then 'well' is replaced by 'full' and so on. Two worth mentioning things here are as follows: 1) the use of the new intensifier didn't completely vanish the use of the old ones; Old English intensifiers can still be a part of the 'contemporary repertoire (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003), and 2) The length of the time (as shown through the length of arrows) reveals that the use of 'very' began somewhere in the Early Modern times and it is still being frequently used in the present century.

Figure 2
History of intensifiers adapted from Tagliamonte & Roberts (2005) page 282



It is very important to see the frequency of different intensifiers as used in the different types of corpora. Labov (1984) finds 'really' as one of the most frequently used intensity markers in the American colloquial conversation. Tagliamonte and Roberts (2005) come up with the three most frequently used intensifiers ('very', 'really', and 'so') in the British data and the Friends (American TV show) data. However, they find difference in the ranking of these intensifiers. The intensifier 'very' is more frequently used by the British users, while 'so' is the most popular in the American TV show (Friends) data.

The use of intensifiers by the second language learners and users hasn't been much discussed in corpus-based studies. Su (2016) also highlights the fact that there are only a few corpus based studies that investigate the use of intensifiers by the second or foreign language learners. Su's (2016) study is significant in this regard as it particularly compares the use of four intensifiers (quite, pretty, rather, and fairly) by the non-native Chinese speakers of English with that of the native English speakers. Su utilizes 'Chinese Learner English Corpus' (CLEC) and the 'Written English Corpus of Chines Learner' (WECCL) (both corpora are based on the written samples) to compare the use of intensifiers with the British National Corpus (BNC). The researcher finds striking differences between the natives and non-natives regarding their preference in the use of intensifiers; moreover, the non-natives have different understanding of the target intensifiers.

When it comes to the Pakistani Twitter users (or social media users), we don't find any corpus-based study so far that brings forth the use of intensifiers. Here it becomes important to chronicle the use of intensifiers by the social media users of Pakistan. This study will be helpful for the potential researchers to explore the use of intensifiers by SLA users on other platforms of the social media. Moreover, the study provides a comparison between the native English speakers' data (COCA) and the local tweets data. This will let us find the differences and similarities between the two corpora in the context of intensifiers.

3. Research Methodology

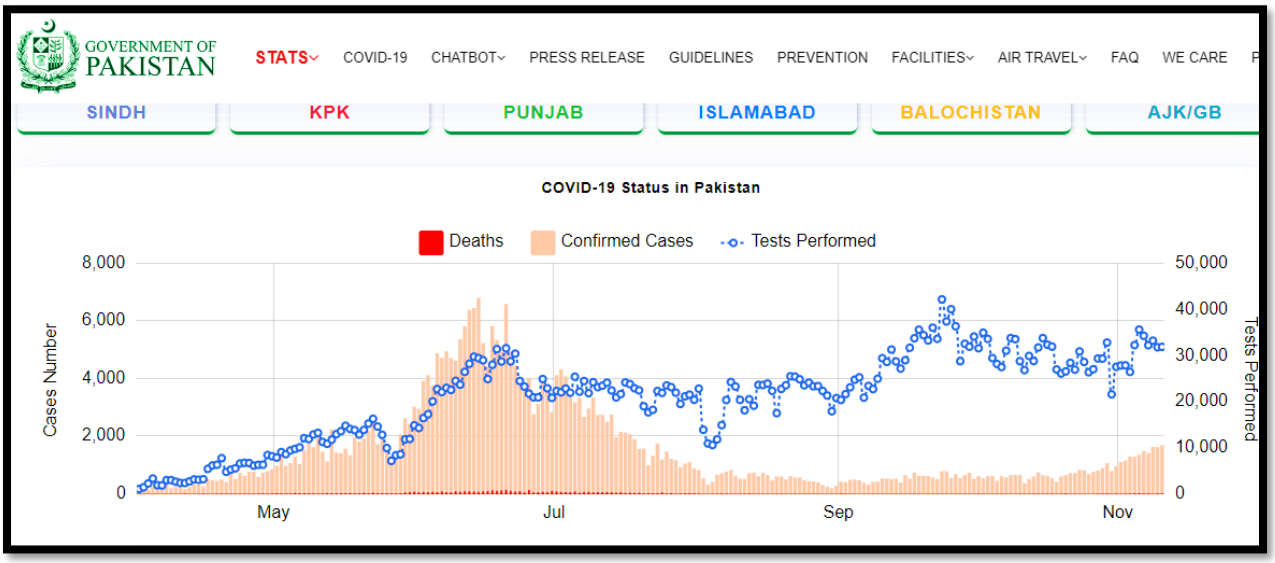
In our research two corpora have been used: Tweets data as target corpus, and Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) as a reference corpus.

3.1.Target Corpus (Tweets data):

The Twitter page #PakistanFightsCorona has been one of the most popular pages among the Pakistani Twitter users since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. The page remained the part of top trends during the months of July and August 2020. The data of 3,320 tweets, consisting of 79,972 words used by Pakistani people, was extracted automatically from the URL of the target webpage through the web scrapping tool. These tweets cover 37 days, i.e., from July 6, 2020 to August 12, 2020. In this regard, Fig. 3 can help us graphically understand COVID-19 first wave situation in Pakistan.

The nature of the target corpus is nonfiction texts, in the real world, that is, used for empirical investigations of usage, and style. It retrieves the maximum amount of information when keywords are launched. It displays the most Pakistani users' tweets of page mentioned below. Frequency of word use is used to determine the most frequently used words. This result therefore corresponds to an entire 3,320 tweets that lasted approximately to 32 days in total.

Figure 3
An overview of the first wave of COVID-19 in Pakistan



Source: https://covid.gov.pk/

The graphical representation has been obtained from the official website of the Government of Pakistan (http://covid.gov.pk/) on November 12, 2020 to get the latest statistics on the pandemic. According to Fig. 3, the novel corona virus out broke around the month of March, got its peak in June, but the mortality rate, confirmed case and tests performed slowed down in July and August and got an average limit. The month of October witnesses the rise in

the COVID-19 cases again. Globally, there are more than 1.2 million mortalities while more than fifty-one million have been affected by the virus. The detailed statistics about the source of tweets, volume over time, users mention, and influencer index are provided in Appendix.

3.2. Reference Corpus (COCA)

The reference corpus of the study, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), is the largest and freely available online corpus of the American English. It is based on more than 560 million words and provides five registers of texts including Spoken, Newspaper, Fiction, Magazine, and Academic.

On the website, https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/, six methods for searching COCA are available. The second method was to collect relevant examples of the individual words, for instance, we chose the target intensifiers. For each individual word, this method of searching the corpus provides collocates, topics, clusters, concordance lines, and related words. Additionally, it was used to conduct analysis on the target corpus by the researcher. This enabled a comparison of the normalized frequencies of selected intensifiers in the target and reference corpora.

4. Data Analysis

Three types of analyses have been performed in the present study: a) Distributional Analysis, b) Adjectival Collocates, and c) Semantic Prosody. Initially, we wanted to see the most frequently used words in the target data. For this purpose, the lists of the top words in tweets were auto generated using the computational tool Tweet Archivist (www.tweetarchivist.com). This allowed us to see if any of the intensifiers could win the above average occurrence score and so we can see that the Urdu intensifier بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') appears in the data more often. Table 1 consists of the top English and Urdu words used in tweets during the pandemic months.

Table 1
Top Words in Tweets corpus

Sr. No.	Top Words	Count	Sr. No.	Top Words	Count
1	کی	1224	14	HANDING	782
2	کے	1214	15	1st	780
3	ہے	966	16	BATCH	779
4	سے	903	17	MATCH	777
5	یہ	841	18	ساقیCONGRATULATIONS	772
6	ہو	828	19	PAK	763
7	تو	817	20	HTTPS://TCO/27MX5TTSW	708
8	بہت	810	21	اور	677
9	میں	809	22	کو	468
10	نم	792	23	کورونا	444
11	مٹی	792	24	کا	415
12	زرخیز	792	25	پر	398
13	ذرا	791			

The present research is based on the use of intensifiers in the aftermath of COVID-19 in Pakistan and therefore we are particularly interested in the frequencies of intensifiers in the target and reference data. The table shows an above average against the intensifier 'بہت' (transliterated as 'boat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') as it occurs 810 times in the target data. The English counterparts for the Urdu intensifier بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') can be 'very', 'so', 'really', etc.; all these belong to the adverbs of degree that aim to intensify the context where they are being used. The extraction of top words was significant in the way that it provides us with the initial information about the use of the required words, intensifiers in the present case. The presence of بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') leads us to search for further intensifiers used in the Urdu/English Pakistani tweets.

The most frequent line in the target data is given below in Table 2:

Table 2
Most frequently used line in the target data (Example 1)

	Urdu Text	Transliteration	Literal translation
1	(زرخیز ہے ساقی یہ مٹی **بہت** ,ذرا نم ہو تو	Zara num ho to ye matti bohat zerkhez hai saqi.	If this soil is made a little humid, it will prove really/so/very fertile.

The most frequently tweeted verse is one of the most popular verses written by the national poet of Pakistan, Allama Muhammad Iqbal. Originally, this verse uses the intensifier بڑی instead of بہت. (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really'). This is an example of malapropism. However, our purpose is not the correction of this wrong use, but to highlight the use of intensifier. Seemingly, people prefer بہت over بڑی, or they feel the use of بہت more convenient and innovative. The original (as used by the poet) or alternative (as used in the Pakistani tweets) use of the intensifiers in the verse makes us realize that it intensifies the adjectival context; for example, compare 'fertile' with 'very/so/really fertile'. We are now able to understand that how intensifiers are used to emphasize a particular context. A few important points can be noted as under:

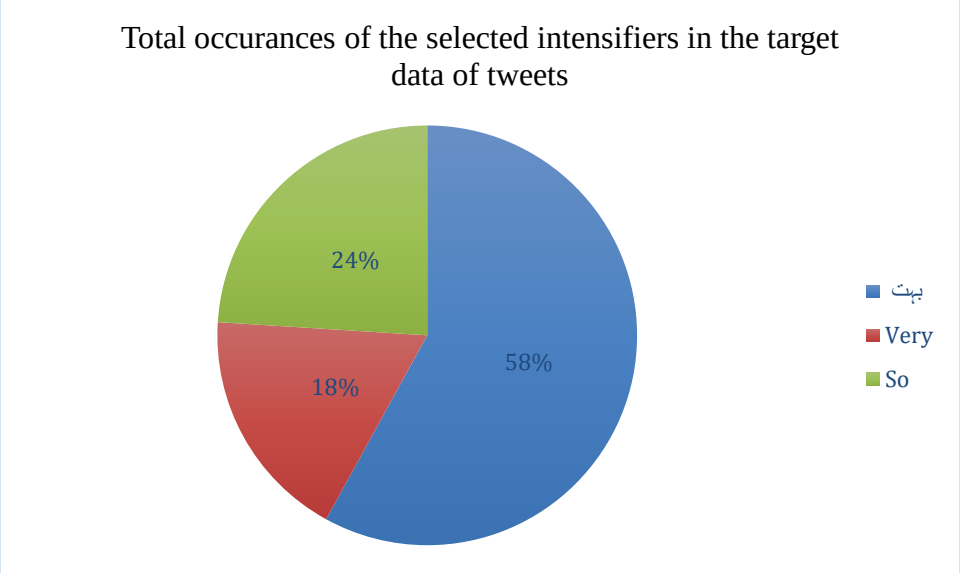
Only a few examples of Urdu Language Tweets were used to demonstrate adjectival collocations. Additionally, the Urdu intensifier is not being compared to COCA examples. It is merely expanded upon with reference to the target corpus. Urdu examples have been justified separately; for instance, prior to the results & discussion section, it is stated that the most frequently tweeted hashtag Urdu verse is exclusively from the works of Pakistan's national poet, Allama Muhammad Iqbal. Originally, this verse uses the intensifier بڑی instead of بہت. (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') This is an illustration of a malapropism, as explained earlier. However, our objective is not to correct this erroneous use, but to emphasize the use of intensifiers. The poet's original (or alternative) use of intensifiers in the verse demonstrates how they intensify the adjectival context; for example, compare 'fertile' with 'very/so/really fertile'. We now understand how intensifiers are used to draw attention to a

particular context. Furthermore, Fig. 4 (Section 5) only depicts the overall frequency percentage of intensifiers in the target data, rather than any comparison to reference corpora. Although Urdu language corpus is available in Sketch Engine, the research was restricted to easily accessible resources in order to conduct the initial screening.

5. Results and Discussions

The initial analysis of the top words leads us to find out intensifiers in the target data; they may appear in low frequency though. Overall, we find three intensifiers in the target data; so, in the first stage of analysis (distributional analysis), we observe بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really'), very and so after their grammatical functions are completely identified. In the target corpus, we don't have a large variety of intensifiers. The only intensifier that appears in the above average top words is بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') and the reason is that it appears in a poetic verse that has been quoted by a lot of people. The other two (so, very) appear in low frequency. All this makes us to narrow down our study on three intensifiers ('بہت', 'very', and 'so') in the target corpus and two intensifiers ('very' and 'so') in both the corpora. The narrowed down intensifiers are among the most frequent ones as used in both the corpora. The following chart (Fig. 4) presents the frequencies of Tweets data and COCA respectively:

Figure 4
Frequencies of intensifiers in the target data



In the target data both Urdu and English language tweets have been taken into account. The target corpus exhibits that بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') is the most frequently used intensifier accounting for 58% of the total number of occurrences. The intensifiers 'very' and 'so' occur 24 and 18 times respectively. We have already discussed that the highest frequency of the occurrence of the Urdu intensifier بہت (transliterated as 'bohat' and translated as 'very', 'so' and 'really') is because of the frequent

quoting of Allama Iqbal's verse. Let's have a look at the other ways the same Urdu intensifier is used.

In examples 2 and 3 (Table 3), we have highlighted the neighboring words along with the intensifiers to see how they intensify the context and meaning. In example 2, we see that the decrease in the number of Corona cases has been intensified by the use of بہت (transliterated as 'bohat') in the Urdu tweet. Compare 'much decreased' and 'very much decreased' in the translated version of the tweet. Similarly, see the underlined words of the translated version of example 3 and compare between 'many' and 'so many'. We see that the intensifiers, used in these examples, emphasize and elevate the context where they are being used.

Table 3

Urdu tweets with transliteration and translation (Examples 2-7)

	Urdu Text	Transliteration	Translation
2	اکستان میں کورونا کیسسز میں **بہت زیادہ** کمی، اب ہم مائیکرو لاک ڈاؤن کی طرف جا رہے ہیں	Pakistan mein corona cases men **bohat ziada** kami, ab u micro lockdown ki tarf ja rahey hein	Corona cases in Pakistan have very much decreased n number and so we are moving toward micro lockdown
3	اسد عمر کا بندی و ترقی جامع پالیسیوں سے متعلق وفاقی وزیر کی حکومت خلاف **بہت سی** منصوبہ بیا کے کورونا ن	Corona kei khilaf hakoomat ki **bohat si** jame palision se mutalliq wafaqi wazir mansooba bandi-o- taraqqi Asad Umer ka biyan.	**:** Federal Minister for planning and development's statement regarding so many comprehensive policies of the Government against corona
4	ڈاکٹرز اور پولیس اہلکاروں سمیت ان **ت شکریہبہ** جو تمام افراد کا کے خلاف لڑائی میں #COVID19 صف اول میں موجود ہیں	Doctors aur police ehalkaron semait un tamam afrad ka bohat shukeriya jo COVID-19 kei khiaf saf-e-awwal mein moujud hen.	We are very thankful to all the people including the doctors and the police officers who stand as the vanguard against COVID-19.
5	اللہ پاک کا شکر ہے کہ پاکستان میں کرونا کیسز میں کمی آرہی ہے - ان شاء اللہ **بہت جلد** ہمارا پیارا وطن اس وبا سے پاک ہو جائے گا-	Alah Pak ka shuker hei keh corona cases mein kami aa rahi hei. Insa'Allah bohat jald hamara piyara watan iss waba sei pak ho jaey ga.	Thanks to Allah Almighty as corona cases are decreasing n Pakistan. Hopefully, our dear country will soon be purified from this pandemic

6	زندگی خاص ہے، احتیاط کیجیے!زندگی **بہت بڑی** نعمت ہے، اس کی قدر کیجیے۔ کورونا وائرس کو شکست دینے کیلئے احتیاطی تدابیر اختیار کریں۔	Zindagi khas hei, ehtiyat kijiay! Zindagi bohat bari nemat hey, iski qader kijiay. Corona virus ko shikast denay kei liay ehtiyati tadabir ikhtiyar kren.	Life is a special thing. Be careful! Life is a very big blessing; value it. Take pre-cautionary measures to defeat corona virus.
7	۱۹ کے نتیجے میں ہونے والی اموات میں 87% کمی آئی عیدالاضحی کے موقع پر احتیاط سے **بہت سی** بچائی جا سکتی ہیں **مزید جانیں**	COVID-19 kei nateejay mein honey wali amwat mein 87% kami aai. Eid-ul-Azha kei moqa per ehtiyat sei bohat sim azeed janein bachai ja sakti hein.	There is 87% decrease in the death toll caused by COVID-19. We can save a lot omore lives by taking care on the eve of Eid-ul-Azha.

Below we can see the examples (9-15) of the other two intensifiers *'so' and 'very'* used in the target corpus (Tweets):

9 I swear this is **so true**... #PakistanFightsCorona #CoronaInPakistan

10 Your Part to Stop COVID-19 :The idea of doing one's part should be **so nice** ▪Wear a mask▪Social distance… https://t.co/LI0iiMq1vW

11 .
Remember that taking the right precautions can protect you and your loved ones & to be **so true** to others. S... https://t.co/LbN1UfsTtM

12 It was confusing at times but for now **so good**! Some measures can be adopted on permanent basis like regulating mark... https://t.co/6eb6jKUVNE

13 RT @imran_sidra: Thank you dr. @fslsltn for visiting karachi today. It was **very good** to meet you @Asad_Umar for equipping karachi hospitals to deal with #Covid19 in best possible way

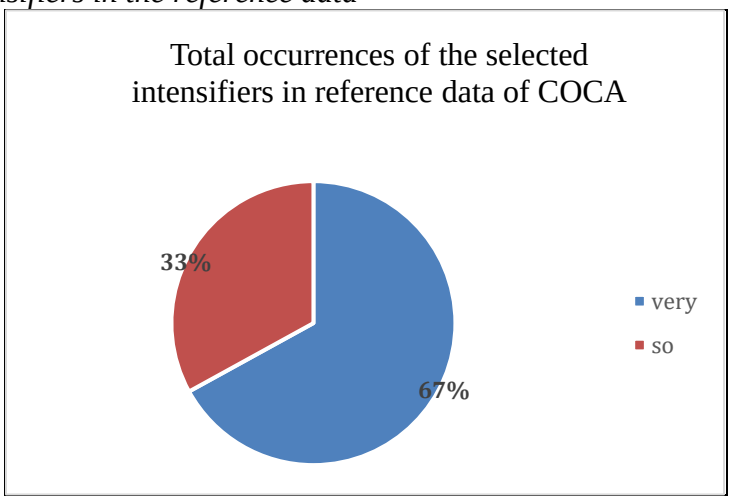
14 @pid_gov **very nice** job for progressive #Pakistan #PakistanFightingPolio #pakistanfightscorona

15 Wishing All Muslims a **very true** Eid ul Azha. May Allah Bless You All with Good Health, Happiness & Prosperity. Stay Safe, Stay Healthy!#EidulAzha

In the above examples (examples 9-15), 'very' and 'so' have been used to intensify two adjectives 'good' and 'true'. Both the adjectives 'good' and 'true' have been highlighted by the use of intensifiers 'very' and 'so' respectively. The frequencies of the intensifiers in the reference corpus are given above in Fig 4.

Figure 4

Frequencies of Intensifiers in the reference data



Tagliamonte (2005) refers to the media language as innovative and that the use of intensifiers makes it more attractive than the one used in the general population. Twitter is a social networking service that allows its users to share their point-of-views. We see the use of intensifiers by the Pakistani Twitter users; however, it is very important to compare the occurrence frequencies of the two corpora because it will allow us to see the frequency rates of the two corpora.

In the reference data, we find a variety of intensifiers like really, pretty, too, very, so, etc., but we have observed and focused on the two ('very' and 'so') as they are the ones that were initially seen in the target data. When the two words are compared, we see that 'very' is more frequently (67%) used than 'so' (33%) by the Native American speakers according to the reference corpus, i.e., COCA. Frequency rates are different in the reference data chart (Fig. 4) from the target data. We see that 'so' is more frequently used in the target data than 'very'; while in the reference data, speakers prefer using 'very' more frequently and the use of 'so' is not frequently used as an intensifier. Further, it is important to see the style these intensifiers are used. A few examples (16-20) of 'very' and 'so' in the reference data (COCA) have been extracted and presented below:

16 correspondence for overall rating across sources. There was **very good** agreement between staff nurses on the two externalizing...

17 ...double that of 'liberals'. You are not **very good** at this.

18 . ....offshore of northwestern Australia . We believe we found a **very good** candidate ...for what is the impact even itself.

19 If you are asking me why it is that the middle class is disappearing and we're seeing more income and wealth inequality than any time since the 1920s, trade is a **very important** factor, not the only reason...

20 NATALIE-MORALES# MmHm. WILLIE-GEIST# Are you happy with the movie? MANNY-PACQUIAO # Yes, I'm **very happy** about the movie, Manny...

In COCA, the spoken register has the highest frequency of the usage of 'very' and we find multiple strings formed with the it like 'very nice', 'very important', 'very good', 'very difficult', 'very hard', etc. For example, see at https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/.

To conclude the distributional analysis results, we came up with the following points: 1) The native English speakers use a variety of intensifiers in their speech as revealed through COCA while the Pakistani Twitter users use a limited number of intensifiers. 2) The frequency rates of the most frequently used intensifiers (i.e. 'so' and 'very') are different in the two corpora. The native English speakers prefer to use 'very' over 'so', while the Pakistani Twitter users use 'so' more frequently than 'very'.

The above discussion and the examples presented so far lead us to see **adjective collocates** in both the corpora. For this purpose, top five (most frequently occurring) adjectives have been chosen that co-occur with the target intensifiers, i.e., 'very' and 'so'. The most frequently occurring adjectives that form adjectival collocates with the target intensifiers in the target data are: good, true, nice, bad and hard and therefore these collocates have been seen in the reference data too. Adjectival collocates results have been presented in the following table:

Table 4
Top 5 Adjectives in COCA and Tweets

Adjectives	**So**		**Very**	
	COCA	**TWEETS**	**COCA**	**TWEETS**
Good	**X**	✔	✔	✔
True	**X**	✔	✔	✔
Nice	**X**	✔	✔	✔
Bad	**X**	**X**	✔	✔
Hard	**X**	**X**	✔	**X**

Table 4 reveals interesting results. It is very important to note that nowhere in the reference data we could find the use of 'so' intensifier with the selected adjectives. It is surprising to note that most of the non-native English speakers (Pakistani Twitter users) use 'so' more frequently and differently from the native American speakers. In the target corpus, we see that 'so' collocates with 'good', 'true', and 'nice' but is found missing with 'bad', and 'hard'. In the reference corpus, the intensifier 'very' collocates with all the adjectives while the same intensifier could not be found with 'hard' in the target data. In conclusion of the 'adjectival collocates' analysis we can say that the tweets and COCA corpora almost match on the use of 'very', while there are striking differences on the use of 'so'. This conclusion validates Su's (2016) finding that the nonnative English speakers use intensifiers differently from the native English speakers.

The distributional analysis of the reference data showed that 'so' has been used quite a lot (33%) in the said data but adjectival collocates reveal that mostly it wasn't used as an intensifier and didn't collocate with the selected adjectives. Here are the examples that illustrate the use of intensifier 'so' with its neighboring words (revealing that 'so' is not used as an intensifier in the reference data): 'so I', 'so far, 'so you', 'so we, 'so it', 'so long', 'so much', and 'so he'. Thus, the findings suggest that non-native Pakistani Twitter users use 'so' more frequently as an intensifier and the adjective collocate that are so formed are not found in the reference data. Findings are very interesting under 'adjective collocates' analysis. To summarize this section, the following points are the most crucial: 1) Native English speakers (as presented by COCA) and Pakistani English Twitter users use different adjectival collocates while intensifying a certain context. 2) The word 'so', that has been used as an intensifier in the local data, hasn't been used as an intensifier in COCA.

The above discussion and findings lead us to the last stage of analysis of both the corpora, i.e., **semantic prosody**. Semantic prosody allows us to see the overall meaning of the utterances as we take into account the contexts and neighboring words around the intensifiers and the adjective collocates. Some of the adjectives are perceived with single prosody either positive, negative, or neutral and some can convey all three. That is also determined by the intensifier with which these are used; for example, good, bad, and hard are the familiar ones to be used with most of the intensifiers. Following the example of Patumanon (2016); we have divided the chosen adjectives into four categories: positive, negative, neutral, and others and like (ibid), we utilized the following list of the web resources to create the adjective list:

1. https://systemagicmotives.com/positive-adjectives.htm (Systemagic Motives)
2. https://positivewordsresearch.com/list-of-negative-words/ (Positive Word Research)
3. https://www.enchantedlearning.com/wordlist/negativewords.shtml (Enchanted Learning)
4. https://www.learnenglish.de/grammar/adjectivepersonality.html (Learn English)
5. https://www.learnenglish.de/grammar/adjectivecommon.html (Learn English)

In addition to the adjectives (given in the Table 5 below), many other adjectives were found too with their exclusive semantic profile, but the study has been narrowed down on the following:

Table 5
Adjectives Groups with Semantic Prosody having Top 5 Adjectives

Positive	Negative	Neutral	Other
Good True Nice	Hard Bad	∅	∅

The classification (in the table above) reveals that 'good', 'true', and 'nice' are positive, while 'bad' and 'hard' are negative. None could be classified under 'neutral', and 'others'. Table 6 presents occurrences of semantic groups in both the corpora:

Table 6
Comparison between the two corpora

Classes	So		Very	
	COCA	TWEETS	COCA	TWEETS
Positive	0%	91%	88%	43%
Negative	0%	9%	12%	57%

According to these percentages (Table 5), 'so' is more frequently used in the Pakistani tweets with positive adjectives and it has not been used in the contemporary English, i.e., COCA with the target adjectives; same is the case with the negative adjectives in the reference data. It also showed that negative adjectives do not carry 'so' in the negative context in the target tweets data; however, it is important to note that the native data doesn't use 'so' as an intensifier at all, as revealed by the 'adjective collocates' analysis. The intensifier 'very' is found more frequently used with the positive adjectives in COCA as compared to Pakistani tweets data and vice versa.

The findings under the semantic prosody analysis highlight major differences between the usage of the intensifiers in the selected backgrounds. We find that 'so' has not been used with the selected adjectives in the reference data, while it has significantly been used to intensify the positive background in the target data. Similarly, differences can be seen in the target and reference data regarding the use of 'very'. The reference corpus uses 'very' less frequently in the negative context. The results align with Su's (2016) study where the author draws striking differences regarding the use of intensifiers between the non-native Chinese English speakers' written samples with that of the British National Corpus (BNC). The study may prove helpful for the future researchers as it can be extended to the use of different intensifiers (more samples of intensifiers can be studied) used at different other plat forms of social media.

6. Conclusion

The discussion and findings of the three analyses (distributional, adjective collocates, and semantic prosody) let us see interesting things on the basis of which we can infer that the native American English speakers use 'very' more frequently and 'so' is not used as an intensifier in the reference data. The intensifiers 'very', 'بہت', and 'so' have been used innovatively in the target tweets data. However, we can very conveniently differentiate between the styles with which these intensifiers are used in the two corpora. For example, compare 'very good to meet', 'very nice job, 'very true Eid' (examples 13, 14, and 15) in the target corpus with 'very good at this', 'very good candidate', 'very important factor' (examples 18, 19, and 20) in the reference corpus. Use of 'so' in both the corpora lets us see interesting things. There are striking differences the intensifier 'so' has been used in both the corpora. In the reference corpus, 'so' has not been collocated the way it has been used in the target corpus. Moreover, we find the native English speakers have less inclination to the use of 'so' as an intensifier in their everyday speech, while the non-native Pakistani English users use 'so' more frequently as an intensifier with the adjectival collocates that were found completely missing in the reference data.

As far as the general use of intensifiers is concerned, there are many instances in the target data where intensifiers could have been used to intensify or modify the adjectives, but the

speakers/users prefer not to use them; in the reference data, however, we see an abundant use of intensifiers where they could possibly be used. This suggests that the Native American English speakers are more prone to intensify/amplify/modify the adjectival context than the Pakistani twitter users.

There are certain limitations of the study: 1) The study was conducted on a limited number of tweets and in a fixed context (aftermath of COVID 19); therefore, the study can be expanded in many different ways by using different other contexts and other platforms of the social media. 2) More varieties of intensifiers can be studied. 3) The local tweets data was compared with COCA while the latter may not be considered a good comparison in the present context; thus, the potential researchers may draw comparisons by using equivalent platforms, like Pakistani tweets and native English tweets.

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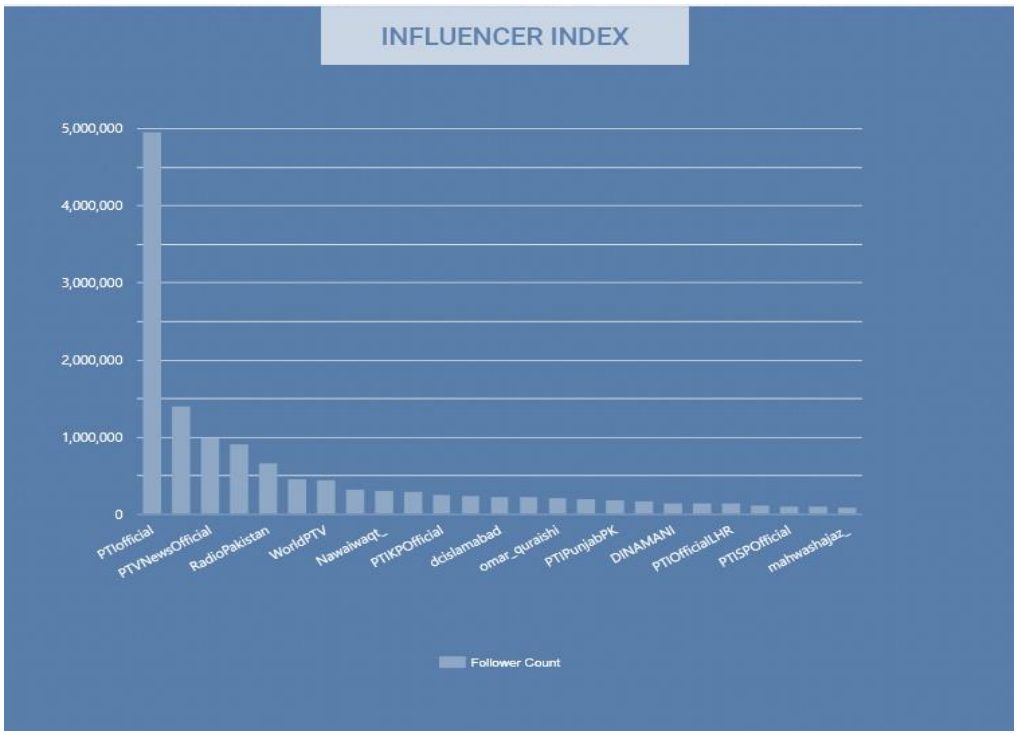
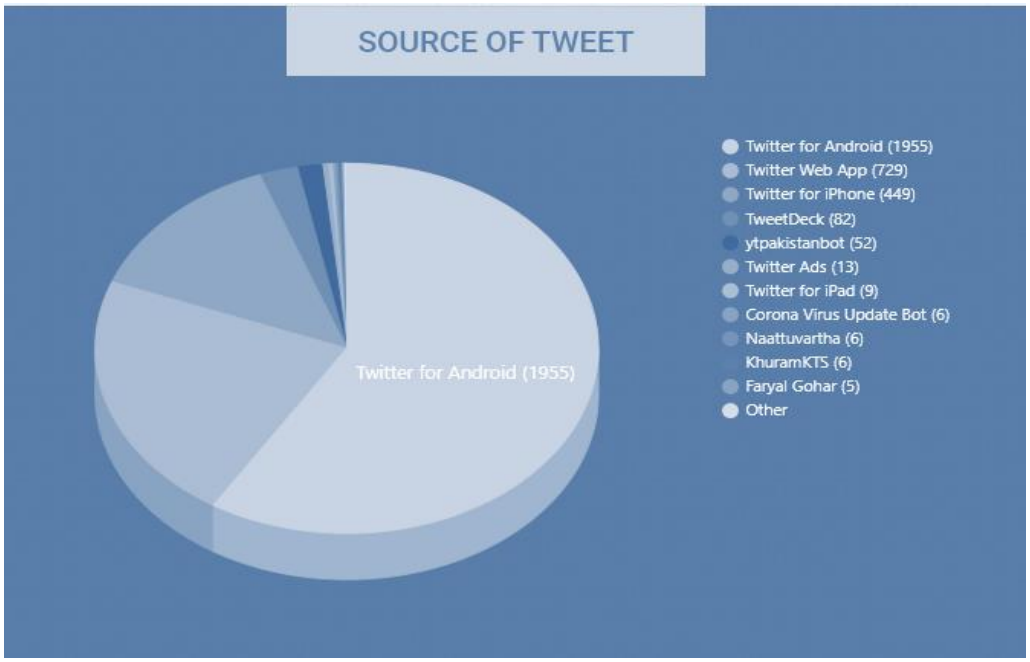
Appendix

Note: The following graphs are based on statistical information of tweets data. These are auto generated through software computationally, therefore 3-D format of graphs is provided:

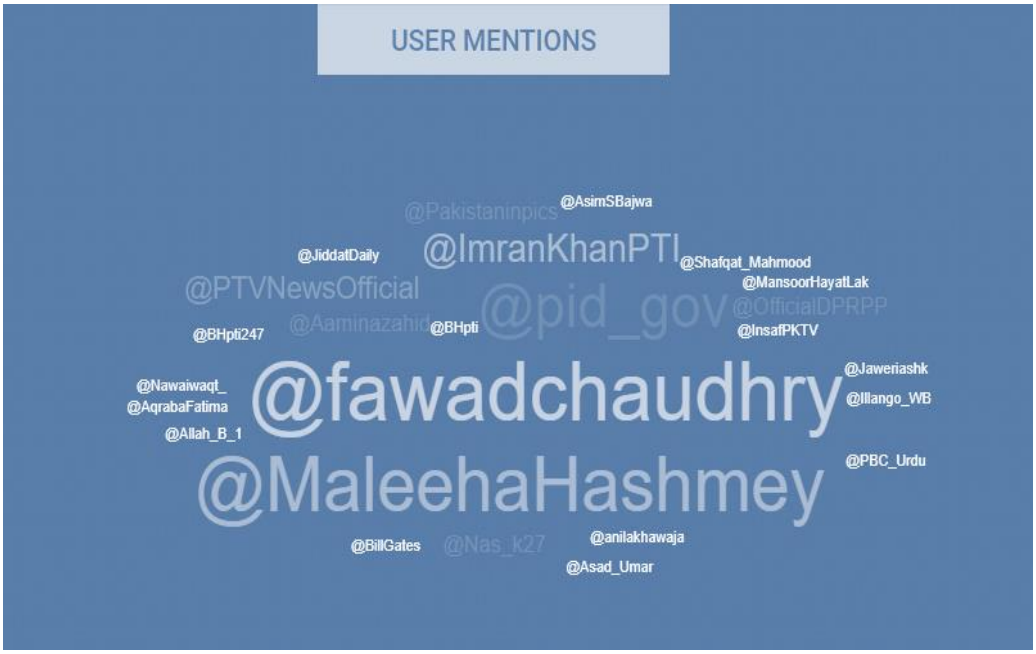
a. Influencer Index



b. Source of Tweet



c. User mentions



d. Volume over time